

## **"THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED."**

*– JUNE 21. – Luke 24:34-53. –*

ALTHOUGH the disciples had been informed concerning our Lord's resurrection, they seem to have but imperfectly comprehended his words. At all events, they evidently were not expecting him to rise from the dead, and hence, when he appeared in their midst, they were greatly affrighted and troubled. Our Lord foreknew how they would regard the matter, and had chosen the most favorable manner for manifesting himself, and communicating to them the wonderful fact of his resurrection. He could have appeared to them as the angel appeared to Moses in the burning bush. They would then have seen a flame, as Moses did, and could have heard his voice, and could have been impressed with the dignity of his presence by being commanded, as Moses was commanded, to take off their shoes because the ground was holy. This would have made a deep impression upon their minds, but it would not have made the kind of impression the Lord desired to make. It would not have convinced them that their Master, whom they had seen crucified and buried three days before, was no longer dead, but risen and alive.

Our Lord could have chosen another method. He could have appeared as a glorious angel and have manifested something of his spiritual glory, as he did later to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos (Rev. 1:13-18), and as he did to Saul of Tarsus on the way to Damascus. He was just as truly a glorious spirit being at this time as he was afterward, and as he will be to all eternity. He had been put to death in the flesh, but, as the Apostle assures us, he had also been quickened (made alive) in spirit. (1 Pet. 3:18.) This change had come to him in his resurrection, just as it is promised that a similar change will come to his faithful Church, – "sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:43,44.) But had he appeared to the disciples a

glorious, shining being, as he appeared to Saul, the effect upon them no doubt would have been similar to the effect upon Saul. They would have fallen before him, and perhaps also have lost their sight as Saul lost his. This might have impressed them powerfully, but it would not have led their inexperienced judgments to accurately connect this glorious being with the man Christ Jesus whom they had followed for three years.

The manner chosen by our Lord for revealing himself was much more favorable for the disciples. He wished to gain their attention, and to avoid anything that would unnecessarily excite them, and hinder them from learning the lessons which he wished to impart. Hence he appeared *as* a man on several occasions, – once as a gardener to Mary, again as a stranger to the two who went to Emmaus, and on another occasion; [R1995 : page 142] and in each case, he revealed his identity by his conversation or by his manner so that they recognized him as their crucified Master, – Jesus. But on the occasion mentioned in this lesson he appeared in a body of flesh and bones, similar to that which had been crucified. The body which they saw was not *he* for he had been "*changed*" in his resurrection and was now a spirit being with a glorious body such as John and Saul saw. But he appeared to them in a body of flesh and in ordinary garments specially prepared for the occasion, just as angels (using the same power) had appeared as men previously. Just as our Lord (centuries before he became a man) appeared *as a man* to Abraham, and ate and talked with him, so now, after he had ceased to be a man, and had been changed and was a spirit being highly exalted, far above angels, he again appeared *as a man* because this was the best means of communicating to the disciples the grand truths which he wished to communicate. Hence also he assured them, to allay their fears, that *what they saw* was not a spirit. He at that time was a spirit (1 Cor. 15:45; 1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:17), but they did not see *him*, but merely the body of flesh which veiled yet represented him; and which, as he intended, helped their imperfect faith and knowledge to grasp the important lesson that he was no longer dead but alive for evermore.

Then he reminded them of his own previous utterances on the subject of his resurrection; he quoted to them and expounded the prophecies which bore the same testimony, and showed them the necessity for the great transaction which he had accomplished, saying, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day." All of this discourse probably is not given, but we may presume, reasonably, that he explained to them particularly the necessity for the ransom-sacrifice, and something concerning the wonderful results which must yet flow therefrom to all the families of the earth.

He was present with them for forty days before his ascension, yet was *invisible* to the "brethren," except during the few times of his manifestation; and these manifestations were but brief; during all this period of forty days none except the "brethren" saw him; and, as we have seen, they saw him only by reason of the miracle which he performed, appearing in their sight *as* a man; because human beings cannot see spirit beings. In this our Lord fulfilled his statement made before his death – "Yet a little while and the *world* seeth me no more." – John 14:19.

Those who hold the view that the flesh of our dear Redeemer *given* for us (John 6:51) was resumed by him, and constitutes his resurrection body, miss the real lesson taught the disciples during those forty days preceding [R1996 : page 142] his ascension. The lesson of the occasional appearances, and then in different forms or bodily appearances, and of his *vanishing* after each manifestation was (1) that he was no longer dead but risen; (2) that his resurrection conditions were *totally* different from those of the *man* Christ Jesus.

To imagine the care-worn, thorn-marked features and the wounded hands and feet, of "*flesh and bone*," to be Christ's resurrection body would be thoroughly inconsistent every way. If his marred, fleshly body is his resurrection body, why did the Apostle so

carefully explain that "there is an animal body and there is a spiritual body"? (1 Cor. 15:44) And why tell the saints that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be" in the resurrection? (1 John 3:2.) If we shall be like as we are now, with all of our present blemishes and scars, then it doth appear and surely would be very disappointing to those who have believed the Lord's word that flesh and blood (human nature) cannot inherit or enter the Kingdom of God, and that therefore we, who are alive and remain unto the second coming of our Lord, must be "changed" – that we may "be like him and see him *as he is.*" Originally a spirit being, our Lord humbled himself and was *changed* to our nature and was "made flesh" "*for* the suffering of death" as our ransom price. He then was "made like unto his brethren:" but now, having redeemed us, he has been glorified with the glory which he had with the Father before the world was created, and now his promise is that the "brethren" shall be "changed" and made *like unto him* and share his glory. – 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 15:41-46,51-53.

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## **JUNE 28. – REVIEW STUDIES OF THE QUARTER.**

**Golden Text. – "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations." – Luke 24:47.**

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