

Thursday Evening Bible Class

16th July 2020

Continuing on the Theme of the Study of the End Times

Introduction to the Subject of ...THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

The scriptures are not silent on the resurrection of the dead, and this subject is core to the hope of Israel, and distinguishes the Truth preached, from many who believe in the apostasy of going off up to heaven after death. Belief in the resurrection is not talked about by main- stream churches, and why should it be, what is the point of being resurrected on earth, if your soul has already found peace and quiet on a cloud somewhere? Thus the vast majority of so called Christians regard talk of resurrection as alien, and strange.

Paul preached the Resurrection

Indeed, Paul the Apostle was accused of being a babbler. Acts 17:18: *...And some said, What will this babbler say? ... He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.* They asked him *May we know what this new doctrine, of which you speak is?* You are telling us strange things and we want to know what they mean! In contrast to this fluffy foolish vanity inherited from ancient pagan Greeks and Egyptians, Paul preached the truth of the Gospel: 31,32 *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.* That the resurrection of Jesus Christ is so central to the Gospel, can be seen again in the way Paul used it in his defence before the Jews, and Felix the Governor in Herod's judgement hall in Caesarea. Acts 24:14-15 *But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the*

God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. Quite clearly the Apostle Paul, chosen by God to be a vessel unto the Gentiles, states that the fundamental teaching of the resurrection of the dead is based in the law and prophets, that the Jews themselves allow this (that is they also hold to this teaching -although the Sadducees did not) and that those resurrected will include two classes of people the just and unjust. Paul stated before all, that it was on this principle that he had been arrested and accused, *21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.* It was because of the Sadducees who were so angry that he was preaching the resurrection (see chapter 23: 6-8 for context) that he had been forced to defend himself and the Gospel. What an opportunity!

The Resurrection not a Strange doctrine

So it is obvious that the teaching of the resurrection was not such a strange and alien teaching. The majority of Jews believed in it. And well they might. That generation had witnessed it themselves. In John 11 the gospel record narrates the wonderful miracle Jesus performed in front of many, in the resurrection of Lazarus. As a result of this we read: *John 11:45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.* These things were not done in a corner. They saw the power of God invested in Jesus, and saw what he spoke was true. This was impressed upon many when after our Lord was crucified, when *Matthew 27: 52 the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.* (A

similar effect on general populations in the latter day when people they knew who had died, having come back to live and rejected at the judgement seat, will act as a warning to many.) This would have had a thrilling effect upon those who believed and yet had doubts though their weakness. They saw this as cast-iron proof, that if these people who they once knew were alive again, then surely the resurrection of Jesus Christ was not only possible but probable. They would be reminded of the time when the dead man in 2 Kings 13:21 who was being buried touched the bones of Elisha, was revived and stood again. They would have stopped, and considered, and wondered. Remembering how Jesus had said John 11:25, *I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.* In time, as the events of Jesus crucifixion and resurrection would have settled in their minds, this teaching would have become clear, and established the Gospel in those who did believe.

Taught in Law and Prophets

They believed, because all that Jesus said and taught was in the law and prophets, as Paul himself had proclaimed. For instance we are reminded by the Apostle of the example of faithful Abraham: Hebrews 11:19 *Accounting that God was able to raise him [Isaac] up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.* Yes, Abraham believed God, and that was why it was accounted to him for righteousness, for he was persuaded that what God had promised He was fully able to perform, that through this son, he would inherit the land for ever, that through this son would come a Great Seed, through whom would all nations of the earth be blessed. But how could that happen if this son be killed. Abraham believed God could raise him up again. Exactly the same as he believed that he himself would be raised to life again to inherit what God had

promised for ever. So too, with Isaac and Jacob who were promised the same possessions for ever, even though they knew they were mortal men, Joseph gave commandment concerning his bones, that he would be identified with the land of promise, and the next thing would be him standing again in the same land of promise. These all says the writer to the Hebrews having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, but died in faith *that they might obtain a better resurrection*: (verse 35) It thus follows without question that all of them, from Abel, through to Noah, to Samuel, David, all the faithful believed in the resurrection to want a BETTER resurrection. They believed and understood in the raising of the dead, the giving to life again to their own dead bodies, which would have long mouldered away to dust. Take for another example Jesus' comments to those who refused to believe in the resurrection of the dead in Luke 20: 37 -38: *Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.*

The symbol of the bush burning with fire yet not being consumed, was a sign of that which naturally is corruptible, a bush whose leaves fall off, and the plant withers and dies eventually, this plant which naturally would die, being engulfed in flames, yet not showing any sign of death, but radiating light and glory to an amazed Moses. Here God pronounced his glorious purpose and how he would be manifest, and proclaimed himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jesus shows the connection, that all who die in faith, naturally corruptible, but are part of the tree of life, the nation of God, people God is happy to associate His name with, will live again, to radiate His glory, and His Will, His Light, for example Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God is not the God of the dead but the living. But these all

died in faith. In what sense are they living? Paul to the Romans 4:17 explains: *...even God, who quickens [makes alive] the dead, and calls those things which be not as though they were.* That is, what God has promised He is fully able to perform. He has said. It is so certain, it is done. The promise cannot be broken. God has sworn by Himself. He cannot lie. Thus, those who die in faith are physically dead. Corpses disappeared. Bones even disintegrate. But their image and character, their personality has been sealed. Stamped and impressed for ever in God's mind. A day is but a thousand years to God. And they live to Him. But this is of course not the only way they are alive. Far from it. They will live again. This is plain from the law and prophets.

Example of David

David, a man after God's own heart, was promised Sure Mercies. That he believed God is plain. God promised him 2 Samuel 7:16 *And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.* David was informed he would see this, it would be before him, in front of him he would witness it. But David went the way of all men, not receiving the promises, and as Peter the Apostle points out in Acts 2: 34: *For David is not ascended into the heavens: (as of course no man has ascended into heaven) but (29) that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.* (Indeed it is.) Peter goes on to say however of the faith of David how he plainly believed in the resurrection: 30 -32 *Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell,[in the grave]neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.* That David believed that His Greater Son would be resurrected is plain to

see, but he firmly believed in his own resurrection, as he penned the Messianic Psalm, Peter refers to: Psalm 16: 8 -10 *I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.* In the very next Psalm 17:15 *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.*

Job another of the faithful, whose patience is quoted by the Apostle James, had this to say: 19:25-27 *For I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another;*

We can see that as Paul pointed out to Felix and the Jews, that the belief in the resurrection was long established, and a pillar of the Gospel, found taught in the law and prophets. Paul argues with devastating logic in 1 Corinthians 15 of the truth of the resurrection: 16-18: *For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.* In the same chapter Paul teaches: 1 Corinthians 15: 22 *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.*

When?

This last passage is of interest to us. Just as Job said in chapter 19 we mentioned earlier: *For I know that my redeemer lives, and that he*

shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, so here also the Apostle hints at when this resurrection should take place. Job says at the latter days, his redeemer will stand, and then he will in his flesh see God. Thus he believed that the Redeemer returning would happen before he would be resurrected. So here the Apostle says the same thing. Christ Jesus was resurrected first, and thus is described as the first fruits, and afterwards they that are Christ's at His Coming. That is those who belong to the Lord Jesus will be resurrected at His Coming, when he returns again to the earth. Paul describes this also to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1 *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick [living] and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;**(we will return to this passage later)* Again the same Apostle writes: 1 Thessalonians 4:16: *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:* Again, Jesus will return – on high alert – to commence the next phase of the Will of His Father in subduing the Kingdoms of men, but first he will carry out a great miracle in bringing about the resurrection of the dead.

Witness of Daniel

Daniel the prophet was shown this in detail, this order of events, so that we can establish when this great resurrection will take place. We read this in chapter 12:1 *And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.* Before we continue, the question immediately that jumps out at the reader, when we read and at that time shall Michael stand up.... Is What time?

Context...

So quickly turning back to the previous chapter we get the context: Reading from verse 40 to the end of the chapter, we see several great traumatic events are detailed. The King of the North – the great northern alliance hostile will invade the glorious land, that is the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the land where the Kingdom is supposed to be established. This same power will overspread neighbouring countries with its great military and political power, and accumulated wealth, north Africa will be in submission, however this power of the North, known as Gog will be diverted, and so will establish his headquarters in Jerusalem – in God's eyes the site of the glorious Holy Mountain. But this alliance will be broken. Ezekiel 38 also provides a parallel prophetic commentary of this invasion of the power of the northern alliance seeking to expand territory, and control of the Middle East, Israel and its people one of the targets. Daniel chapter 2 describes this as the standing up of the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar the prophet. But then a little stone power smashes this alliance, and destroys it. Thus the context supplies what is the time for the appearance of Michael. Michael meaning Who is like God, Jesus Christ the manifestation of His Father, will stand up. He will appear and assume control. Daniel is told that *thy people will be delivered – all who have been written in the book*. These people are then described: 2-4: *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. 4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.* The

time of resurrection is thus described as the Time of the end. The time of the end of the Gentiles.

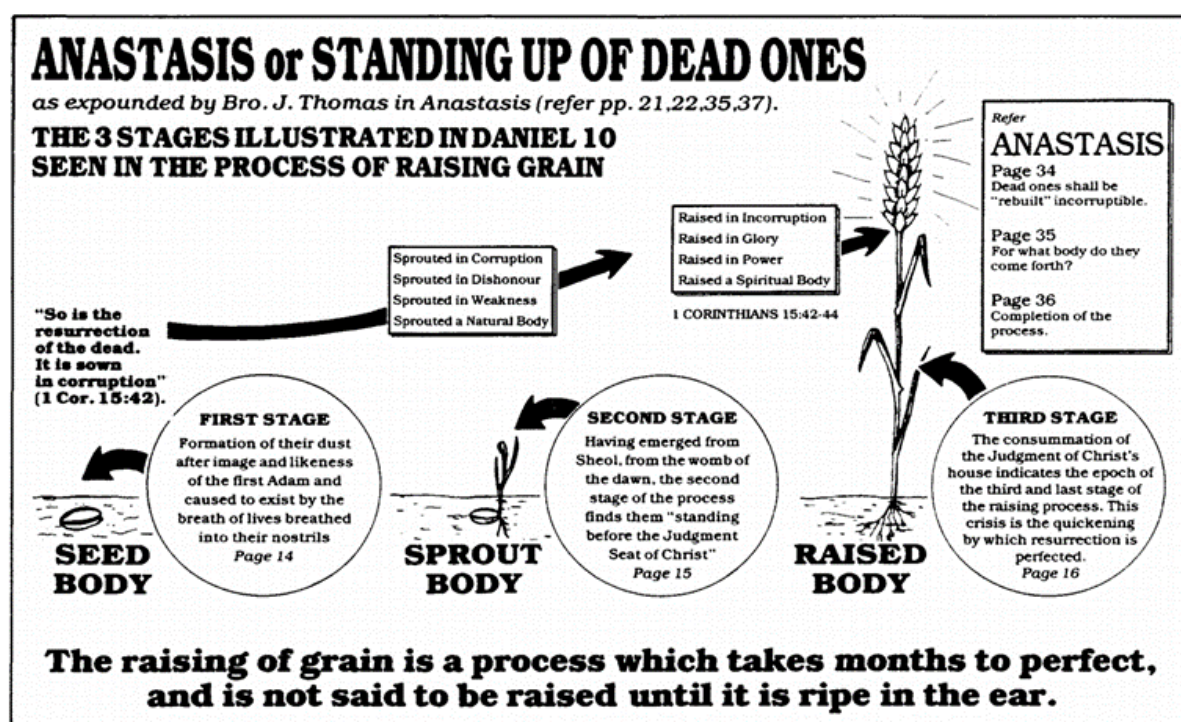
Resurrectional Era

It will be around the time of the invasion of the Northern confederacy into the Holy Land. Ezekiel 37 and 38 reveal that the invasion of the land of Israel by Gog takes place after the resurrection of Israel as a people. Chapter 37 gives a graphic vision of a valley of dry bones which are by stages gradually revitalised to no longer be a pile of skeletons but an exceeding mighty army. The nation of Israel has been resurrected. It was a dispersed people with no central identity, or homeland, no laws or sovereign governance, even its language was dead. Millions were dying in ghettos and ovens across Europe. The Jew was unloved, uncared for and unwanted, dead to the world. But stage by stage, bone has been brought to bone, sinews, muscles, the nation has come back to life and rise from the dead. A national resurrection. A new nation. Set to be destroyed by the alliance of the enemies of God. At that time Michael will stand up, and the resurrection era will continue.

A temporary death

Those who sleep in the dust of the ground, will awake. It is interesting the word sleep is used here in Daniel 12. Because when we fall asleep, and wake up again, we are the same as we were before, only refreshed. We are not a different form or in a different state, but same as before. This is an important point, as some assume when the righteous are raised they are given immortality as they come out of the grave. But this is not the case as we shall see. Sleep also gives the idea of a temporary death. We note how Jesus knowing that Lazarus was dead, said that Lazarus was sleeping, (John 11:11) *Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go, that I may awake him out*

of sleep. much to the jeers of onlookers. His death was temporary – just as the Psalmist used the expression: 13:3: *Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;* (see also 1 Corinthians 15:6) It is death in every sense of the word, but by using the word sleeping the writers, and Jesus convey the power of the Holy Spirit, that will awake the dead, as if they have just been asleep, to arise out of their graves, just exist again, just as they were before, out of the dust of the earth – just as all men are made of the dust of the earth. Thus the resurrected will be made of the same substance as they were before. Out of the dust. Even if the atoms and molecules which constituted that person have long gone, the power of the Holy Spirit, is to recall that person back into existence – as they were. In body and in mind – and importantly as in character. From the location of their resurrection they will be transported to the location of the judgement. They may be resurrected in the place of judgement. They may be resurrected in the place of their death. The latter seems more likely, as enough hints are given, but scripture is not specific on this minor point. However, Paul does make clear in



1 Corinthians 15: 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. *It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:* Brother Thomas refers to this and reference might be made at this juncture to the diagram above.

The dead person awaiting the resurrection is like the grain of seed in the ground. Not literally of course, but the packet of information is stored in the vault of God's mind. At the resurrection the seed sprouts, and shoots up, and has life. The same characteristic as the plant it came from. However it is still vulnerable, 'corrupt' as Paul describes, because its next phase is to be tested to see if it a useful plant, with fruit to come. That stage is the judgement seat of Christ. At this point there will be a tiny handful of people who are still living who will join them at the judgement. See 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 already mentioned:*and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught away suddenly together with them in clouds...* Daniel in the passage we referred to earlier shows that there are two stages of people who will be resurrected. Some to life. Some to death. Paul to Felix explained there will be the resurrection of the just and the unjust.

Is Everyone Resurrected?

Some people believe that all people that have ever lived will be resurrected. The scriptures do not allow for this. Without knowledge there is no responsibility. As described by the Psalmist: Psalm 49:12 *Nevertheless man being in honour abides not: he is like the beasts that perish.* There is no talk of animals rising from the dead in scripture. Likewise in Proverbs 21:16: *The man that wanders out of the way of understanding (ie lacking knowledge) shall remain in the congregation of the dead.* Another useful passage is Isaiah 26: 13 - 14: *O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. They are*

dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. Lastly in our well used passage in Daniel 12:2 *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* Note Many and not all!! It is knowledge that brings responsibility to an individual, and on that they will be judged.

Raised to Everlasting Life

Returning to the two classes of people who will be raised, there will be those raised to everlasting life. Everlasting is the word *olahm*, for the hidden period. This is for the whole of the millennium and beyond. To become as the Elohim. Immortal. Deathless. This is the BETTER resurrection spoken of in Hebrews 11, that so many of the faithful were prepared to make sacrifices for. From the feeble sprout body (shown in diagram) the natural bodies are changed. They are infused with the Holy Spirit. It is given to them without measure – just as Jesus was after his resurrection. It will change them into spirit beings. Able to pass through walls, as Jesus did, able to disappear and reappear, to be at a different place in a instant. The individual has attempted in his life to align his mind with God. He will be given the reward. He will be aligned fully without distraction. God's will and his will become one. He becomes a Mighty One. An Elohim Higher than the angels. This is being raised. This the elevation to the Heavenlies for ever. This is the change to Divine nature. This because the individual has attempted to live his life as a citizen of the Heavenly State. He has given his life to that Cause. Paul writes of this in Philippians 3: 20 -21: *For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able*

even to subdue all things unto himself. Our body now is not vile. It is made in the image of God. The text should read the *body of humiliation* because we are corrupt, because of sin. Sin is the cause of death. Death triumphs and is successful because of sin. However, Mercy rejoices over Judgement, and Righteousness is successful in life. Thus, Righteousness is the cause of Life. The faithful individual has chosen the righteousness of Christ. For His sake our sins are blotted out, and counted for nothing, and instead our faith is accounted for righteousness. It is then why the faithful sleep, and are raised, why the Lord Jesus has led captivity captive - for them.

Raised to Shame and Everlasting Contempt.

Daniel also was shown how some too would be raised to resurrection but would not be rewarded with a new spirit body. Instead they would be judged and shown to be still in their sins. They will be raised that sprout body in that corrupt natural state they had before. They will be re-energised. They will walk about, and the dust of daylight will jolt them back to their last memory - their deathbed, when they died with a guilty conscience. It was too late then, and will be too late now, as they make their way to the judgement. They will not be treated cruelly. They will not go to hell like the apostates claim. No, instead their reputation, and wastefulness, their disregard and lack of respect to the Truth and Power of God, their lack of honour to the Mercy and Forgiveness of God will never be forgotten. It is this way that their worm will not die or their fire be quenched (Mark 9:44-46) it is in this way that their contempt will be everlasting. (Daniel 2:2)

Of what class will we be?

It is true we know the terror of the Lord. We return to what the Apostle Paul had to say: 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: *For we must all*

appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; The day of opportunity is now to determine of which class we as individuals will be. It is too easy to be compascent and deceive ourselves. John 7: 22 -23 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Again, this graphic image is reinforced in Luke 13:26-28 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

Brother Terry