

## A Guarantee for the Living and the Dead!



“So indeed God, having overlooked the times of ignorance, now commands all men everywhere to repent, because **He set a day in which He is about to judge the world in righteousness by a Man whom He appointed**, having provided a **guarantee to all, having raised Him out from the dead.**” Acts 17 verses 30 to 31.

Now, when considering the resurrection of the Lord, we mainly perceive it from the perspective of salvation. And this is rightly so, since the resurrection of the Lord is the cornerstone of the Christian faith, as Paul said, “For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. **And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.**” 1 Corinthians 17 verses 16 to 17. As such, when we study the Lord’s resurrection we perceive it from the perspectives of all the glories that would follow. The result of which is that, we have taken it for granted that the Lord was raised in a glorified Spiritual body, and everything He has done after He was raised to be an evidence of the body to come. However, such perspective gives a limited view, and we forget His resurrection must also bear testimony to a dead world, whether they believe it or not. So, in this study we hope to establish that the Lord Jesus Christ was in fact resurrected in His Natural body, through which we hope to reconcile the Scriptures, and present a more comprehensive point of view. The main purpose of which is to establish how the Lord’s resurrection speaks directly to the nature of mankind.

And the obvious place to start is to examine the first discussion the Lord had with His disciples after He was raised from the dead. Luke states, “And He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts come up in your hearts? **See My hands and My feet**, that I am He. **Touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see Me having.**” Luke 24 verses 38 to 39. Here, we see the Lord taking great trouble to prove to His disciples it was Him who was crucified and was raised back to life again. And as proof He showed them the mark of the nails that pierced His hands and His feet, and the wound at His side and said, “**See My hands and My feet, that I am He.**” In a similar manner He also sought to alleviate the doubts of Thomas, saying, “And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them, the doors having been shut. Jesus comes, and He stood in the midst and said, “Peace to you.” Then He says to Thomas, “**Bring your finger here, and see My hands; and bring your hand, and put it into My side**; and be not unbelieving, but believing.” John 20 verses 26 to 27. The reason the Lord on both occasions points to the mark of the nails, and the mark of the spear that pierced His side, is to prove that He is the same Person whom they saw being

crucified and is now alive, thereby proving He was raised in the very same body He was crucified in. Consider, if He did not rise in the same natural body He died in, but took a form of a spirit, how many would have had reason to say, there is no resurrection of the dead, just as Thomas.

So, the Lord took great effort to prove His resurrection was actually in His Natural Body, complete with the wound marks. So He says to them touch Me and see, **“for a spirit does not have flesh and bones.”** By that He meant flesh and bone are attributes of the natural body and not of the spiritual. As Paul says, **“The One making His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire.”** Hebrews 1 verse 7. That is to say, heavenly beings are constructed of a material that is different to our own. Now, when we consider this we might be forgiven to think, the Lord was actually trying to calm the fears of His disciples, by assuring them He was not a disembodied spirit as in a ghost, but a full-bodied Man. However, the previous verse shows what the disciples actually thought, saying, **“But having been terrified, and having been filled with fear, they were thinking [to] themselves to see a spirit.”** Luke 24 verse 37. Now, the Greek word for ghost is, “phantasma,” and it is used in Matthew 14 verse 26, when the disciples saw the Lord walking on water. However, the Greek word “pneuma” is used here, which means spirit, and it is applied to all spiritual beings including God. For which reason the Lord goes further to assure them and says, **“Have you any food here?”** And He made sure to eat in front of them to show that He is indeed flesh and bones.

And, when the Lord appeared to His disciples, the room was filled with people discussing His resurrection. From His first appearance to Mary Magdalene, to the evening appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. In regards to which, Luke states, **“[The two walking to Emmaus,] found the eleven and those with them gathered together, saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and He has appeared to Simon. And they began relating the things on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of the bread.”** Luke 24 verses 33 to 35. So, we have no reason to suppose what they thought they saw to be His ghost. However, they can think He is a spirit because of the testimony of the two disciples, and the fact He suddenly appeared in the middle of the room while the doors were shut, which seems to have jarred them. The point is, they believe in angels and spirits, which Luke affirms distinguishing between Pharisees and Sadducees, saying, **“For indeed Sadducees say there to be no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit; but Pharisees confess both.”** Acts 23 verse 8. So, they know that the spirits hold a form of existence that is different from the natural world. So now they have a reason to suppose, **“they were thinking [to] themselves to see a spirit.”** They did not think that before, not when Mary saw Him, nor when He appeared to Peter, and they were in fact discussing saying, **“He has risen.”**

So, it is His vanishing from sight, and His sudden appearance in the room that brought that thought to their mind. And like us, they also supposed it is because He is spirit. But the Lord used the fact spirits do not have a flesh and bone body as we do to convince them saying, **“Touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see Me having.”** Now, if the Lord was indeed raised in a spiritual body then He would have fully qualified as spirit. Paul wrote, **“The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”** 1 Corinthians 15 verse 45. And he used this Scripture to confirm that the natural body will be replaced by a spiritual body. [1 Corinthians 15 verse 46.] Therefore, if the Lord was indeed in His spiritual body then it would not be right for the Lord to correct them by saying, **“Touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones.”** The point being, only natural mankind is composed of flesh and bone, which the Lord was proving He was.

Now, the fact that the Lord appeared and disappeared from their sight, can easily be explained by the power of the Holy Spirit, who performed the same miracle with the Evangelist Philip. Luke writes,

“Now when [Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch] came up out of the water, **the Spirit of the Lord carried away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no longer**. For he went his way rejoicing. **But Philip was found at Azotus**, and passing through, he was proclaiming the gospel to all the towns until his coming to Caesarea.” Acts 8 verses 39 to 40. Likewise, it is the same Holy Spirit that caught away the Lord from the sight of the two walking to Emmaus, and made Him appear in the midst of the disciples even with the doors being shut! So, the fact the Lord disappeared and appeared is not proof of a spiritual glorified body.

And we make this distinction with a purpose, in order to highlight that the resurrection of the Lord in His natural body bears so much significance, not only the fact of the resurrection but as proof for the natural, that is creation itself will be redeemed from the grips of corruption. [Romans 8 verse 20 to 21.] Death and Decay are an aspect of being subject to the kingdom of darkness, and we have to remember, Death is a person, not just a mere incident. Therefore, the resurrection of the Lord must stand as proof that the judgement of death that came on the account of Adam’s Sin was revoked in Christ. That is, Jesus in dealing with Sin through the sacrifice of Himself has effectively repealed Death. And, Paul writing of this victory says, “**Death has been swallowed up in victory.**’ ‘Where O death, is your victory? Where O death is your sting?’ **Now the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law.**” 1 Corinthians 15 verses 54 to 56. That is to say, without Sin death has no Authority. And we know that Death came into the world through the Sin of Adam, and everybody died because all sinned. [Romans 5 verse 12.] And from Adam until Christ, everybody that died entered the heart of the earth. So when Christ died a perfect death for Sin, He was undoing all the wrong that came through Adam. And in order for this fact to be proved that Sin indeed was put off through Him, Jesus Christ had to be raised in His natural body. That is, since Death’s dominion is over the natural, so Christ victory over Death has to also be declared in the natural. So Christ can stand on the earth in full dominion, as Adam once did beyond the grip of death. This is proved by the fact, “**The creation itself will also be set free from the bondage of decay, into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.**” Romans 8 verse 21. That is to say, the Natural World fell because of the sin of Adam, and the Natural World will also now be restored because of the righteousness of Christ.

And this victory was first declared by Peter in his first sermon, saying, “[The Lord Jesus Christ was] delivered up by the determinate plan and foreknowledge of God, **you put to death, having crucified Him by lawless hands, whom God raised up**, having loosed the agony of death, **inasmuch as it was not possible for Him to be held by it.**” Acts 2 verses 23 to 24. The point Peter was making was that Adam was held by Death because of Sin, as Paul writes, “**The wages of Sin is death.**” Romans 6 verse 23. However, Christ, who is the last Adam, was not held by Death because Death had no authority over Him, since He had not sinned. So, Peter emphatically states God raised Him up, “**having loosed the pains of death,**” specifically addressing the stranglehold Death had over the natural body saying, “**it was not possible for Him to be held by it.**” The late great teacher, Derek Prince used to teach saying, “Death kills the body while Hades takes the soul.” Likewise, Christ’s soul was released from the grip of Hades, and His body from the grip of death. And Peter makes this point quoting the psalm of David saying, “**You will not abandon My soul into Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see decay.**” Acts 2 verse 27. Peter used this text in comparison to the tomb of David that stands present to this very day. The point being, Death is decay, it is corruption, and it affects the natural body as well as all creation. So when he says “**You will Not allow Your Holy One to see decay,**” Peter is specifically speaking of Christ’s natural body, not because it was transformed into the glorified spiritual body, but because His natural body was raised beyond the dominion of Death, as Adam once was before the fall. And this is the very proof that affirms the sin that came through Adam is fully revoked in Christ.

Consider, when a person is raised from the dead like Lazarus and Dorcas, the natural body is still subject to death. But Paul makes the point, “**Christ, having been raised up out from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer rules over Him.** For that which He died, **He died to Sin once for all; but that which He lives, He lives to God.**” Romans 6 verses 9 to 10. Now, this statement would be null and void, if Paul was referring to Christ’s spiritual body, since Death never had any authority over the spiritual. However, the death of Christ has a deeper significance because it addresses the issue of Sin at its roots. And the fact that His body did not see decay is only unique to Christ. Though we are raised incorruptible, and the mortal is changed to immortality, none of us can make the same claim, since our natural body is subject to death because of Sin. [Romans 8 verse 10.]

So, the fact that the natural body of Christ was raised beyond the dominion of Death and Corruption is meant to stand as proof that the day is coming when all the dead will be raised. As Paul says, “**For as indeed in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.**” 1 Corinthians 15 verse 22. That is to say, not only those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, but even those who do not, will be made alive. In respect to which, when Paul preached to the Athenians he gave the resurrection of Christ as proof of the judgement to come, saying, “[God has] set a day in which **He is about to judge the world in righteousness by a Man whom He appointed,** having provided **a guarantee to all, having raised Him out from the dead.**” Acts 17 verse 31. And again, Paul said to Felix, “That **there is about to be a resurrection, both of the just and of the unjust.**” Acts 24 verse 15. Therefore, Christ’s resurrection must represent each group accordingly. To a believer it says, “you have passed from death to life and will be raised in a glorified spiritual body in His likeness.” And to the unbeliever it bears witness that the natural body will be raised beyond the domain of death to face the eternal judgement of righteousness.

Now, we have no reference of flesh being applied to describe any spiritual being's body. Flesh is an aspect that is distinctly unique to the natural world. And Peter makes this point saying, “**For to this end the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead,** so that they might be judged indeed **according to men in the flesh,** but **they might live in the spirit according to God.**” 1 Peter 4 verse 6. This shows that there is a clear distinction between the natural and the spiritual, whereby the term flesh cannot be used to describe a spirit or a spiritual body. And Paul also makes the point saying, “**Flesh and blood is not able to inherit the kingdom of God,** nor does decay inherit immortality.” 1 Corinthians 15 verse 50. Now, he is not saying flesh and blood are not raised, just that the kingdom of God does not belong to them. So those who die in sin, die as flesh and blood not having received the Spirit of life from Christ.

The point is, Christ being raised in a flesh and bone body speaks to the fact that sin is repealed, therefore it has application for the unjust. Now, the question is, how can sin being repealed have an application for the unjust? This is possible because mankind is no longer being judged for sin, but for righteousness. Paul said, “**God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not reckoning their trespasses to them.**” 2 Corinthians 5 verse 19. The fact of the matter is, apart from sin having been dealt with, the Just or Unjust could not be raised, and we all would have perpetually belonged to the dominion of Death and Hades. And this is specifically the point Peter made when He said of the Lord, “**It was not possible for Him to be held by it.**” Likewise, in Christ, both the just and unjust cannot be held by Death, because of the fact in Christ sin has been dealt with, once and for all. For which reason the Lord said, “**I have the keys of Death and of Hades.**” Revelation 1 verse 18. The “Key” speaks of authority, in respect to sin, which was revoked in Christ.

So John, speaking of the resurrection of the unjust, says “And the sea gave up the dead who were in it; and **Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them.**” Revelation 20 verse 13. That is to say, Death and Hades will be forced to give up the dead that are in them, because they no longer have the legal authority granted to them by sin in order to hold them captives. So, Death will give up the body and Hades the Soul. That is, the dead will be raised in a flesh and bone body in the likeness of the Lord’s earthly natural resurrection, being clothed with the habitation of the earth, which the Sea and Death gave up. This brings with it the greater consequence of the judgement of righteousness, resulting in the Second Death, for those whose names are not found in the Book of Life. We need to consider, the first death applied to both Soul and Body, likewise, now the Second Death also applies to both Soul and Body, as the Lord said, “Indeed rather you should fear the One being **able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.**” Matthew 10 verse 28. It is Important to note here, it's not some disembodied soul that is cast into hell, but both Soul and Body. Death is not an aspect of the spiritual but the natural, that is why spiritual death is very wrong. And, the natural body is subject to the judgement of Second Death, since creation itself is reserved for the fire to come, as Peter said, “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which **the heavens will pass away with a roar**, and elements will be dissolved, burning with heat, and **the earth and the works in it will not be found.**” 2 Peter 3 verse 10. So, the ground from which our body and soul was formed is subject to this eternal fire, which means, the same judgement directly applies to us.

Now, this resurrection must not be confused with the resurrection of the righteous. And this is where the difference between the body of the Just and Unjust is expressed. Paul said of the Just, “For we know that if **the tent of our earthly house should be destroyed**, we have **a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.**” 2 Corinthians 5 verse 1. That is to say, the Just will be clothed with a spiritual body that comes from heaven, in the likeness of the heavenly Man. As Paul said, “As we have borne the image of the earthly, **we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.**” 1 Corinthians 15 verse 49. Now, in order for us to bear the image of the heavenly Man, we ourselves must first be heavenly, that is we must be born of the Spirit. And Paul makes this point abundantly clear to us, saying, “**We ourselves, even having the first-fruit of the Spirit**, also groan ourselves in ourselves, awaiting divine adoption as sons, **the redemption of our body.**” Romans 8 verse 23. That is, the redemption of our body is dependent on the fact that we have the first-fruit of the Spirit. The same concept is also related in Corinthians, saying, “So that **the mortal may be swallowed up by life.** Now the One having prepared us for this very purpose is God, **having given to us the pledge of the Spirit.**” 2 Corinthians 5 verses 4 to 5. As well as in Ephesians 1 verses 13 to 14. That is to say, the Holy Spirit Himself is the guarantee for receiving a spiritual body. Finally, as to address the heavenly concept, Paul says, “**For our citizenship exists in the heavens**, from whence also we are awaiting a Saviour, **the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our body of humiliation, conformed to the body of His glory.**” Philippians 3 verses 20 to 21. The fact that we are primed to enter heaven with Him is the reason He transforms our body to be like His.

The main point we need to grasp is that, the spiritual body belongs only to those that are set to enter heaven, in order to bear the image of the Heavenly Man, but this does not apply to those that are of the earth. We must bear in mind that the spiritual body, is a body of honour, it is a body of power, it is a body of His glory and is specifically reserved to those who are made righteous in Him. [1 Corinthians 15 verses 42 to 44.] And this is the fundamental proof that mankind was not created spirit. If truly mankind was created spirit, both the unjust and the just would have put on the body of spirit, but they do not. For which reason, the Unjust will bear the image of natural mankind which is according to Adam, but made alive in Christ.

The point being, if Christ was indeed raised from the dead in a spiritual body, then only those that are primed to enter heaven can be raised. However, if Christ was raised in His natural body, then His resurrection speaks to all, only that the just will be clothed with the heavenly habitation, purely for the fact in Christ they are made a New Creation, that is spirit. For which reason Paul says, “For as indeed **in Adam all die**, so also **in Christ all will be made alive**.” The “all,” Paul is referring to is in respect to all mankind. Consider, in Adam everybody dies without any exception, regardless how good or bad they are, and no one can escape this reality. Likewise, now all will be made alive in Christ, also without exception, because what Christ has done has revoked the legal right by which all were made to die. [Isaiah 28 verse 18.] However, to this Paul adds, “But **each in [his] own order**: Christ the first-fruit, **then those of Christ at His coming**, then **the end**.” 1 Corinthians 15 verses 23 to 24. Here, Paul makes a clear distinction between the resurrection of the just, that is those who are His, and those that are raised at the end, giving clear significance to the type of body each will be raised in.

And this Heavenly body as it relates to Christ is proved in the observation which John makes, and writes, “Beloved, **now we are children of God**, and **what we will be has not yet been revealed**. We know that **when He appears, we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He is**.” 1 John 3 verse 2. This John, who testified to have seen the Lord after He was raised, and said, our hands have touched Him, and we sat and ate with Him, is the one who tells us, “**what we will be has not yet been revealed**.” And he follows that with, “**when He appears, we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He is**.” John was clearly looking forward to the glory of a spiritual body that is yet to be revealed, which resembles the likeness of the Lord, as Paul also said, “**our body of humiliation [to be] conformed to the body of His glory**.” And if we are to resemble Him, then He has not yet revealed what that spiritual body is going to be like. So, both Paul and John were looking forward to the return of the Lord for its fulfilment, that is, the appearance of the Lord in His spiritual form. Therefore, John was not regarding the resurrected physical appearance of the Lord which he and the disciples were privy to.

Likewise, Paul also when giving an explanation of the kind of body we will be raised in, he did not point at the Lord as He was revealed to the disciples, but only that the natural must put on the spiritual. And he explains there is a distinction between the two, saying, “**And there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies**. But truly **the glory of the heavenly is one kind**, and that of **the earthly is another**.” 1 Corinthians 15 verse 40. The heavenly body is of heavenly construct and not of the earth. Then he points to the difference between the two types of mankind, in respect to Adam and that of Christ and says, “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. **If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual**. So also it has been written: “**The first man Adam became into a living soul; ” the last Adam into a life-giving spirit**.” 1 Corinthians 15 verses 44 to 45. The main point we want to stress is that, this spiritual body as it relates to the new creation in Christ, is not yet revealed, because it can only be realized when Christ returns, and we see Him as He is in His new form, as far as it concerns us who are still on earth.

Now, the next point we need to address is to point out the moment Christ took on His Heavenly body, in order to draw a clear distinction between His natural form to that of the Heavenly form. Paul writes, “The first man Adam became into a living soul; ” **the last Adam into a life-giving spirit**.” Now, we might have spiritualised what the Last Adam became in order to apply to our present state as believers, but the context in which Paul used that statement was in respect to a physical body, be it natural or spiritual. For which reason he says, “**As the one was made of dust, so also are those of the earth; and as is the heavenly one, so also are those of heaven**. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, **we shall also bear the image of the heavenly**.” 1 Corinthians 15 verses 48 to 49. So,

what Christ became is according to His New Nature as spirit, for which reason Christ became the firstborn from the dead, to become the first Spirit-mankind to live as God does in the spirit. Peter writes, "Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that He might bring you to God, **having been put to death indeed in the flesh, but having been made alive in the spirit.**" 1 Peter 3 verse 18.

Now, being made spirit also means to have a corresponding spiritual body and that was the point which Paul was making. A spiritual body is a heavenly body as Paul says, "**to be clothed with our dwelling which is from heaven.**" 2 Corinthians 5 verse 2. To be a heavenly man you must be from heaven, to be an earthly man you have to be from the earth. The material of your body will correspond to the place of your habitation. This being the case, Christ did not put on His heavenly body until He first entered heaven by His own blood. So Christ was raised having died to Sin and made alive to God in the Spirit while still in His natural body. And He had to enter Heaven in this state in order to make atonement for all flesh-mankind. John writes, "And **He is the propitiation for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for those of the whole world.**" 1 John 2 verse 2.

Now, the "life-giving" portion of the verse is addressing the fact Jesus Christ gives us His life. The Lord said, "For even as the Father raises up the dead and gives life, **thus also the Son gives life to whom He will.**" John 5 verse 21. So this authority was given to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of Man. So when Christ was raised from the dead He breathed on His disciples and said, "**Receive the Holy Spirit.**" John 20 verse 22. And He imparted His life to them, having obtained eternal redemption, for which reason Paul writes, "**Now you are not in flesh but in Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you;** but if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him." Romans 8 verse 9. So our present life in the spirit, while still being in the natural mortal body, is bound to the fact we are united as one with Him, as Paul says, "**The one being joined to the Lord is one spirit.**" 1 Corinthians 6 verse 17. Now, there is a difference between conception and birth, between the first-fruit of the Spirit of Adoption as sons, and the acquisition of divine adoption in the redemption of our body. [Romans 8 verses 15, & 23.] Those who fight for the life of the unborn, emphatically and rightly state, an embryo or fetus is still a human life in whatever state of gestation it may be in. Likewise, one who is made a new creation in Christ, in having His Spirit is spirit, even though we have not yet fully been born in order to acquire the spiritual body to be one. As such, the present state of a believer is described, as a promise, a taste of what is to come, a deposit, and a guarantee, all pointing forward to the day we obtain our purchased possession, that is, a spiritual body in the likeness of the Lord. That is why enduring to the very end in faith, being vigilant in the pursuit of this prize is very important. [Philippians 3 verse 14.]

The Word God became the Son of Man when He was born on earth, as John writes, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." John 1 verse 14. And when Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, He went as the Son of Man in His natural body, in respect to which, Jesus said, "**No one has gone up into heaven except the One having come down out of heaven, the Son of Man.**" John 3 verse 13. Now, the Lord was not contradicting the fact that God took Enoch and Elijah to heaven; however they did not enter heaven in their natural body, since "**flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor corruption inherit incorruption.**" So the bodies of Enoch and Elijah were transformed. However, the distinction is that the Lord Jesus Christ entered heaven itself in His flesh and bone body when He made His blood an offering for Sin, which Paul writes saying, "**Through [His] own blood, He entered once for all into the holy places, having obtained eternal redemption...** For Christ has entered not into holy places made by hands, copies of the true ones, but **into heaven itself, now to appear for us in the presence of God.**" Hebrews 9 verse 12, & 24. The fact of the matter is, there

has never been a Heavenly Man before the Lord Jesus Christ, that is the Son of Man that entered into heaven itself, He is the first, and we take after His likeness. We have to remember, Mankind was created for the domain of the Earth, and not heaven! And this is the reason why none of the writers of the New Testament could say what the Heavenly form was to be like.

The point is, Paul is saying what we have seen of Christ is according to the resurrection of the natural and not of His spiritual body. So, Christ went from earth in His natural body, but will come back from heaven as the Heavenly Man, having put on His Heavenly habitation. And when we see Him as the Heavenly Man, we who are in our natural body will also be transformed to look like Him. For which reason Paul says, **“We will all be changed— in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”** 1 Corinthians 15 verses 51 to 52. This transformation to the spiritual body happens in the moment of the rapture, and is only applicable to believers. The corresponding verse is, **“But each in [his] own order: Christ the first-fruit, then those of Christ at His coming.”** 1 Corinthians 15 verses 23. And again, **“The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we, the living remaining, will be caught away together with them in the clouds for the meeting of the Lord in the air; and so we will be always with the Lord.”** 1 Thessalonians 4 verses 16 to 17.

The overall concept we are trying to impress upon you is that, the resurrection of Christ must apply to both the natural and spiritual, as Paul says, **“For the administration of the fullness of the times, to bring together all things in Christ—the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth—”** Ephesians 1 verse 10. When Paul says, both the things of the earth that is to say the natural, and that of the things of heaven is to say the spiritual, both of which must be consolidated under Christ. That is why the resurrection of Christ must speak both to the natural and the spiritual.

Now, for us to fully grasp the far-reaching implication of the redemption that was worked through Christ, we have to examine the people of the millennium age of Christ to come. As described above, spirit-mankind is now known as citizens of heaven, and no longer of earth. However, there is a New Earth and a New Heaven that is yet to come, the residence of which are not the Heavenly Mankind, but those of the Earth, that is Flesh-mankind. These are the ones that will be rescued from the hands of Gog and Magog, and those having lived and died during the Millennium Reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. Bearing in mind even during the righteous rule of the Lord Jesus Christ, death is still operational over the natural world, since it is the last enemy to be defeated, and the people of that age are still in a natural body that is subject to death. What we are trying to impress upon you is that, Christ's first appearance as flesh-mankind brought with it an opportunity to become spirit as He is, thereby becoming a resident of heaven. However, Christ's second appearance as spirit, that is as heavenly mankind, has closed this opportunity, nevertheless, the people of that generation have the option to continue as flesh-mankind apart from sin.

That is to say, the people of that age, that is the remnant that are left from the destruction brought about by the beast and the false prophet, will live under a totally different system than the world has ever known. Not of Law as for Sin, nor of Grace since the people of this Age live apart from the presence of Sin and Evil, as John says, **“And he seized the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. And he cast him into the Abyss, and shut and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed.”** Revelation 20 verses 2 to 3. Please note, the people of this age are not deceived since there is no deceiver, not even Adam and Eve had the same privilege as these will have.

Yet, the Lord tells us, even these that lived apart from sin will be subject to the judgement of righteousness to come, which Matthew describes in Matthew 25 verses 31 to 46. Please consider the weight of this judgement, which we in the present age seem unable to grasp. It is not sin that is judged, but our correspondence to the nature of Christ, that is righteousness. And at the end of all ages, these will be raised in the redeemed flesh and bone body in the likeness of the Lord's own natural resurrection, to face the righteous judgement of God along with all those that have rejected Christ in the previous and current age. [Revelation 20 verses 11 to 15.] That is to say, corruption will put on incorruption because death no longer has legal right, therefore death is defeated. [1 Corinthians 15 verse 54.]

And John describes the Heavenly Jerusalem coming down to the New Earth saying, "**Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men**, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and **God Himself will be with them as their God**. And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and **death will be no more nor mourning nor crying nor pain; they will be no more, because the former things have passed away.**" Revelation 21 verses 3 to 4. Please note, this statement comes after 1000 years of the reign of Christ, during which spirit-mankind [that is the bride of Christ] were present before God and have lived beyond the reach of death all this time. So this statement is not applying to them, but to those who come through the Millennium Age of the Lord.

The point is, Christ being raised in flesh and bone body has a far-reaching implication even extending into the New Heaven and the New Earth. It is the restoration of what Adam was originally intended to be, to live on the Earth as Flesh-mankind forever. The fact of the matter is, if there was not going to be flesh-mankind there would have been no need for a New Earth. Since Spirit-mankind has already a place prepared by the Lord in Heaven to dwell in the presence of God forever, heaven is our domain. And this is the fundamental point which we refuse to accept, mankind is not created spirit, if it was, all mankind would have lived in the New Jerusalem in the presence of God without the need for a New Earth. As God consoling those who bear the image of His Son, said, "**They are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple**; and the One sitting on the throne will tabernacle over them. They will not hunger any more, neither will they thirst anymore, nor shall the sun at all fall upon them, nor any scorching heat; because the Lamb in the centre of the throne will shepherd them, and He will lead them to fountains living of waters, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." Revelation 7 verses 15 to 17.

The point is, the New Jerusalem that comes down from heaven is the throne of God, in the presence of which Spirit-mankind bearing His name on their forehead, will serve Him day and night. However, this city is set in the middle of the New Earth, where flesh-mankind that are raised beyond the grips of Death will dwell. On the Account of which, Isaiah says, "**For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,**" says the Lord, "**So shall your descendants and your name remain.** And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, **all flesh shall come to worship before Me,**" says the Lord. "**And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me.** For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched. **They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.**" Isaiah 66 verses 22 to 24. Here, the presence of flesh-mankind is clearly portrayed in the New Heaven and New Earth, along with the description of those who are eternally punished for their rebellion.

So Christ's resurrection is a testimony to the fact sin is utterly done away with, to the extent of abolishing the authority death had over all mankind. So, we in recognising the fact that the Lord was indeed raised in His natural body, we can see the implication that addresses the unjust, as well as those

who are to eternally inherit the New Earth. And when Christ returns He will come back as the Heavenly Man, and all who belong to Him, will see Him as He is, and will be transformed to be heavenly. Thereby, there will be Spirit-mankind as well as Flesh-mankind, one of Heaven the other of Earth, all brought under the One, the Lord Jesus Christ.

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