

THE RISEN CHRIST

– APRIL 23. – 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-28. –

RANSOM AND RESTITUTION TWIN DOCTRINES – JESUS' RESURRECTION ATTESTED BY MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS – TODAY'S STUDY IN IRRECONCILABLE CONFLICT WITH CURRENT THEOLOGY – THE TIME OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE – THE WORK OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM BRIEFLY OUTLINED – SUBJECTION OF EVERY OPPOSING POWER.

"Now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the First-fruits of them that are asleep." – Verse 20. R.V.

TODAY'S Study calls attention to the great importance of the doctrine of the Resurrection, presenting it as the twin of the other great doctrine which the Apostle sets forth "first of all" – "how that Christ DIED FOR OUR SINS according to the Scriptures." To this fundamental doctrine of the Ransom that of the Resurrection stands related as effect to cause.

So important is this doctrine in the estimation of the inspired Apostle that he emphatically declares that, if it be not true, then there is no hope for any one beyond the present life, the preaching of the Gospel is in vain, those who preach it are false witnesses, the faith of Christians is vain and their hope delusive. Moreover, he urges that their life of sacrifice, in view of the resurrection and its rewards, merely robs them of what little enjoyment and advantage they might have in this present life, which is all they would ever have; and that those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished – if Christ be not risen from the dead.

Such indeed would be our sad plight if there be no resurrection. If this, which Christ died to secure, is not guaranteed to us, to be realized in due time, we are yet in our sins and under the death

penalty without one ray of hope. Moreover, if there be no resurrection, although our Lord Jesus Christ died to secure it, then God is not fulfilling His part of the contract.

While verses 12-19 declares the importance of this twin doctrine of the Ransom – the Resurrection – Verses 20-26 emphasize its truthfulness. The resurrection of Christ, attested by many infallible proofs (Verses 5-8; Acts 1:3), is the guarantee that those whom He redeemed by His precious blood shall have not only an awakening from death, but an *opportunity* to attain a complete resurrection to all the blessings and favors lost in the Adamic fall. This is the assurance which God gave to all men that the Ransom for the sins of the whole world given at Calvary was acceptable, a full satisfaction of the claims of Justice against the race of mankind, so that now He can be just, and yet the Justifier of all that believe in Jesus. – Acts 17:31; Romans 3:26. **[R5882 : page 106]**

In Verse 20 let Christians observe what the various creeds of Christendom ignore, and what is in direct antagonism to their teachings; namely, that the risen Christ was "the First-fruits of them that slept" – that our Lord was the first to experience a resurrection in the full sense of the term, the first to experience a resurrection to perfection and everlasting life. True, some before Him were temporarily awakened, again to relapse into death; for example, Lazarus, Jairus' daughter, the son of the widow of Nain, the Shunammite's son, etc. But these were only partial illustrations of resurrection, to assure men of the Divine Power to accomplish it fully in God's due time.

THE SCRIPTURES LOGICAL

Mark the logic of these facts: If Christ was the first to be resurrected from the dead, no one was resurrected before Him; and if, as shown in the preceding verses, those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished, except they be restored to life by a resurrection; and if those who die in Christ "sleep in Jesus" until His Second

Coming, it is plain that none of them went to Heaven when they died. They were dead, they slept in Jesus, they rested in hope; and they must remain so until the time appointed for their resurrection – at the Second Advent of Christ, when "all those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." – 1 Thess. 4:14; John 5:28,29.

"David hath not ascended into the Heavens." Daniel must wait, and he shall stand in his lot "at the end of the days." Abraham must wait his time for the possession of the Promised Land, of which he has never yet owned so much as to set his foot upon. Job must tarry until the wrath of this "evil day" be overpast. St. Paul, and with him all those that love the Lord's appearing, must await the fulness of time when the reward of their faithfulness will be due. – Acts 2:34; Daniel 12:13; Acts 7:5; Job 14:12-15,21; 2 Timothy 4:8.

All this Scripture teaching is in perfect accord. But it is in irreconcilable conflict with the current theology of so-called Christendom, in whose theories, logically considered, there is no place whatever for the doctrine of the resurrection. If a man goes to Heaven when he dies, and is glad "to shuffle off this mortal coil" which some call his prison, although he loves it, cherishes it, and stays in it as long as possible – why in the name of reason should he hope for a reunion with his body? The whole position is illogical, unscriptural, untenable.

Verse 21 antagonizes the current theology with equal force. It declares that since *by man* came death, *by man* – "the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a Ransom for all" – comes also the resurrection of the dead. Current theology says that our redemption is secured by the sacrifice of a God, not a man. But the Scriptures are very explicit in pointing out an exact equivalent, a human substitute for the human head of our race, whose redemption secures that of his posterity, on precisely the same principle that his fall and condemnation entailed sin and death upon them. – 1 Timothy 2:5,6; John 1:14.

ORDER IN THE RESURRECTION

In consequence of the sacrifice of Himself – His flesh, His humanity – our Lord has been highly exalted, even to the Divine nature. It was *after* His resurrection that He said, "All power in Heaven and earth is given unto Me." When "the Man Christ Jesus" gave up His humanity, He gave it up forever. Consequently, when He was raised from the dead, His existence was in a new nature, that the abundant power of the Divine nature given Him might be exercised in actually reclaiming from sin and death those whom He had legally rescued by His own death. – Philippians 2:8-11; Matthew 28:18; John 6:51.

Verses 22,23 show that all who are Christ's – by faith in His sacrifice – are to receive the benefits of His death in full resurrection to the perfection of life forfeited in Eden. The order of resurrection is to be "Christ the First-fruits," which includes Jesus the Head and the Church His Body – "the First Resurrection." (Revelation 20:6.) Then follows the resurrection of all that are Christ's during His presence – Greek *parousia*, presence – not coming. The time of His presence is the entire thousand years of His Reign. During that period "all that are in their graves [good and bad, just and unjust] shall hear His voice and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" – Greek *krisis*, judgment, not condemnation. – John 5:28,29.

The former class enter immediately upon their reward of full resurrection – human perfection; while the latter class awake to a judgment, or trial for life everlasting. This it will be their privilege to attain if they become Christ's by fully submitting themselves to His discipline and control. Otherwise, their trial will be cut short at a hundred years; and they will die the Second Death, from which there is no recovery. – Isaiah 65:20.

No one out of Christ will be made alive, fully resurrected, though all will experience the awakening from death, which is the first step in the resurrection process, and a trial to prove their worthiness or unworthiness of the fulness of resurrection, which is actual perfection and everlasting life. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son *shall not see life*, but the wrath of God *abideth* on him." – 1 John 5:12; John 3:36.

THE WORK OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM

Verses 24,25 assure us of the victory of Christ, and show us in what that victory will consist – the complete subjection of every opposing power and authority, and the putting of all enemies under His feet, whether those enemies be evil conditions, evil principles, evil powers or evil individuals. He will banish all evil conditions by first permitting a great Time of Trouble (Daniel 12:1) and then by causing perfect conditions to supplant them. He will forever banish evil principles by flooding the world with His light and truth and by effectually renewing a right spirit in the hearts of all the willing and obedient. He will completely overcome every opposing power by the exercise of His own Almighty Power for their complete and final overthrow. He will put down every opposing individual by cutting such off in the Second Death, from which there shall be no recovery.

"He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet." The time of that reign is limited to a thousand years. (Revelation 20:6.) At the expiration of that period all in opposition to righteousness, and the Devil who deceived them and led them, are to be cast into the Lake of Fire, which is the Second Death. (Revelation 20:7-15.) "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." This is not the Second Death, into which the opposers of God have been cast; else the language would be contradictory. It is the Adamic death, which Christ came to destroy by liberating all its subjects. To

accomplish this work will require the entire Messianic Reign – a thousand years.

"Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven;
To His feet thy tribute bring;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Evermore His praises sing!"

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