

## "WHO CAN HEAR IT?"

An idea sometimes becomes so imbedded in our minds, so much a part of ourselves, as that we can scarcely part with it. Yet how many of our ideas we have found it necessary to modify, the reason doubtless being that now we see as through a smoked glass, dimly. To very many it becomes a trial to have a long-cherished theory interfered with; but to all who have the childlike spirit of Christ, viz.: a readiness to take the Father's word unhesitatingly (not man's word), to such there is no trouble, for they say: I know nothing at all on the subject, and if I have received an idea unsupported by God's word I don't want it. I want truth, not my own ideas; give me truth, no matter what idol it may overthrow.

To such only, we have a word to say touching the long-cherished idea, that some of those now living would never die a physical death. We want to say to you that the Scriptures upon which that idea has been based, when critically considered to not (in our judgment) support the thought; and other Scriptures seem to teach positively that all who will be members of the body – Christ, must like their head, example, forerunner, die physically. Carefully examine the subject in the light of the following remarks on texts usually regarded as the basis of the idea that we will be exempted from physical death, and should you find any other texts which you consider evidence of the old idea, please inform us.

In 1 Thes. 4:15,17, we read – That we which are alive and remain unto the coming (parousia – presence) of the Lord shall not prevent [hinder] them which are asleep. For the Lord...shall descend... and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together [or also] with [or to] them, &c."

Now we do not claim that anything here mentioned, indicates that the saints who remain over to this time of the Lord's presence will die; but we do claim that nothing in this text teaches that their human bodies will not die. This Scripture does not mention what change they will undergo before being joined to the Lord; in fact the change is not mentioned here at all. But the same apostle elsewhere informs us that a change must take place, because "flesh and blood" cannot inherit the kingdom of God – we must all be "changed" to spiritual bodies.

Let us next look at 1 Cor. 15:51, for it mentions the change particularly, and let us notice carefully whether Paul says we shall be changed without dying, as we have always supposed he does. We read: "Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye;...the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed." We received our impression that our earthly body would not die, from the above statement regarding sleep, but who cannot see that the human body might be dissolved and we the new creatures be delivered from it and so quickly clothed upon with our spiritual body, that not a moment for sleep would intervene. If time should intervene between the dissolution of our earthly house (human nature) and the receiving of our spiritual body we should be obliged to sleep, as the Apostles and "all who sleep in Jesus." But that sleep has always been an undesirable thing; therefore with the apostle we can say that we are anxious, not to be unclothed (asleep without either human or spiritual body) but we prefer if the will of God be such, that we should be of the class alive when the Lord has come, so that instead of being even for a moment in the unclothed (or sleep) condition, we might be clothed upon, or receive that spiritual at the same moment we part with the old human house. And this in substance Paul here states – all will not sleep for to some the change will be in a moment, in an eye twinkling.

One thing is sure, we must leave the flesh sometime, and whenever or however it may be, it will be the death or dissolution and end of the human to all who become full recipients of the divine.

Now notice the words of Jesus, concerning John. John, we have long since seen to be a type or representative of the last part of the church – those who are alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord and who shall be changed. Jesus said of our representative, John: "If I will that he tarry till I come what is that to thee," Peter? Then went that saying abroad among the disciples, that that disciple should not die; howbeit Jesus said not that he should not die but, if I will that he tarry till I come," &c. (John 21:22.) Just so, dear brethren, it has been with the company typified by John; the saying has gone abroad and has been generally received that this part of the church will not die: Howbeit when we examine the evidences, we find that neither Jesus nor the apostles said we should not die, but that we would tarry till the Master's presence and be changed in a moment and not sleep.

Now notice the positive teaching that all of "the body" will die and then mark the necessity of death. It was no less an authority than Paul who said: If we be dead with him we shall also live with him; and if we have been planted in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection – desiring therefore to be made conformable unto his death.

Does some one object that these words are applicable to the daily life of Paul and of us and suggest that we are to be "living sacrifices." Very true, so we have taught and so we still believe, but while our dying commences at our consecration, it does not end there. As in the case of our "Captain," it does not end until the human is dead. While we begin, as "living sacrifices," yet when the sacrifice is finished, all that is human is dead. The thing that dies at once, is the human will, and when this is accomplished we reckon ourselves dead; but the death actually is in progress day by day until the sacrifice is

complete. We cannot receive the spiritual mind unless we surrender the human mind or will, so also we cannot receive our spiritual body unless the earthly body is surrendered. Remember that Jesus said to all the churches: "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

It is in harmony with these thoughts that we understand the words of Jesus (John 11:26): "Whosoever liveth (at this time) and believeth in me [or is one of the faith-ful] shall never die." The class referred to are reckoned dead to the human will, nature, hope, etc., and are alive toward God as new creatures. Such **[R294 : page 7]** new creatures who are now living will not sleep – will not die, but immediately – in the twinkling of an eye will be transferred to their new body like unto Christ's spiritual body. What matters it to us, if the earthly house of this building be dissolved in death, we shall not be unclothed but clothed upon with an heavenly one.

Now as we have seen that in Jesus' case, the human was surrendered to death forever, (He was "put to death in the flesh but quickened in spirit"), and that had he taken back the human nature it would have been taking back our ransom price, so we have seen that it is a privilege granted to us as his body, to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ – to share in the world's redemption, with him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood – to suffer with him, being made conformable unto his death. In a word, if Jesus must needs be obedient even unto death, and if he says to us: "Be thou faithful unto death," who shall say that the dissolution or death of the human being is not necessary?

Well, says one, then you are not now expecting translation, but death. No, we reply, we as new creatures who are living in this favored time of the Lord's presence expect to be translated – or changed to our own spiritual condition, but we expect the change to take place at the moment of the death of the "earthen vessel" – we will

not be obliged to sleep as did the new creature Paul and others, but will be "changed in a moment."

We believe that translation in this manner is now due, and shall not be surprised to hear of some going thus beyond the second veil into the "Most Holy" condition – the perfect spiritual.

We are on the race course for life, and must be faithful unto death if we would receive the Crown of Life. "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it." (Luke 17:33.)

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THE Jewish Chronicle says: "The prosperous Jews form but a small portion of our brethren. Those who are comfortable and content are comparatively few. These, perhaps, would be loth to leave their assured and luxurious homes to find a new country and a new civilization. But those who are oppressed and unhappy, long for the advantages which reconsolidated nationality would give them. Oppression and persecution has kept our people, as a body, alive and homogeneous. The more the Jew is downtrodden the more he clings to the faith of his fathers and its observances. Liberated, and anxious to compete, socially, with his fellow countrymen, he throws over the restrictions which are deeply respected by those whom he would conciliate by their abandonment, with the simple result of making himself appear contemptible and sycophantic. It is oppression, and not prosperity, which will lead us back to our proper place in the Holy Land."

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