

JEWESS RESTORED TO LIFE

– *MARK 5:21-24, 35-43. – AUGUST 18. –*

Text: "And He took the damsel by the hand and said unto her, Talitha cumi, which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." – Vs. 41.

WHEN JESUS and the Apostles returned to the vicinity of Capernaum, the people were on the lookout for them, especially Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue. He came and fell at Jesus' feet in great distress. He besought Him to come and heal his little daughter who lay at the point of death. As they went to the house of Jairus the multitude followed and thronged and delayed the procession. Meantime a messenger arrived from Jairus' house, telling that the child was dead. But Jesus said to the bereaved father, "Be not afraid, only believe."

The multitude was left, and only three of the Apostles, Peter, James and John, went on with Jesus and Jairus. When they arrived they beheld a great tumult connected with the customary weeping and wailing. Jesus astonished the mourners by telling them not to weep, that the child was not dead, but asleep. What did He mean? Did the Great Teacher prevaricate? He spoke in the same manner in respect to His friend Lazarus, saying, "Lazarus sleepeth," and then later He explained that he was dead. How shall we understand these words? What were the facts? What was the truth in the case?

"ALL LIVE UNTO HIM"

The key to the matter is given us in our Lord's own words to the Sadducees, a class who denied that there would be any resurrection of the dead or any future life. The Sadducees asked Jesus a question about a woman who had had seven husbands, and who died after them all. They thought to make the teachings of Jesus respecting the resurrection

of the dead look ridiculous by this question, but our Lord answered, "You do err, not understanding the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

Jesus proceeded to give them a proof that the dead are not really dead in the sense that the brute beasts are dead, because God in His Plan had made an arrangement for the resurrection of humanity from the death state, whereas He has made no arrangement for the resurrection of the brute beasts. The provision for man's resurrection was that God would provide a Redeemer to satisfy the claims of Divine Justice against Adam and all his race, and who thus would become the Great Deliverer, and, establishing His Messianic Kingdom, would release all mankind from the power of death.

From this standpoint, God's standpoint, no human being is dead in the sense of being extinct like the brute beast. Their awakening will be accomplished by Messiah's Kingdom, and all will then have fullest opportunity of coming to a knowledge of God's character and His will respecting them; and all will be assisted back to harmony with God, if they so desire, that they may thus reach again the perfection of life lost by disobedience. It is in view of this Divine intention, the awakening of the dead, that Jesus spoke of death as a "sleep," a period of rest, of quiet, of unconsciousness.

Jesus' declaration to the Sadducees evidenced all this when He stated that God said to Moses at the burning bush, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." Jesus pointed out that God does not thus speak of Himself as being the God of a being absolutely extinct, destroyed, as brute beasts. The expression therefore signifies, in harmony with all the Scriptures, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and that mankind in general are merely sleeping, waiting for Messiah's Kingdom and the morning of awakening, the morning of a better day, in which righteousness will prevail and in which Messiah will be the Great King.

This same thought respecting the sleep of the dead prevails throughout the Bible. We read, for instance, that "Abraham slept with

his fathers"; "When Stephen, stoned to death, fell asleep" (Acts 7:60); St. Paul declared that the Church "sleep," but that some of its members, alive in the end of the Age, at the second coming of Christ, would not need to "sleep," but instead would "be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (I Cor. 15:52.) Again he mentions all that "sleep in Jesus." Figuratively, both good and bad, are thus asleep in Jesus, because all of God's provision for their awakening is in and through Jesus' work of Redemption and Restitution. – Acts 3:19-21.

We are not to surmise that these sleep in heaven, because both good and bad sleep. For instance, in the statement, "Abraham slept with his fathers," we see two classes – Abraham, the friend of God, and his fathers, heathen men. Besides, Heaven is not a sleeping place, **[R5060 : page 217]** but a place of joyful activity and life. Neither could we imagine mankind as sleeping in a Catholic purgatory, nor in a Protestant hell of eternal torture.

Looking into the Bible for an answer as to where they sleep we hear the inspired words, "They that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." (Dan. 12:2.) Ah, that is it! – "Dust to dust," as God said in the beginning to Father Adam, upon whom the sentence fell and through whom we inherit our share: "Cursed is the earth for thy sake," "thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee wast taken." (Gen. 3:17-19.) Thus God has provided for Adam and his family a redemption from the power of death and a deliverance from the tomb, by the power of the resurrection; and it is Jesus who declared, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." The Church will be the first from humanity to receive eternal life, and they will be granted a share with Jesus in His resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, as His Bride, His Joint-heir under His Headship. Then, as said the Apostle, will come the world of mankind, "every man in his own order."

THEY LAUGHED AT HIM

Jesus put the statement about the maid's being asleep in a forceful way, in order to impress the great lesson that death does not end all,

even though it appears so to do. The awakening which He was about to perform was to be a [R5060 : page 218] lesson and illustration of Divine power, which will be exercised toward the entire race under the Messianic Kingdom. Thus, as He declared, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth." This statement applies not merely to the saintly Church, who will come forth first, sharers in the First Resurrection, and whose trial and testing are already past, and whom Divine approval has already sealed. The promise of coming forth applies also to the remainder of mankind; all except the spirit-begotten will come forth in a secondary or general resurrection, which will include nearly all mankind, not only the civilized, but also the heathen.

The world will come forth, Jesus said, that they may have a resurrection or raising up, up, up to perfection, to all that was lost in Eden, to all that was redeemed at Calvary. The awakening will be but a preparatory step. It will be accomplished instantaneously, but the further raising up, to mental, moral and physical perfection, will be a gradual work for which a thousand years has been apportioned, and in which the individual will be obliged to cooperate for his advancement and instruction in righteousness. This resurrection of mankind in general Jesus styled, "The resurrection by judgment," by disciplines, by trials and testings. Only those who wilfully reject the Lord and His way will die the Second Death, from which there will be no resurrection. Christ died once for all, and, according to the Scriptures, He will not die again.

Let us not forget that our Lord's miracles were merely illustrations of the great work which He will do on a world-wide, gigantic scale by and by – through the power and influence of His Kingdom. He and the Church, as spirit beings, will, of course, be invisible to men, but through earthly Agents the great burden of sickness and sorrow and pain and death will gradually be rolled away, so that by the end of Messiah's reign of a thousand years all the willing and obedient will have attained full human perfection; and the earth, meantime, will have

been made to "blossom as the rose," and, as the Lord's footstool, thenceforth it shall be glorious.

