



The Resurrection of the Dead

1 Cor 15:12-23

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In the previous lesson's parable, the Lord took us from life to death to life after death. Today, we look at the nature of the resurrected body.

Scriptural Context

“I am the resurrection and the life.”

“He who believes in Me, though he die, yet he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

Riddle of the Sadducees

The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: “Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. “Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. “Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. “Last of all the woman died also. “Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her.”

Jesus answered and said to them, “You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. “But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching.

Promise of the Resurrection of Christ

Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty, and thus we are found false witnesses of God,

because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up---if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

With what body we will be resurrected

Someone will say, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies.

Paul's letter to the Corinthians is contains precious knowledge about the resurrection. If there is no resurrection, then Christ is not risen. Conversely, if Christ is risen, then there is a resurrection. What is Christ's resurrection? It is a down-payment or a warranty of our resurrection.

Bodily Resurrection

The Bible tells us that our resurrected body will be

1. incorruptible (instead of corruptible),
2. celestial (not terrestrial),
3. powerful (not weak),
4. glorious (not dishonorable),
5. spiritual (not only natural),
6. life-giving (not only living),
7. eternal, and
8. like that of the angels.

The Bible tells us that there will be a *day* of resurrection. It is repeatedly mentioned that the Lord will raise us up. What is the nature of the risen body? Is it like our present earthly nature, with all its physical dependencies? No.

So also is the resurrection of the dead.

The body 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 body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.

And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.

Will our resurrected bodies exactly resemble our earthly bodies? Did the people who met the resurrected Jesus immediately recognize Him? No, our lowly bodies will be transformed into glorious bodies.

He will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Signs of Love. The signs of pain and sacrifice are evident in the resurrected body of the Lord. He let Thomas stick his finger into the holes. In the book of Revelation is mentioned a Lamb looking like it is slaughtered, but He is living! The signs of his suffering remain. Not as a curse but as a sign of love. If someone loves Christ there will be signs of love, that is, sacrifice.

Relation between the Resurrection of the Lord and our resurrection. The Lord's resurrection is the evidence that we will be raised. He says many times he will raise us.

He was buried, and He rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures, and He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

Maybe one or two imagined, but five hundred?

Appearances. According to the Bible, the resurrected Messiah appeared eleven times to different people or groups of people. He appeared to James, Peter, Mary Magdalene, and many others.

Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

Summary

The Lord rose from the dead. He will raise us. He reveals many characteristics of resurrected bodies, spiritual, heavenly, glorious, and angelic.

The belief in the resurrection, if it is before me at all times, will enliven my life.

God is perfect in his justice. When we do something good (or bad), we do it with our spirit and our body. Therefore, the rewards will be for both our spirit and our body.

"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done

good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”

Q & A

Q: Will we know each other?

A: Yes, we will know each other very well. In his wonderful book, “Release of the Spirit,” Pope Shenouda says we will know St. Paul and many different saints and hear about their lives with the Lord and how the Lord led their lives to Heaven.

Q: Will we recognize each other?

A: Yes, we will look similar, in a refreshed young body.

Q: Will we be sexual?

A: No, we will have no bodily functions, neither of sexual reproduction, nor of hunger and eating, nor of bodily wastes of egesting and excreting, etc.

Q: What will we desire? What will be our focus?

A: Our focus will be changed. Our nature will be changed. We will have no need for the things of the world; we will not tire, we will not be hot or cold, as there will be no weather.

Q: What do the Bible or the Church say about cremation?

A: The Bible respects the body. Elisha raised a dead body. This is why we keep the relics of the faithful of God. We take a blessing from them. These are the bodies that carried the souls that sacrificed themselves for the sake of Christ. The body is the temple of the Lord and the Holy Spirit dwells in you.

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”

That is why the Body of the Lord was buried and not cremated. The body should be put in wraps, and we pray. We see that cremation is against this. Many miracles happen at the bodies of the saints.

Q: What about organ donation?

A: Organ donation is not a humiliation of the body; it is a sacrifice for others, for their healing. This is the foundation of love.

Exercises

Exercise 1. Find the Biblical references to all the appearances of Jesus after His resurrection prior to His ascension.

Exercise 2. Find the Biblical references to all the scriptures quoted in this presentation.