

## **I. EVENTS AT THE PAROUSIA: THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY**

### **A. The first great event at the Second Coming will be the resurrection of the dead.**

- 1. This will be one event which shall happen on the same day as the Parousia (John 5:25-29).**
  - a. Revelation 20 does not teach otherwise. The "first resurrection" of v. 5 is not a bodily resurrection but is the reigning of the soul of believers in heaven in the intermediate state.
  - b. On that day "all that are in the graves shall hear [Christ's] voice" (John 5:28), whether believer or unbeliever, whether from the OT or NT, wherever they are.
  - c. Rev. 20:13 teaches that God will find and resurrect all men from every location (the sea, etc).
- 2. The resurrection of the wicked will be a resurrection of damnation (John 5:29)**
  - a. It will not be a blessing for the wicked to be raised bodily from the grave. It will be for the purpose of judging and punishing them for the sins performed in the body
  - b. The body with which the wicked will be raised will be the same body without glory or beauty. The bodies of the wicked will be fitted for hell, undying death, unending shame (Dan. 12:2).
- 3. The resurrection of God's children will be a resurrection of life (John 5:29)**
  - a. The resurrection of the body is necessary because we are the members of Jesus Christ and since He is the "firstfruits of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:20) our bodies must follow His as the final harvest. Paul makes it clear that, if there is no resurrection of the body, then Christ is not raised.
  - b. The resurrection is necessary because our bodies, in their present condition, are not fit for life in heaven. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (v. 50). This does not mean that human nature itself cannot enter heaven but that the human nature must be glorified before it can enter heaven. Indeed, the Ascension of Christ is proof that the human nature has entered heaven.

### **B. About our bodily resurrection the Bible tells us two things: it will be the *same* body, but *glorified*.**

- 1. Christ will not make us a brand new body when He raises us from the dead on the Last Day.**
  - a. If He did, He would not save *us*. Our body (and soul) identifies who we are.
  - b. The Bible is very clear about this (Job 19:25-27 ["this body" "my flesh," "mine eyes shall behold and not another"]; Ps. 16:9-10 ["my flesh shall rest in hope"]; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2; Luke 20:37; John 11:24; Rom. 8:11; I Cor. 15:23; Phil. 3:21).
  - c. This is necessary for the sake of justice: the one who fought the good fight must be the same one who is crowned with righteousness; the one who sinned must be the same one who is punished.
- 2. But the body which we receive from Christ on the Last Day will be changed and glorified.**
  - a. The body we have today is four things according to I Corinthians 15:42-45: corrupt (corruptible), dishonourable (shameful), weak, and natural (pertaining to this world). That body is called "vile" in Phil. 3:21 (a better translation would be "the body of our humiliation").
  - b. Our humanity is under the power of sin; and even the human nature of Adam was not fit for life in heaven ("of the earth, earthy" must "bear the image of the heavenly" (I Cor. 15:49).
  - c. This glorious transformation of our body (as well as our soul) was purchased on the cross for we were redeemed body and soul from sin (I Cor. 6:20).
- 3. This means that the body which we shall have in the eternal state will be *essentially the same* body but *glorified*, transformed and fit for life in the new heavens and the new earth.**
  - a. Paul likens this transformation to a seed. A seed is in principle everything the tree shall be but the fully grown tree is much more glorious than the seed planted into the ground.
  - b. The resurrection body will put on incorruption, glory, power and spirituality. We must be careful not to confuse spiritual with immaterial or non-physical. The resurrection body will be entirely filled with and governed by the Spirit of God without the hindrances of sin.
  - c. Therefore everything glorious about your body shall remain and all imperfections shall be removed and our body will be truly human but glorious like Christ's (Phil. 3:21).

## **II. EVENTS AT THE PAROUSIA: THE FINAL JUDGMENT**

### **A. The Final Judgment will be one public event at which Christ will judge all men and angels.**

1. **The Judge will be Christ Himself (Matt. 25:31; John 5:22; Rom. 14:10-12; II Cor. 5:10).**
    - a. The judgment will not be like a human judgment with the hearing of testimonies, the weighing of evidence, the determination of guilt or innocence. That has already been decided.
    - b. Men and angels will not appear before the Judgment to hear for the first time *whether* they are to be justified or condemned. The consciences of all men already testify of God's judgment. Besides this, the dead will already be judged immediately after death (a preliminary judgment) and will already be in heaven or hell in the intermediate state (Heb. 9:27; Rev. 20:13).
    - c. The Judgment will be for the purpose of the *theodicy* (the justification or vindication of God). Justice will be done and *justice will be seen to be done*. All sins will be exposed and condemned.
  2. **The Judgment will include believers. Many deny this because they think it is an uncomfortable thought that believers will appear in the Judgment (see Heid. Cat Q&A 52; BC Art. 37).**
    - a. The Bible is clear that believers will appear in the Judgment: Matt. 25:34; II Cor. 5:10.
    - b. But believers will not appear in the Judgment to be condemned or even to be shamed. The sins of believers will be exposed on that Day in order to magnify the grace of God in covering them. On that Day we shall know with greatest clarity that our salvation is by grace alone (Rom. 8:33).
    - c. Believers will be vindicated, acquitted and rewarded; we will take part in judgment (I Cor. 6:3).
- B. **The outcome of the Judgment will be everlasting life for the righteous and eternal punishment in hell for the wicked. We finish by looking briefly at the subject of everlasting punishment.**
1. **The eternal state of the wicked is hell or the lake of fire. Strictly speaking, the "hell" of the intermediate state ("Hades") and the "hell" of the eternal state are not the same.**
    - a. The "hell" of the intermediate state is punishment for wicked souls until the resurrection.
    - b. The hell of the lake of fire is a place of everlasting torment of soul *and* body. Hell is the place where God's wrath is revealed as a consuming fire, a place of undying death, the "second death."
    - c. The awfulness of hell is expressed in the imagery in Scripture: fire, worms, darkness, pit, etc.
  2. **Everlasting punishment, although dreadful, is perfectly just.**
    - a. The severity of punishment is not determined by the length of time that sinners sinned, but by the gravity of the crime and by the fact that it is a crime against the infinite majesty of God.
    - b. At the same time there will be degrees of punishment in hell: all will be punished everlastingly but some will be beaten with fewer stripes or less severity perhaps than others (Luke 12:45-48).
    - c. The punishment of hell will last as long as God has being, that is, forever (Isa. 66:24; Dan. 12:2; Matt 25:41, 46; Mark 9:44-48; II Thess. 1:9; Jude 7; Rev. 14:9-11, 19:3; 20:10).
  3. **Let us look at some of the arguments offered by some *against* the doctrine of hell.**
    - a. Annihilationism: God destroys the wicked so that they no longer exist (Matt. 10:28; II Thess. 1:9). But to "destroy" does not mean to cause to cease to exist; it means to ruin, to render useless, to render inoperative. It makes no sense to have everlasting fire and smoke rising from the fire if no one is burning in the fire. And notice it says "*their* worm" and "*their* torment," etc.
    - b. Everlasting punishment in Matthew 25:46 means "everlasting cutting off." This is a favourite argument of the JW's cult. It proves nothing because the cutting off is not annihilation. Also the everlasting punishment is as long as the eternal life (the Greek word is the same).
    - c. Conditional immortality: God will sentence the wicked to a certain time in hell but they will be either released into heaven or annihilated. There is no proof of this in Scripture (Luke 16:26)
    - d. Emotional argument: God would not do that! Emotional arguments cannot overthrow Scripture. Our attitude to hell must be thanksgiving that Christ suffered the pains of hell in our place.
    - e. Only the righteous have eternal life: this is true but everlasting existence under God's wrath is not life. It is the second death (Rev. 20:14). Life is fellowship with God (John 17:3).
  4. **After the judgment God renews the universe in the new heavens and the new earth.**
    - a. The world will not be annihilated and recreated but it will be renewed, rejuvenated and purged from all wickedness (II Peter 3:10-13).
    - b. The new heavens and the new earth will be the eternal home of God's people. And that will be the subject of our next, and final, lesson.