

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY BRINGING
TO PASS THE IDEA OF IMMORTALITY THAT THE HUMAN HEART
CRAVED BEFORE CHRIST
CAME.

I. Cor. 15:35-38

It is a good thing for the spring of the year to come. The chilly winds of winter and the biting cold are so destructive of life that we get to thinking dead leaves, dead flowers, dead grass, dark days, and blue days. This runs over into the mental and spiritual and we see so many people buried, so many interests of the church lifeless, and so many church members dead although their physical beings are still walking around that we get to thinking dead. Even as I read to you my lesson today and took this text you thought of a funeral. So it is good for the flowers to bloom again and for the birds to sing once more forcing before our eyes the fact that winter is over. May it be that this will run over into the mental and spiritual so that we may see bright prospects for a great crop of the fruits of the Spirit this year.

We are not so far removed from the time of Paul that we are not still asking "How are the dead raised up and with what body do they come?" It is not a thing unnatural nor unexpected that people should ask such questions. There are many things that make people to have inquiring minds just at this point.

- a. There is the seed planted in the earth. Something springs up from it and we see a reason for it. The reason is that it is a sound seed when buried and has in it the germ of life. That germ of life in the sound seed springs up but you do not see the grain any more but a stalk, absolutely unlike the grain.
- b. But now here is the body. It, unlike the grain of corn, is buried after the germ of life is gone from it. Now since it is dead already no germ left in it it is but natural for you and for me to ask, "How are the dead raised up and with what body do they come." Paul stimulates us to ask that question when he said, "Thou sowest not the body that shall be." Even the grain of corn is not the body that shall be but 'bare' grain.
- c. If God is a Spirit and heaven is to be a world of spirits will we need the body?
- d. If these bodies, with no germ of life in them, will be raised up will not the dead bodies of animals also be raised up? Did not the same law that made us die make them die? *Is the flesh all important?*
- e. *Where is the example of decayed bodies rising? Matt 27:52*

These are reasonable questions and to get at the answers we go primarily to two things:

- a. The cravings of the human heart.
- b. The written word of God.

What has been the craving of the human heart? Observe:

1. The Indians found in America longed for a Happy hunting ground and buried the dead with that in view laying by him his dog.
2. The Egyptians longed for continued existence and came to believe that for such to happen the body must be reanimated.
3. Abraham believed that if he sacrificed his son that God would raise him up.

In the Bible we find;

1. Enoch was translated.
2. Job said, "Yet from my flesh shall I see God."
3. The Psalmist said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

Is the longing of all races and the inspired sayings of the O.T. writers any less realized in the resurrection of a real human body - Jesus.

RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

But the risen body of Jesus was not the first human body raised up.. The widow's son, the damsel, and Lazarus all were raised before the body of Jesus. Theirs, however, were raised back to mortal form but that of Jesus was raised to the eternal form and was the first of that kind. "He became the first fruits of them that slept."

Since the body of Jesus, after the Resurrection, is the exact type that our resurrected bodies will be, I think we will all be interested to look at His body for a few observations:

1. It was one that could be seen. Many people saw it. More than five hundred at one time saw it. It saw, it heard, it spake.

2. It was a body that disregarded solid walls..think of bones or flesh penetrating solid walls. I do not know of any scriptural proof that Thomas felt the wounds. It seems that when he saw the nail prints he just cried out "My Lord and my God." But on another occasion we read, "And as they went to tell His disciples, behold Jesus met them saying, 'All hail! And they came and held Him by the feet.'"

3. Many think that he had power to assume bodily form that was visible to fleshy eyes when it was necessary.

4. His must have been a translated body for we have no account of His body decaying and going back to dust. What became of the minerals of His body Through the power of God they were eliminated, maybe contrary to the laws of nature...i.e. by miracle...just as the law of gravitation was laid aside when He ascended into heaven.

We look upon the Bible as the inspired word of God so we may safely go to it and trust the teachings concerning the resurrected body. Paul is a great authority on all the subjects he discusses. His idea is that not the same body will rise as was placed in the grave. "Thou sowest not the body that shall be." "Our citizenship is in heaven, whence also we await for the Lord Jesus, who will fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory." He uses the seed process. We sow not the body that shall be but bare grain. We sow a natural body, we reap a spiritual body, which is to be identified with the grave body as the plant is exactly identified with its seed.

The Egyptian idea was that the soul would come back to this material body and they mummified the body so that the soul could find it. The Pharisees had about the same idea. But the example of Jesus resurrected body and Paul's teaching of the same carries us so far beyond these imperfect ideas.

Paul does not make me feel blue that this same body will not rise. Who could desire that the boy yonder born with a horribly deformed body should go through eternity with such? Who could desire that the deaf mutes of the world suffer that condition for ever? Who would want Helen Keller deaf, dumb, and blind go on forever that way? So it does not make me blue that such as that will be corrected in the RESURRECTION POWER. My heart is made to be full of joy in that Paul says that God will give us a body that pleases Him and if it pleases my Good God I know that it will please me.

After all the supreme message of Easter is not the kind of body that we shall have but that there will be continuity of life beyond the grave. Life eternal life.

"'Tis life of which our nerves are scant
'Tis life, not death for which we pant.
More life and fuller, that we want."

