

Our resurrection.

What does the Bible teach about our resurrection?

Rom 6:4 - 11 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, ⁶knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; ⁷for he who has died is freed from sin. ⁸Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. ¹⁰For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

That means, not only my soul will be taken immediately after this life to Christ, its head, but even my very flesh, raised by the power of Christ, will be reunited with my soul and made like Christ's glorious body.

Luk 23:42, 43 And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" ⁴³And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

Php 1:21 - 24 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²²But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. ²³But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; ²⁴yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.

Php 3:20, 21 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

1Co 15:12 - 24 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? ¹³But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁴and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.

¹⁵Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁷and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.

¹⁸Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

¹⁹If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. ²⁰But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. ²¹For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. ²²For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. ²³But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, ²⁴then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

1Co 15:42 -46 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; ⁴³it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual.

1Jn 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

Although a very glorious matter, our resurrection is the epitome of God's grace, having first been announced in the Garden when the promise of restitution was made to our First Parents as they left the presence of God.

Glorious but by no means simple. It promises the end of the journey of mankind that started when God wrote the names of the elect in the book of life. Even before creation the salvation plan was put in place with the objective of taking up the elect into the presence of the Father having been justified, regenerated and sanctified.

It started with Adam and Eve as sinless creatures, following through the fall and all the trials and tribulations that followed; the law, the tutor of the church while it was embedded within the nation of Israel; at the right time the church came of age and was scattered among all nations when its Head, Jesus Christ, just as was planned before creation, justified and regenerated the church, and sent the Holy Spirit to orchestrate the application of these merits through faith, waiting for the return of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

The many facets of our resurrection can be divided into nine questions:

- I. Is the soul immortal?
- II. Where and in what state does the soul remain after separation from the body?
- III. What is the resurrection and what are the errors that are normally related to it?
- IV. From what does it appear that there will certainly be a future resurrection?
- V. What kind of bodies shall rise in the resurrection?
- VI. How will the resurrection be effected?
- VII. When will the resurrection take place?
- VIII. By whose power, or through whom, will the dead be raised?
- IX. For what purpose, and to what state, will the dead be raised?

I. IS THE SOUL IMMORTAL?

While this point deals with our resurrection, it may be asked what the immortality of the soul has anything to do with it.

The immortality of the soul is pertinent since the resurrection presupposes death and the state of the soul would determine whether there would be a reunification with the body.

We need to find out whether the soul dies, and rises up again as the body will. Our study of this question will be helpful to understand many passages of Scripture that seem to speak of the soul of man as though it were mortal.

We will also be able to refute the errors of those who deny the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body. There are those who believe that the resurrection of believers already took place and that the resurrection to come would be merely spiritual. Furthermore, we will address the arguments of those who believe that the soul lies dormant until the future resurrection when it will be united with the body.

Paul III, Pope of Rome, on his death bed said: *'now I would find out the truth of three questions, concerning which I had doubts during the whole of my life: whether the soul is immortal, whether there is a hell, and whether there is a God.'*

In a somewhat similar character we read in Psalm 115:17: "It is not the dead who praise the LORD, those who go down to silence" and in the writings of Solomon, in Ecclesiastes 3:19: "Man's fate is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath; man has no advantage over the animal. Everything is meaningless. All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return."

It is then necessary that we study this question thoroughly.

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is clearly established in Scripture:

Ps 49:17, 18 "For he will take nothing with him when he dies, his splendor will not descend with him. Though while he lived he counted himself blessed..."

Matt 10:28 "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul."

Mark 12:26, 27 "Now about the dead rising--have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Christ told the thief on the cross "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43) Although the thief could not be with Christ in paradise in his body, because that was dead and buried, his soul was brought into paradise, and hence the soul must live after death.

Paul said in his letter to the Philippians (1:23)

"I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far..."

He spoke of the rest and joy he would have with Christ after death. How can there be joy in the unconsciousness that death brings? Those who imagine that the soul sleeps after death, and so deny its immortality, are refuted by this passage of Scripture:

Luke 23:46 "Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

Acts 7:59 "While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

John 11:25 "Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. ""

"We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord." (2Cor 5:8)

From this we know that the soul does not sleep after death but enjoys immortal life and heavenly glory with the Lord. The souls of the martyrs are said to cry under the altar with a loud voice saying:

"How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" (Rev 6:10) Hence, they must be alive.

In Luke 16:22 we read about Lazarus who was carried after his death to the bosom of Abraham, while the rich man was sent to hell, the place of torment. These and similar passages of Scripture teach and prove conclusively that the soul exists, lives, feels, and understands, not only in the body before death and after the resurrection from the dead, but also during the time between death and the resurrection. The soul will have all its attributes after death, without the restrictions of the body, and fully comprehend and experience life after death, although we do not know the manner in which the soul operates without the body.

The resurrection of the body presupposes the immortality of the soul, so that believing in the one, we also believe in the other. As it is the same body that shall rise again, it is necessary that it should be fashioned by the same substantial form, which it formerly had, which is the soul. The change that the body will undergo does not constitute another individual. The individual remains the same as long as the same matter is quickened with the same substantial form. But if the soul dies, and God were to create another soul, and infuse it into the body, then it would not be the same, but a different form that would quicken and fashion the body and then it would not be the same individual.

It will be the same body that will rise in the resurrection, as we shall show in the fifth question.

But if "*Man's fate is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath; man has no advantage over the animal*" (Ecc 3:19) can we conclude from this that the soul is mortal? No we cannot. The fate of man and animals is the same only as it respects the necessity of death, since man and beast must necessarily die at some time, and depart from this life, because men must die so that no one has here a permanent abiding place.

The condition of man and beast is not the same in the event of death and the state which follows, for while the existence of the animal becomes extinct and vanishes away, the soul of man, on the other hand, remains alive and active after death as we have seen. Solomon also does not address the issue of death here to illustrate the similarity of death in man and beast but rather the

issue of the apparent similarity of events which happen to both the good and the evil.

But, if "*It is not the dead who praise the LORD, those who go down to silence...*" (Ps 115:17) does this indicate that souls can perish? No, it does not. They do not praise the Lord as we do in this life, but it does not follow from this, that they shall not praise the Lord at all after they have departed this life.

Next week:

II. WHERE AND IN WHAT STATE DOES THE SOUL REMAIN AFTER SEPARATION FROM THE BODY?