

Questions of Correspondents.

Answers by the Editor.

QUES. I see no reference to the resurrection of the natural man, in a natural body in 1 Cor. 15. Does it not seem to treat only of the raising of Saints – spiritual bodies?

ANS. In 1 Cor. 15:22, Paul restates what he has everywhere affirmed, viz: That as by Adam's disobedience the race became dead, so by Christ's obedience all were in God's sight justified to live again, and in his due time, they will be delivered from death's dominion and restored to perfect life. He lays down the general proposition or truth that, "as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order." This indicates that several resurrections may take place before all are raised. Paul does not specify how many orders or companies there will be.

He was writing to believers and informs them, that their resurrection is the first order "Afterward they that are Christ's at his parousia [presence]." "Then – the end." (The word cometh is not in the Greek.) The thought is: "Then, i.e. after all the companies or orders of the dead are raised, &c. – When "all are made alive." Then, having rescued man from his fallen condition and having destroyed the last enemy death, by releasing mankind from his bondage, the work which the Father gave him to do is accomplished, i.e., "reconciling the world," having put down all rule and power opposed to the Father, then will he deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father; then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him." Ver. 28.

QUES. Does not Rev. 20:4,6, seem to ignore any but the two classes, viz: the blessed and holy of the first resurrection, and the rest of the dead who live not until the thousand years are finished. Now

where do we find the great restitution class mentioned in these two chapters?

ANS. This text certainly does emphatically contradict the idea of the various orders of resurrection during the (1000 years) millennial age; and not only so but it also contradicts all scriptures which teach – "a restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets;" and it precludes the idea of "all men being saved [from death] and coming to a knowledge of the truth;" and it would prevent its being "testified in due time [to all] that Jesus Christ gave himself a ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2:6.) Verse 4 treats of the first resurrection, those who reign and live with Christ during the thousand years. Now, if "the rest of the dead" (outside the first resurrection,) "live not until the thousand years are finished," they certainly have no probation, for verses 7 to 10 describe the final winding up of sin and sinners, symbolically termed a "lake of fire and brimstone" where the symbolic beast had been cast, &c.

But how about this? If Rev. 20:5, contradicts the balance of the Bible what shall we do? This same point troubled me about eight years ago. I knew not what to think. This text stood opposed to all thought of restitution and the "blessing of all the families of the Earth" through "The Seed," Yet I could not think of discarding it even though the Prophets had said that Sodom, Samaria, Israel, &c., were to be restored to their "former estate, &c." I was in this perplexed condition until I found that the objectionable part of this fifth verse (the first sentence) is not to be found in three of the oldest MSS. viz: the "Syriac," "Sinaitic" and "Vatican." The Syriac is the older, (second century) and the "Sinaitic" the most authentic and reliable MSS known; written about A.D. 350. The only ancient MSS containing this sentence is the "Alexandrine." It is not only less reliable (although recognized as valuable) but being written about the middle of the fifth century, it is less valuable than the more ancient "Sinaitic" and "Vatican," because

more liable to have its text interpolated during the century intervening. The last mentioned three manuscripts are acknowledged by all to be the best GREEK texts extant. The "Syriac" is not so authoritative because written in the Syriac language.

Upon a careful reading of the context, you will notice that the connection would not only not be impaired, but positively improved by the omission of this sentence; read it: "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years: This is the first resurrection. Blessed, &c."

When copying was all done by the pen, the transcribers have, it would appear, frequently made a parenthetic or marginal note of their thought upon the subject, designed to refresh their memory when reading it again. These notes were mistaken by subsequent copyists for parts of the inspired text. Another similar interpolation is Jno. 21:25, also omitted in the "Sinaitic" MS. (See article on "The Holy Bible" – crowded out, will appear in Jan. No.)
