

ANASTASIS – RESURRECTION.

No subject occupies a more important place in God's Word than the resurrection, except those two other doctrines so closely identified with it – the *ransom*, which is the basis of all hope in a resurrection, and the *second coming of the Lord* to establish his kingdom, under which the fruit of the ransom (resurrection) shall be extended to Adam and his race in general. Yet, while these doctrines are given such prominence in the divine plan, how strange it seems that Christian people generally almost ignore these topics which the spirit of God indicates to be of greatest importance. The cause of this neglect lies in the fact that in the period from the third to the sixth centuries the idea of a coming kingdom for the blessing of the world, with Christ and his glorified spiritual church at its head, was dropped and exchanged for the idea that it would be a kingdom composed of the notables of the earthly church in earthly glory and honor, and with one of their number as chief or pope to *represent* Christ on earth. This thought tended to undermine and make void the apostles' doctrine of glory and blessing and a crown of life to the church at Christ's appearing and kingdom. (1 Pet. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:8.) And gradually the idea was introduced, which is totally foreign to the Scriptures, that the resurrection is really a matter of no necessity – that the dying saints pass immediately into the fullest of life and glory and blessing, irrespective of Christ's second advent and a resurrection. And surely if this were the case, if *fulness of life and blessing* can be obtained without a resurrection, the term would represent nothing of value to be hoped for or expected; and the doctrine of the resurrection, like the doctrine of the Lord's coming, would be gradually lost sight of and at last cease to be specially cherished and hoped for. And so we find it.

As we have already seen that the *study* of the subject of the ransom and of the second coming of the Lord, and the kingdom then

to be established and to bless all the families of the earth, reveals much valuable truth that was previously unseen, so the study of the subject of *resurrection* gives clearer views of the divine plan.

It was not until the year 1881 that our attention was drawn critically to the subject of resurrection; and shortly after, under the same caption as above we presented the subject in the TOWER of June 1882. Further study, aided by increasing light shining from other features of the divine plan, has served to confirm the views there expressed and to amplify them, so that the entire subject of the resurrection is now very clear, and harmonious with itself, as well as with other features of the plan.

We find that while men use the word resurrection in a very general way, the Bible uses the Greek word *anastasis*, represented by our English word resurrection, in a very particular manner. The common view of the doctrine of resurrection is shown by Webster's definition of the term, as follows: "**Resurrection**. (1) A rising again; the resumption of vigor. (2) Especially, the rising again from the dead; the resumption of life."

As examples of resurrection, our Lord's notable miracles, in the case of Lazarus, and of the son of the widow of Nain, of Jairus' daughter, etc., are often cited; the idea being that the restoration of any degree of vigor or life to one who has passed into the unconsciousness of **[R1259 : page 3]** death is a resurrection.

The Scriptural use of the original Greek word *anastasis* is, however, quite different from this. The Scriptures never speak of the above cases of the awakening of the dead as a resurrection. *Anastasis* means much more than merely awakening out of death; it signifies to *raise again*, and this means all that the word *restitution* means, and all that the word *saved* means, to the lost and ruined race of Adam. As restitution means *full* restitution to all that was lost by Adam, and as *saved* means *full* salvation from all the penalty and loss incurred under God's sentence by Adam's

disobedience, so resurrection (*anastasis*) signifies a *full* and complete raising up again to *all that was lost*; not a partial raising to a part of what was lost, but a full raising again, clear *up* to the position and condition of perfect manhood, mentally, morally and physically, whence the fall hurled father Adam and all in him – his posterity. This is the blessed fulness implied in the word *resurrection* as God uses it. Let us rejoice in it hereafter, and use the word *resurrection* as God uses it. Hereafter let us not speak of such cases as the awakening of Lazarus as resurrection; for Lazarus neither came perfect from the tomb, nor did he from that time begin to progress to perfection. He was merely *awakened*, as our Lord said: "I go that I may *awake* him." And when Lazarus died again, that could not be considered his second death, for he never was fully freed from the Adamic death. If one were *awakened* a dozen times from Adamic death, he would still be in it, and could not die the Second Death (the wages of *individual*, wilful sin) until *some how* released from the first or Adamic death-sentence.

Writing particularly on this subject (1 Cor. 15), the Apostle tells us several important things:

(1) That the doctrine of a resurrection is an all-important one, because if there be no resurrection, those who have already fallen asleep in death are *perished*, and we who are hoping and seeking for a future life are deceived and will be sadly disappointed (verses 18,19); but he assures us that there is the best of ground for faith in God's power and purpose to have a resurrection, and that the resurrection of our Lord Jesus is the proof of this. – Verse 20.

(2) He further declares our Lord to be the *first* one ever resurrected; thus showing that Lazarus and others were not resurrected in the sense that God uses that word – Christ was "the *first-fruits* of them that slept." – Verse 20 and Acts 26:23.

(3) Building upon the foundation he had already laid down (chap. 1:18,23,24,30) – that Christ's *death* as our ransom is the basis

of our hope of the resurrection to life, which he thus redeemed for us and for all, the Apostle proceeds to declare (verses 21,22) that as *death* came as a result of something done by man (Adam) so the *resurrection* comes as a result of something done by another man ("the *man* Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all"); and that *as* all who were in Adam shared his sentence and as a consequence die, *even so*, all who are in Christ will be made alive – made to share the blessing which the *man* Christ Jesus merited, but which he laid down in death on behalf of all those who will obey him when brought to a full knowledge of the truth. – Heb. 5:9.

(4) But even among those made alive in Christ there will be a difference: there will be two orders, or classes, or grades; and all brought to perfection by resurrection, all lifted completely out of death, will belong to one or the other of these orders. They will either belong to the *spiritual order* of which the "body of Christ" under Jesus its head, represented in Israel's priesthood, is the first-fruits unto God of his creatures (verse 23 and James 1:18), and of which the second company, represented in the Levites, will be the blessed servants or assistants, or else they will come up in the *human order* to human perfection as members of the great restitution class to be developed during the *Lord's presence* – during the Millennial reign.

(5) But, says the Apostle (verse 35), some will unthinkingly ask, How can the dead be raised up? Where are their bodies? O thoughtless person, to suppose that the decay of the body to dust could hinder the fulfilment of God's promise! Do you not see that in nature God teaches this very lesson? that though the seed planted does not come up, another seed of the same sort comes forth – a new grain of the same nature as that planted. (Verses 35-37.) And so it will be in the resurrection: it will not be the same body, composed of the same solids and liquids as the one which was buried, but it will be the same *being* who died that will be resurrected.

(6) Is it asked, What sort of a body will the resurrection body be? We answer, There will be different *kinds* of resurrection bodies – just as with the different sorts of grain when planted, the new grain which springs up is of the same kind, or nature, as that which is sown; so it will be in the resurrection. What kind of a perfect body one will have in the resurrection depends upon what *nature* he belongs to. But are not all who died in Adam of the same nature as Adam – human nature? No; the vast majority are, and all *were* such at one time; but a few, a "little flock," have *changed* their nature and are human no longer. (These, and the method by which their change of nature was effected, are specially pointed out in the August TOWER.) From the time they consecrated their justified human natures as sacrifices, they were reckoned of God as "*new* creatures in Christ," "partakers of the divine nature." In the resurrection, God, according to his plan, will give to each one such a body as it hath pleased him to provide – namely, to each kind of seed his own appropriate body. Concerning mankind in general, we know the kind of bodies they will have, for we all have imperfect human bodies now, and can form fairly good conceptions of what will be the grandeur and powers of such bodies when perfected, when fully *raised up* to the perfection lost in Adam. But of the bodies which God hath prepared for the little flock of his chosen saints, the "royal priesthood," who are to be changed to the divine nature, we can now know but little. We can merely know that they will have divine bodies when they are perfected. And so the Apostle declares, "It doth not yet appear *what* we shall be, but we shall be like Him" who is "the express image of the Father's person."

And this fact is in accord with what we see of God's general plan. If we look beyond the earth we see variety in God's creation, and if we look about us on earth we see great variety in plant and animal life. – Verses 38-41.

(7) We will be specially interested in the resurrection bodies of the saints, because (*a*) that is the prize for which we are running,

and (*b*) because we have a tolerably clear idea of what a restitution body will be. And while it doth not yet appear *what we* shall be, I can suggest some contrasts between what we now are and what we shall be then, though it will afford but a meager view. "Thus is * THE RESURRECTION *of* THE DEAD [the chief resurrection or the resurrection of the chief class, the sacrificing overcomers]. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural [human] body, it is raised a spiritual body." As surely as there are natural, human or earthly bodies, so surely also there is such a thing as a heavenly or spirit body.

*The Greek here particularizes *the* resurrection and *the* dead as we have indicated by putting these words in small capitals.

In harmony with this is the statement – The first man, Adam, became a living soul (*i.e.*, an animal or earthly being), the last Adam (became – by resurrection) a life-giving spirit. The spiritual, however, was not first, but the natural, afterwards the spiritual, so that the race in general inherited not the divine nature, but the earthly or human nature; hence it is only the few, only such as now experience the change of nature, that in the resurrection or revivifying out of death will have the divine bodies.

(8) If we would think of the two orders of beings, we should consider the change that took place in one of those who became divine and how the change was effected. For "the first man was *from* the ground, earthly; the second man *from* heaven." Of the kind or nature of the earthly one, in his highest attainment, will be the kind or nature of all the earthly ones who by resurrection attain fulness of life and perfection; and of the kind or nature attained by the one from heaven is to be the kind and nature of the heavenly ones. Yes, even as *we* have borne the likeness of the earthly *we* shall also bear the likeness of the heavenly. *We* shall be like him and shall see him as he *is*. And this I say, brethren, because I would have you understand that such a change from human to divine nature and

organism is necessary, because flesh and blood [human nature] cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor can we so long as corruptible inherit that incorruptible glory and kingdom promised us. Therefore, such a resurrection, such a perfecting, completing us as divine beings, is absolutely necessary. – Vs. 47-50.

But I will reveal a mystery to you, a point not clearly seen heretofore (verse 51) – We shall not all need to *sleep*; for when the time for the establishment of God's kingdom has come it will no longer be necessary to *wait* in the unconscious *sleep* of death. Yet, though we will not need to wait in sleep, the same *change* from flesh and blood [the earthly, human nature] [R1259 : page 4] to the divine nature will be as needful to such as to those who are required to sleep and to wait for the kingdom. The change to such will be of the same sort, but instantaneous; the moment of death will be to them the moment of change, [R1260 : page 4] and hence no sleep will intervene. The change will be instantaneous to all these, to those who sleep and to those who shall not sleep, but it will be at the instant of dying to those only who are alive when the Lord is present a second time establishing his kingdom. It will be a full *resurrection* change, to all of these, a full, complete lifting out of death into perfection and fulness of life – the perfecting in each of the divine nature.

This resurrection to divine existence is the First Resurrection – the chief or most important and most wonderful. It is most wonderful in that it fulfils the most wonderful promises of God – exceeding great and precious promises. It is most important, as well as first in order of time, in that all other promises of restitution or resurrection are dependent upon it – because this resurrection completes the Christ, the "Seed," in and through whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed; because *they* [the restitution class] without us [the Church of the First Resurrection] shall not be made perfect. – Heb. 11:40.

And be it noted that our Lord Jesus shared in this first resurrection; or rather, this first resurrection is *his* resurrection, in which we, by the grace of God, are privileged to share. He alone was sinless, he alone gave the legal ransom for man, he trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him; and as a result THE resurrection, to the divine nature, came to him alone as the full reward of service. Our share with him in this chief resurrection (his resurrection) comes indirectly through him; for his work first justified us, and made it possible for us not only to receive this "high-calling," but also to attain it by helping our infirmities and strengthening and encouraging us on the way with grace and help in every time of need.

Thus the Apostle understood the matter and wrote: "That I might know him and the power of *his* resurrection, [by] being made conformable unto his death," and "attain unto *the* [chief] resurrection of *the* dead" (Phil. 3:10,11); and again, "If we be *dead* with him, we shall also *live with* him," be with him where he is and behold his glory and be *like* him, which can be only by the same resurrection change which he experienced. (2 Tim. 2:11; Rom. 6:8.) And again he says, "For if *we* have been planted together in the likeness of his death, *we* shall be also [sharers] in the likeness of *his resurrection*." – Rom. 6:5.

This "change" or resurrection from flesh to spirit, from human to divine nature, which must come to all who will inherit the Kingdom, will be in a moment, an instantaneous change to each; it will not be a protracted or gradual changing from a little life to an abundant fulness, but in an instant they shall be "like him" and see him as he is. This change will not be at the *same* instant to all, however. A long period of over eighteen hundred years elapsed between the instantaneous resurrection change of our Lord and the change of those who have slept and waited for the Kingdom to come that they might be changed and granted a share in it. Though possibly the moment of change may be the same for all who slept

less, it is not God's plan that those who will be changed without sleep should be changed at the same moment; for it is written, "The dead in Christ shall rise *first*, then *we*, the remainder [or ones left over of the same class] appointed unto life, shall be caught away in clouds [into obscurity] to meet the Lord in the air."*

*Air here seems to signify spiritual authority or power, as in [Eph. 2:2](#).

This change, or resurrection, or perfecting, will take place in the end or close of the Gospel age, at or during the sounding of the last trumpet – the seventh trumpet. ([Rev. 11:15,18](#); [1 Thes. 4:16,17](#).) For the trumpet will sound and THE dead shall be raised incorruptible, and *we* [of the same order or class who remain] shall be changed. Because that [part of the body of Christ] which is corrupted shall put on incorruption, and that which is now dying shall put on immortality.

And ([verses 54,55](#)) *when* this mortal [or dying part of the "body of Christ" which is not to be changed until the dead members of the same body have first been made incorruptible] shall have put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to fulfilment that saying [prophecy] which is written:

"Death is swallowed up victoriously.

"O death, where is thy victory?

"O death, where is thy sting?"+

+Thus read the oldest Greek MSS.

Our Lord's resurrection was a step toward this victory: it was the all-important foundation for it. The resurrection change of his Church – the corruptible and mortal to incorruptible and immortal conditions – will be a further step *toward* the victory over death, but still only preparatory, because when Christ and the Church are glorified, death's dominion will be nearly as extensive as ever, the Church being in all only a "little flock."

The thought of the passage is that after the change of the Church, *then* the destruction of Adamic death, by the release of all mankind from its control, will begin – the long promised release (Gen. 3:15; Jer. 31:29-34), when the children shall no longer be held in the bondage of Adamic death for their fathers' transgressions, but, released from condemnation under it, may live forever, unless they come individually under sentence again through wilful, individual sin.

The sting which caused death is sin: had sin not entered the world human death would not have been known.

And the strength of sin is the law. It was God's law behind sin that determined what should constitute sin and what its sting or penalty should be. But, thank God! while he was just in his law, and while the terrible penalty of that law, the sting of death, was merited by the race, he has graciously arranged for our victory over death and our escape from his just sentence through Christ Jesus, our Lord. [R1260 : page 4]

THE GENERAL RESURRECTION.

In the light of the foregoing statement of the true significance of the word resurrection, as indicated by the Greek word *anastasis* which it translates, we need not stop to show particularly again that by the term general resurrection, we do not mean merely a general *awakening* of the sleeping billions of earth, but much more; namely, a general bringing of all mankind *to perfection* of being – to full freedom from the Adamic death penalty and all its hindering weaknesses.

This delivering of men out of Adamic death to full perfection and restitution of being, and into all the rights and privileges lost through Adam, may be done in either one of two ways: namely, (1) by actual restitution to physical, mental and moral perfection of manhood, to full harmony and communion with God

and to the actual dominion of the earth and all the lower animals, as Adam possessed all these in the beginning, before sin entered, and then testing each to see whether worthy or not to retain those favors everlastingly; or (2) by granting to each individual a release *by faith* from Adamic death and condemnation, and a restitution *by faith* to divine favor and communion, and an actual restitution to all the earthly advantages of Adam, so far and so soon as, by obedience under testing, they shall be found worthy of those blessings. Let us notice carefully and particularly the fact that such a release from Adamic death *by faith* (through a full knowledge of the ransom that was given and the forgiveness and reconciliation and restitution thus provided for all who will accept these favors) is not only as good and as favorable for men, during their trial, but that it is better and more favorable than would be the actual restitution first and a trial afterward.

Let us suppose it both ways, and note the advantages of God's plan of justifying by faith. Suppose that the hour had come in the divine arrangement for the restitution work to begin. Imagine all the millions of earth changed instantly to perfect human beings – perfect mentally, morally and physically. How strange it would all be: no man would know his neighbor, either by appearance, or by speech, or by manner, or by former weaknesses. Worse yet, few would know their own fathers and mothers, or their own children, for the same reason. Still worse, but few could recognize themselves, for the same reason. And the few who could in any degree appreciate such a radical change would be those few only who in the present life have by faith, to some extent, from communion with God, learned as justified persons to think and will from the *perfect* standpoint, even though not always able because of inherited weaknesses to *do* as perfect men. The *few* overcomers of the past – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the holy prophets – can and will as justified ones carry over their identity when instantly perfected as *men*; and the little flock of overcomers of this Gospel age, for a similar reason (because already living the new

resurrection life by faith), will also carry their identity, notwithstanding their great and instantaneous change to the perfection of the *divine* nature. But these two classes are exceptions to the generality of the race – not only as to their instantaneous resurrections or perfectings, but also as to their experiences in the present life. [R1261 : page 4]

But let us for a moment imagine the resurrection of the billions who have died, coming forth actually perfect in mind and in body. Imagine Nero coming forth perfect – free from his terrible passions, great depravity, love of rapine and cruelty, a pure, simple-hearted, benevolent man. He would neither be known by any, nor would he know himself. Imagine wild, ignorant cannibals, who had never had any but the most debased sentiments and experiences, coming forth with every power of mind and body perfect. Imagine all the billions past and present thus perfected, and then think over the following points carefully:

How would their experiences with sin benefit them, since by their sudden change they could not even identify themselves with the degraded, sin-polluted creatures they once were?

If such were God's plan, how could the permission of the trouble and sorrowful experiences of the past six thousand years be accounted for? Surely it is only because present woes of earth have served as lessons, as beneficial experiences to prepare men for the future trial, that God has at all permitted them.

Consider, too, that if men were thus perfected instantly, so that present experiences would not be appreciated, they would all be as liable to fail as was Adam, and for the same reason – namely, from lack of experience. The distinction between perfection of being and perfection of experience should ever be kept in mind: Adam had the perfection of being implied in the declaration that he was made in the image of God; but at the time of his trial he had far less experience than his fallen, imperfect sons of to-day. But he knew

enough for his trial upon the simple test of obedience applied: he knew that God was his Creator and benefactor who had done everything for him; and he knew, when he wilfully disobeyed, that implicit obedience was his duty.

Remember, too, that as in Adam's case so in the case of any perfect man on trial before God's law: *one* violation of *one* point would bring upon such the full wages of sin – death, extinction.

So, then, if it were God's plan to instantly raise the world of mankind up out of death to full perfection and trial, as Adam enjoyed these before the fall, it would be a very doubtful blessing – with the strong *probability* that many, if not all, would make some mistake and fall under the just sentence of God's perfect law. Nor would it do to suppose that after being made perfect by an instantaneous *anastasis*, they might be kept for a time free from trial until they had acquired experience and knowledge; for perfection of being implies responsibility to God's law from the moment it begins.

Thus, too, Adam was not given an uncounted experience with sin, but for his first transgression was sentenced so completely that nothing short of a ransom could release him from his sin and its penalty, death. So it will be with the world of mankind: when perfected by the Mediator, Christ Jesus, his work for them will be at an end – they will then be in the hands of God and subject to that law of his which shows no mercy. For imperfect beings to be exposed to the test of that perfect law would mean failure, sure; and hence, as the Apostle declares, it would be a fearful thing for us if we should reject Christ from being our Mediator and attempt to stand trial before God in the filthy rags of our own righteousness (Isa. 64:6; Heb. 10:31); and for perfect beings *lacking in experience* to be tried by that same law would be almost as certain of failure.

God's gracious provision in Christ is, however, abundant. His arrangement is that the whole race, having been purchased by our Lord Jesus, shall be fully in his hands: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22); and he hath appointed the Millennial day for that work of trial or judgment. (Acts 17:31.) He who redeemed or purchased back Adam and his race from the sentence of death will *offer* to each one full restitution to all that Adam possessed and lost, upon conditions which even in their fallen condition they will be *fully able* to accept. Obedience of will or intent shall be the first requirement; and as this is obeyed restitution will commence. As gradually, during the Millennium, imperfection and weakness shall give place to strength and perfection, correspondingly less allowance will be made for transgressions by the Mediator-Judge; his chastisements and corrections proportioned to the ability and wilfulness of the transgressors being meanwhile most valuable experience to those upon trial.

Starting upon the highway of holiness (toward full restitution to the perfection [**R1261 : page 5**] and all the blessings lost in Adam) at a point corresponding to their present state of imperfection, their own identity and the identity of each other will be maintained, and all the experiences in sin and degradation will be fresh and vivid, and will carry with them the full weight and value, in contrast with the experiences with righteousness in active operation, to which they will then be subjected. The difference at first will be not in the hearts of men, nor in their bodies (except that the sleeping ones will be awakened), but in the *outward* conditions of men, under the rule of the Kingdom of God. The earthly representatives of that kingdom will be Abraham and the prophets, whose trials are already passed and who will then be perfect men and samples of what all the race may become by hearty obedience to the kingdom and laws then, and for that very purpose, in control. The outward changes of that age will be very distasteful to many. Men will have less liberty than at present – they will have liberty to

do right and to do good, but no license whatever to do evil, or to pursue any vocation which would in any degree injure or demoralize others morally, or financially, or physically. Thus (by the binding of Satan) more than one-half of the temptations of the present will be cut off, and only those which belong to the weakness of man's fallen flesh will be upon him. And these, as we have seen, he is to be permitted to *outgrow* and *overcome* by the great Mediator's assistance and discipline, and *in consequence* of having been redeemed by him from the sentence of death, of which those weaknesses are a part. This plan of restoring men and testing them at the same time, and giving them the blessings only as they shall learn to appreciate them, is for man's benefit, that he may then have the fullest knowledge and experience, so as to be fully able to make his choice between sin and its penalty and righteousness and its reward.

From the time men are brought to a clear knowledge of God's plan for their salvation from sin and death, under those favorable conditions, they will be reckoned as *having received the gift of God, everlasting life*; because from that moment they will have it within their reach and power. If they fail to eat the bread of life thus placed in their hands, they will fail to receive the strength and the life it contains. But none shall refuse it ignorantly – all will have proofs on every hand that actual restitution to full human perfection is possible and in progress; and none will be left to doubt that the sacrifice for sins once offered by the Lamb of God is efficacious for his full restitution, under the arrangement and law of the New Covenant – "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thy self."

Those who, under those favorable conditions, resist and oppose that law will be permitted to enjoy its blessings for a hundred years, restrained of power to injure others; but if by the end of that period (which is four times the period of mature experience of the present time) they have not conformed to the new

arrangement so as to make some progress, they will be cut off and die for *their own* sin – the second death.

Even after a hundred years of such favor, they will be but "children," partly developed; but their *wilful* rejection of the gift of life, the *anastasis*, or full raising out of death, tendered them and fully understood by them, is reckoned as the very same to them as though they had gradually progressed toward perfection and had reached it, and *then*, despising God's goodness, had rebelled against his laws and arrangements, as we are informed some will do. – Rev. 20:10,14,15; 21:8.

"I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people: and there shall not be heard in her, any more, the voice of weeping nor the voice of complaint. There shall no more come thence an infant of few days nor an old man that shall not have the full length of his days; for as a lad shall one die a hundred years old – and as a sinner shall be accursed who (dieth) at a hundred years old." (Isa. 65:19,20. Leeser's translation.) That this refers to the Millennial age and to the restitution or earthly class is further attested by the succeeding verses of the same chapter.
