

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord Will Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

No. 135

May 2023

The Resurrection - Part 2

Introduction

Christians believe the resurrection is a proven historical fact, which begs the question, “What is a historical fact?” Some time ago I drew a black line on a whiteboard and asked, “What colour is that line?” The automatic answer was “Black”. I then asked them to prove that the line was black and not yellow, green, or tangerine. They repeated that it was black so I asked a second question, “Is it black because you were told that is what it is and accepted that by faith, even though no one could prove it to you?” This is how many consider the resurrection of the Lord or indeed of the fact of resurrection. They accept it by faith, but cannot prove it. The argument that the resurrection never happened began the day the Lord rose (Matt. 28:13). In the church at Corinth there were some who denied the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:12). They who denied the resurrection had in their way of thinking two insurmountable problems:

- a) How are the dead raised? (1 Cor. 15:35)
- b) With what body will they come? (1 Cor. 15:35)

The Apostle Paul does not argue from faith

We accept data by faith because our teachers taught us such in such. Paul will argue the truth of resurrection from the scriptures (1 Cor. 15:4); the testimony of others (1 Cor. 15:5-7); his own experience (1 Cor. 15:8); horticulture (1 Cor. 15:36-37); distinctions of the flesh according to their own environment and activity (1 Cor. 15:39); and astronomy (1 Cor. 15:40-41). He will give the evidence for his belief from:

- a) The truth of the scriptures (1 Cor. 15:4).
- b) By those who were the most ardent in their scepticism (1 Cor. 15:5, 7, 8).
- c) By over 500, many of whom were still alive and consequently, their witness could be questioned (1 Cor. 15:6).
- d) His own experience (1 Cor. 15:8).
- e) Even the unsaved believe in the resurrection otherwise why would they get baptized for the dead (1 Cor. 15:29)?
- f) From creation (1 Cor. 15:36-37).

To question the fact of resurrection is to cast doubt on the fidelity of the word of God, therefore His attributes of truthfulness and ability. It is exceedingly serious to call or even intimate the God of truth (Deut. 32:4, Psa. 31:5, Isa. 65:16) is a liar and on the same spiritual level as Satan (Jn. 8:44). Who are we with our limited knowledge and understanding determine what God can do and decide His limitations? Can He not do as He pleases, can He not exercise His power as He pleases? If so, then who am I to question His power to raise from the dead, to question His method of fulfilling His purposes? The question Paul asked King Agrippa stands like a bulwark against the power of the ocean's waves, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” (Acts 26:8).

The apostle Paul argues very evidentially that if there is no resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15:13) then Christ has not risen, and the fallout from that is our preaching is vain, of no value (1 Cor. 15:14), we are spiritual con men.

- a) Your faith in vain, of no consequence (1 Cor. 15:14).
- b) You are still in your sins (1 Cor. 15:17).
- c) Despite all your beliefs those who have died have perished (1 Cor. 15:18).
- d) If hope in Christ is only for this life we are to be pitied (most miserable) (1 Cor. 15:19).
- e) There is a denial of the logic that if the sentence of death was cast over all men by one man so the fact of the resurrection of all men can only come by one man who can break death's power (1 Cor. 15:22).
- f) There is a bringing to nought all the purposes of God (1 Cor. 15:23-28).

[Why is a man so afraid of the resurrection?](#)

Perhaps, to a great extent, he is not prepared to meet God. Deep down in his heart he knows who God is, and irrespective of what man professes and lives like, he knows there is accountability. Man knows death is not the end of this journey. It is simply the door to another realm of a timeless eternity and the consequences of how this life was lived. If there was no resurrection then man would have nothing to be concerned about, but the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the assurance that all individuals everywhere will rise again and man does not like that truth (Acts 17:31). I have yet to hear anyone deny any or all of the first seven recorded resurrections of the Scriptures:

- a) The widow's son in Zarephath (1 Kgs. 17:17–22).
- b) The Shunammite's son (2 Kgs. 4:18–37).
- c) One of a dead man touching another dead man and raising the man who was thrown into Elisha's grave (2 Kgs. 13:20).
- d) Jairus' daughter (Mk. 5:41).
- e) The young man at Nain (Lk. 7:14).
- f) Lazarus (Jn. 11:38–44).
- g) Tabitha/Dorcas (Acts 9:36–42).
- h) Eutychus (Acts 20:7–12).

[The truthfulness of God demands that Christ rose from the dead](#)

The scripture informs us that God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), but if we are to believe in the resurrection based on the scriptures, then what is the evidence He speaks the truth? To answer this all one needs to do is to read the prophecies of the Old Testament and make the observation of two truths:

- a) God means what He says and says what He means.
- b) Every prophecy was a pledge of that which would happen.
- c) The fact is God does not need to lie because He knows everything about everyone in every country, clime and culture before they ever start to function. For instance:
 - i) It is recorded in Genesis 15:13 that God told Abraham that his family would go down into Egypt and be afflicted for 400 years and after that He would bring them out with great substance. No matter how things looked God did not lie!
 - ii) In Daniel 2:39 God revealed to Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom would not last forever and another world power would arise after him but inferior to his. Afterwards, another still yet inferior kingdom would be the main world power and then a third which would be even more inferior and then a fourth. This fourth one, Rome, would be unlike the others which in time would be split. It did not matter what Nebuchadnezzar desired God did not lie.

[The resurrection was believed in the Old Testament](#)

Before the Lord ever rose from the dead and very probably before Elijah or Elisha were even born, Job was confident of His resurrection from the dead. This is evident when he said, "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:26).

King David died approximately in the year 970 B. C. yet he did not doubt his resurrection. In Psalm 16:9 he wrote the foundation of v10. "My flesh also shall rest in hope FOR Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore". David is speaking of his death and due to the assurance of a glorious life after death his heart was glad and his glory rejoiced. What a magnificent truth (Psa. 16:9-10).

Isaiah, the prophet who saw the Lord high and lifted up (Isa. 6:1), wrote of God's perfect servant some 800 years before the Lord came to earth and went to Calvary. Isaiah 53:10–11 describes His death and resurrection as part of the will and

purpose of God. “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him”, the word “pleased” is better translated in verses 5 and 10 as it was the purpose of God to bruise Him. That bruising (vv 5, 10), wounding (v 5), and chastisement (v 5) was in the three hours of darkness when the Lord was made an offering for sin (v 10). He was buried, and burial confirms death. Isaiah prophesied Messiah would die, but He would rise again for He would “see his seed (offspring); His days would be prolonged and; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand” (Isa. 53:10b). How can He “see” His offspring if He is executed unless He is resurrected? However, this is meaningless jargon if Jesus did not rise. Furthermore, the promise of God to Abraham and David would fail if Messiah did not rise, (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12–13). His resurrection becomes vital to fulfilling God’s promises. The decision the individual must make is:

- a) Is God true to His word and raise the Lord or did He tell a lie or was unable to fulfil His promise?
- b) Were the promises to Abraham and David just to give them hope but in reality, had no possibility of fulfilment?

It all depends on whether I believe the Lord rose from the dead or did His body decompose and return to dust? That is the decision the individual must make.

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