

THEY THAT SHALL ATTAIN RESURRECTION

"They that shall be accounted *worthy to obtain* that age and the resurrection from among the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage." – Luke 20:25.

We do not here treat the subject, "Whose wife shall she be?" having already considered it. (See, TOWER of March '87.) We wish now merely to draw attention to the harmony between the above words of our Lord and the foregoing view, on the meaning of the word resurrection, as applied to the world, showing the class worthy of it, and how the worthiness or unworthiness of each will be demonstrated by their conduct, when awakened from death.

We cannot understand our Lord's words, to apply to the saints, the church, who will share in the first resurrection; for the inquiry and conversation were regarding another class, and by another class. The Lord's answer applied to ordinary Jews who knew nothing about the first resurrection, the reward of following the Lord in sacrifice.

The Millennial age is an age of trial, a transition period, and hence was not the age looked to by the question of the Sadducees who wished to know how matters would be finally and everlastingly. Our Lord's answer meets the question exactly; he does not explain how it will be *during* the Millennial age, while the race is being awakened, and while the willing ones are being restored from death to life, but pointing his words to "that age" of perfection which will follow the Millennium of testing, he informs them first of all, that it is an open question as yet whether the woman and the seven husbands will be *accounted worthy* of that age, *worthy of resurrection*, – of being raised up again to the perfection lost in Adam, and entering the everlasting state. Thus our Lord clearly teaches that though *all* that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth, some [the church] will come forth to a resurrection of *life*, and some will come forth to a

resurrection of judgment or trial, – a resurrection work being begun which for its completion will depend wholly upon the faithfulness of those being tried in it. If in that period of judgment-resurrection any shall be proved worthy of the perfect age and everlasting life, he shall have it; and any found unworthy in that time shall not obtain access to the perfect age, nor to the perfection of life: They are "wicked" and "shall not see life," nor be worthy of complete resurrection.

But, let us remember, that since a full release from the wages of Adam's sin (death – everlasting destruction) has been granted, it follows that the Millennial trial of each, individually, will be as though each were perfect, as though they had never been condemned in Adam, – full allowance being made by the Judge for the weaknesses, from the fall, remaining in them. Each will be judged by *his own* attitude toward righteousness, under the clear light and full understanding of the Millennial age. Only those wilfully opposed to righteousness, when clearly seen, will be condemned as unworthy of life; and such as then die, will die the *second death*; for if never fully lifted up out of the present dying state, it will be *their own* fault entirely – an evidence of their unwillingness to have *life* upon the only conditions it ever will be offered – obedience to God's righteous law.

Hence, when we read, "Even death the last enemy shall be destroyed," "Death shall be swallowed up in victory," etc., we should "rightly divide the word of truth," and note that it is the release of humanity from the penalty which came upon all through Adam's sin and not from the second death, which will come upon wilful sinners only.

Adamic death, though a just penalty, is an enemy or opponent, because it slew all – both the *wilfully* wicked, and the ignorant and blinded, and those also who *willed* to do well and loved righteousness. It was because God foresaw that there would be such lovers of righteousness under the death condemnation, that Christ Jesus died for our sins and released all from that penalty so as to give *life* to as many

as would take pleasure in using it to God's glory and their own everlasting well-being.

The second death, on the contrary, is not an enemy but a blessing; just as the destruction of useless, injurious and filthy rubbish, is a blessing. If the second death meant everlasting torture, the case would be different: No excuse could be offered to justify the perpetuation in misery of the existence of any creature, however wicked. Extinction (death, without hope of resurrection) is certainly a just penalty upon those who are *wilfully* wicked, after they had full knowledge of good as well as evil, and the results of each. But the second death is an enemy to none of the righteously disposed; to them it is a blessing. The utter destruction of such as are proved unfit to have life, is *needful* to the harmony of God's kingdom and the peace and happiness of such as love righteousness. And this is the testimony of God's word concerning his plan: "All the wicked will he destroy." He will "destroy those that corrupt the earth. These are the symbolic "goats" of Matt. 25:41,46, also called the angels, messengers or servants of Satan, and the symbolic "fire" destroys them. The second death will be proportionately as great a blessing, in ridding the earth of the evil-disposed incorrigible, as the Adamic death was an enemy, destroying the well-disposed with the evil-doers and the ignorant.
