

# The Sword & The Plow

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## Resurrection of the Flesh

by

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The resurrection of the dead is a difficult question for many. Preterists maintain that the resurrection was and is nonphysical, consisting in the spirit (soul), not the body, of man. Others, including Postmillennialists, believe that the resurrection is essentially fleshly, that there can be no resurrection apart from *physical bodies* rising from their graves. In this article, we want to examine the idea of the “resurrection of the flesh” to see if it accords with the scriptures. We believe a candid study will demonstrate that the resurrection subsists in the immaterial realm of the spirit, not the flesh.

### **Confusion in the Early Church**

Understanding scripture and eschatology can be a great challenge; the meaning is often elusive, cloaked in metaphors and poetic imagery. Other times it assumes the reader has a familiarity with basic themes of redemption and sanctification, and God’s established methods and manner of bringing his purpose to pass. Language that speaks “everlastingly” may actually mean only “age-long.” Language that says God causes a condition or event may really mean that he merely allowed it to come about, *etc.* The difficulty in understanding scripture is alluded to by Paul when he said that his preaching was “not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth” (I Cor. 2:4, 13).

*“Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world...But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.” I Cor. 2: 6, 7*

The fact that Paul says the gospel was sometimes communicated “in a mystery” and in terms that were “hidden” is telling. It means that we cannot always take words at their face value, but must be alert to deeper significations. The difficulty in understanding scripture would have been especially true of believers from among the Gentiles, who were less familiar with the *usus loquendi* (manner of speech) of the Jewish prophets. The language of the prophets evoking images of the heavens on “fire” and earth “dissolving” under intense heat (Isa. 13:1-13; 34:4; II Pet. 3:10-13) doubtless presented a great challenge to early Gentile believers. What interpretative principles were to guide their (and our) understanding? With no experience in the Old Testament, the tendency of believers then (and now) was to take the language of the apostles and prophets quite literally, mistaking what they read. Among the more learned, however, the story was different. Origen (circa A.D. 185-254), perhaps the greatest and most learned of the early patristic writers, correctly saw the destruction of the world in the cataclysmic events that overtook the Roman Empire and Jerusalem in A.D. 70:

*“We do not deny, then, that the purificatory fire and the destruction of the world took place in order that evil might be swept away, and all things be renewed; for we assert that we have learned these things from the sacred books of the prophets...And anyone who likes may convict this statement of falsehood, if it be not the case that the whole Jewish nation was overthrown within one single generation after Jesus had undergone these sufferings at their hands. For forty and two years, I think after the date of the crucifixion of Jesus, did the destruction of Jerusalem take place.”<sup>1</sup>*

Origen’s astonishing statement testifies to the fact that Preterism has been present in the church from the very start, and that modern Preterists are not alone in their understanding of the eschaton (end). Origen’s statement regarding *all things being renewed* is a citation to Rev. 21:5, and evidences his understanding that mankind now lives in the new heavens and earth described by Isaiah, Peter, and John. Thus, these are not the wondrously regenerated, material new creation Postmillennialists generally suppose. This will figure

<sup>1</sup> Origen, *Contra Celsum*, IV, xxi-xxii; Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. IV, p. 505, 506; emphasis added.

prominently later in our discussion. For now it is sufficient merely to note that it was only through Origen’s vast studies of the Old Testament prophets that this church father gained the insights which opened to him the prophecies of Christ and the apostles about the time of the end. The same is true for us: the hidden wisdom of the New Testament will not open to us if we are not willing to close the door of our closet and spend long hours in study.

Misunderstanding was not limited to the language about the destruction of the earth. Some wrestled with the resurrection itself, questioning or denying its very possibility. Questions about the resurrection entailed the *type of body* men would receive (I Cor. 15:35). The Sadducees, although denying the resurrection, clearly conceived that any putative resurrection would occur in the *flesh*. Because of this conception, the Sadducees believed they had discovered an indissoluble dilemma, refuting the notion of the resurrection, by the question about the seven brothers who had one woman as wife, asking, “Whose wife would she be in the resurrection, since each had her?” (Matt. 22:23-33). The basic assumption is that the resurrection would be *physical* and therefore entail *marriage*. It is unclear whether this was the popular conception of the resurrection or merely the Sadducees’ idea of it. The better view probably is that it reflected *popular* belief. It would hardly make sense for the Sadducees to propound a hypothetical question about the nature of the resurrection that was peculiar merely to their sect, and not shared by the community at large. In that case, the question would refute only *their* notion of the resurrection, but not that of the general public whose belief it was their objective to dispel. Hence, the necessary and reasonable inference is that the resurrection of physical bodies upon earth reflected the general understanding of many Jews of Jesus’ day.<sup>2</sup> But, whether it be this or that, one thing is clear: *Jesus disallowed the concept entirely*. First, by proof that the patriarchs had not ceased to exist, but were participants in the first resurrection in Hades Paradise (vv. 31, 32):

*“But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”*

Second, by showing that in the general resurrection men would subsist in the form of angels (vv. 29, 30):

<sup>2</sup> “Jews at the time of Jesus believed in a bodily resurrection of the dead at the end of history.” Robert B. Strimple, *When Shall These Things Be? (WSTTB)*, (Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 2004), p. 296.

*“For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven”*

Thus, not only was resurrection a *present fact* (the patriarchs were alive in the spirit realm of Hades), the resurrection would not be *earthly or physical*; hence, there would be *no marriage*. The Sadducees’ hypothetical, based upon mistaken notions about the fact and nature of the resurrection, came to nothing. As we shall see, the expectations of those who contend for a physical resurrection, based upon the *same* suppositions as the Sadducees, also come to nothing.

Jewish misunderstanding about the nature of the resurrection had its counterpart in the church, which Paul labored to correct. He dispensed with the idea of a physical resurrection by his statement “And that which thou sowest, thou sowest *not that body* that shall be” (I Cor. 15:37; *emphasis added*). Could it be any clearer? The body that is sown (generated at birth/creation) is *not* the body that is reaped (raised). A physical body is planted, but a spiritual body is raised up. “So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption...It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body” (I Cor. 15:42, 43). Like a seed that is sown as bare grain, only to be raised a plant of infinitely greater glory bearing no resemblance to the seed that carried its germ, so in the resurrection it is not the physical body that is raised. The mistake lies in the assumption that the resurrection would occur upon earth and, hence, be *earthly*. However, *a physical grave cannot retain the spirits of the deceased*. The grave had an immaterial counterpart called *Hades* where the spirits of the departed dwelt pending the second resurrection (Lk. 16:19-31; 24:43; cf. Acts 2:27). Since these souls were not bound to their earthly bodies, it would not be necessary for them to be reunited to their bodies in order to inherit glory. Just the opposite, “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption” (I Cor. 15:50). Absent from *the body* is present with the Lord (II Cor. 5:8). There was to be no physical resurrection.

### **Creeds and Confessions Embody Error of Early Church**

Notwithstanding the apostle’s labor, error took root; belief in a physical resurrection at Christ’s return gained currency and took up permanent residence in the early church. This is evidenced by the creeds that grew up among believing Gentiles. For example, the Interrogatory Creed of Hippolytus (circa 215 A.D.) asks, “Do you believe...in the resurrection of the body?” Similarly, the Creed of Marcellus (340 A.D.)

declares: “I believe in...the resurrection of the body.” The Creed of Rufinus (circa 404 A.D.) is more explicit and declares “I believe in the resurrection of the *flesh*.” The Apostles’ Creed proclaims belief in the resurrection of the body, but the Nicene Creed states only a belief in the resurrection of the “dead.” Other creeds and confessions holding to the resurrection of the flesh include the Athanasian Creed<sup>3</sup> and the second London Confession of 1689 (Baptist) which affirms that the “selfsame” body would be raised,<sup>4</sup> even though Paul specifically disallows this very thing, saying it is *not* the same body that is raised (I Cor. 15:37). Thus, the creeds perpetuated the error of the Jews and some in the early church of a physical resurrection.

The heirs to the creeds were the articles and confessions of faith of later centuries. For example, chapter XXXII of the Westminster Confession - Of the State of Men after Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead - states:

1. The bodies of men, after death, return to dust, and see corruption: but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them: *the souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God, in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies*. And the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Beside these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.
2. At the last day, such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed: and *all the dead shall be raised up, with the self-same bodies*, and none other (although with different qualities), which shall be united again to their souls for ever.
3. The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonour: the bodies of the just, by His Spirit, unto honour; and be made conformable to His own glorious body. (*Emphasis added*.)

Notice the confused eschatology here that has the souls of the dead by-passing Hades and going immediately to heaven where they behold the face of God, where they

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<sup>3</sup>“At his coming all people shall rise bodily to give an account of their own deeds.”

<sup>4</sup>“At the last day, such of the saints as are found alive, shall not sleep, but be changed; and all the dead shall be raised up with the selfsame bodies, and none other; although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls forever.”

await the redemption of their bodies, to which they are subsequently forced to return. What possible purpose could there be in reuniting the spirits of the saints with their earthly bodies? Being in a state suited to behold the face of God in perfect holiness, what is the need to clothe them again with houses of clay? Having begun in the spirit are they made perfect by the flesh? Such is the garbled teaching of the Westminster Confession. Another doctrinal statement holding to the resurrection of the flesh is the Belgic Confession (Reformed Church):

“Finally we believe, according to God’s Word, that when the time appointed by the Lord is come (which is unknown to all creatures) and the number of the elect is complete, our Lord Jesus Christ will come from heaven, *bodily and visibly*, as he ascended, with great glory and majesty, to declare himself the judge of the living and the dead. He will burn this old world, in fire and flame, in order to cleanse it. Then all human creatures will appear in person before the great judges, men, women, and children, who have lived from the beginning until the end of the world. They will be summoned there by the voice of the archangel and by the sound of the divine trumpet. For all those who died before that time will be *raised from the earth, their spirits being joined and united with their own bodies in which they lived*. And as for those who are still alive, they will not die like the others but will be changed ‘in the twinkling of an eye’ from ‘corruptible to incorruptible.’” (*Emphasis added.*)

This confession demonstrates that the notion of a fleshly resurrection is closely related to the idea that Christ would return “bodily and visibly.”<sup>5</sup> The basic assumption underlying Christ’s visible, bodily return is the idea that he is *still in human form*. Gentry states, “*In the Second Person of the Trinity, God took upon Himself a true human body and soul (which He still possesses, Col. 2:9) and entered history for the purpose of redeeming men back to a right relationship with Him (Rom. 1:3; 9:5; Heb. 2:14).*”<sup>6</sup> This is clearly

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<sup>5</sup> The doctrine of Christ’s bodily and visible return is erroneous. His coming would not be bodily, it would be *providential*; it would not be visible, it would be historically *discernable*. In Matt. 24:30, Jesus said there would “appear” the sign of the Son of man ruling in heaven in the events marking the destruction of the city and temple. Speaking to his coming in vengeance upon the Jews, Jesus told the Sanhedrin, “I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Mk. 14:62; cf. Matt. 24:30). This is the same coming “in his kingdom” Jesus told the apostles would transpire while some of them were still alive (Matt. 16:27, 28; Mk. 8:38-9:1). In each of these verses the coming of the Lord was providential, not bodily; it was historically discernable, not visible to the eye of flesh.

<sup>6</sup> Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., *Christ’s Resurrection and Ours*, (Chalcedon, April 2003).

mistaken. Physical bodies, by definition, are confined by time and space. But Jesus is “ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things” (Eph. 4:10). Only spirit is unbounded by time and space and can fill all things (be omnipresent). Hence, Jesus is no longer in bodily form, at least in any earthly meaning and conception of that term. Rather, he is Spirit (Jn. 4:24; I Cor. 15:45; II Cor. 3:17) and therefore invisible to eye of man (I Tim. 6:16). After his ascension, visions of Jesus required *special revelation* of the Spirit, in a manner similar to angels; he also no longer bore his earthly form (Rev. 1:10 *et seq*; cf. Acts 9:7). Col. 2:9, which Gentry cites, does not help. Although the apostle says that in Christ “dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,” he does not say the body is either human or physical. Gentry reads this gratuitously into the text; it is not there. “Fullness of the Godhead bodily” signifies that the fullness of divine authority is reposed in Christ, nothing more (see Matt. 28:18; I Pet. 3:22.) Nothing can be inferred from it regarding the *type* of body Jesus received at his ascension.

In the end, the idea that the “selfsame” physical bodies are to be raised up at the last day is unsupported by scripture. Not *one* verse can be marshaled to establish this claim. The redemption of men’s physical bodies is no part of the redemptive work of Christ, who died to save men’s *souls*, not bodies. Those holding the view that physical bodies will be raised place the resurrection on the *wrong* side of eternity. They place the resurrection in the temporal realm of the flesh, rather than the eternal realm of the spirit where it should be.

### Modern Apologists

Modern apologists are not wanting for these ancient errors. As we have seen, Gentry believes that Jesus still has his human form and body, even while in heaven above. This then becomes his paradigm for the resurrection of *all men*. Gentry asserts that “If Christ was physically raised from the dead, then so shall we, for He is the “first-fruits” of our resurrection. The only way around our physical resurrection is to deny Christ’s physical resurrection.”<sup>7</sup> This is poor argumentation. Reduced to a syllogism, Gentry’s argument looks like this:

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<sup>7</sup> Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., *Christ’s Resurrection and Ours*, (Chalcedon, April 2003). For the full text of this article go to [www.preteristarchive.com/PartialPreterism/gentry-ken\\_03\\_ca\\_01.html](http://www.preteristarchive.com/PartialPreterism/gentry-ken_03_ca_01.html). Strimple is to the same effect: “*God raised his own Son from the grave and promised his people a resurrection like his at his return.*” *WWTTB?*, p. 294; cf. 297.

**Major premise:** Christ was raised physically.

**Minor premise:** Christ was the “first-fruits” of our resurrection; therefore

**Conclusion:** Our resurrection will be physical like Christ’s.

It does not take a logician to see that the conclusion does not follow from the premises. The resurrection of physical bodies simply is not a logical corollary of the term “firstfruits.” The significance of Christ’s resurrection was his power over *Hades*, not the physical grave. Thus, in Rev. 1:18, Jesus said: “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” Jesus did not say he has the keys of the physical *grave*, but of hell (Hades). He promised that the “gates of Hades shall not prevail against” the church” (Mat. 16:19). Hades had prevented man from beholding the face of God in heaven; *it was destruction of this last enemy that the promise of resurrection looked to* (cf. Rev. 20:14.) For saints on this side of the eschaton, it is *the assurance they do not have to go to Hades at all*. The apostle thus states “O death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory?” (I Cor. 15:55; cf. Hos. 13:14). The purpose of Jesus’ physical resurrection was primarily *evidentiary*; it was intended to serve as a *demonstration* of God’s power and work among his people and that he *spoke through Jesus*. Rom. 1:4 says Jesus was “declared to be the Son of God with power...by the resurrection from the dead.” In the resurrection, God declared Jesus to be his Son, vindicating Jesus’ claims during his life (cf. Acts 13:33). This could not be accomplished without the resurrection of Jesus’ body. Had God merely wafted Jesus’ spirit to heaven, there would have been *no objective proof* of Christ’s Sonship. To the contrary, the continuing presence of the body in the tomb could only have suggested Jesus was a fraud and a liar. In fact, the very purpose behind the open tomb was so that man could go in and see the Lord was risen indeed, *not* so Jesus could come out. The bodily resurrection of the Lord provided empirical evidence that Jesus was the Son of God, of which the apostles were made witnesses (Mk. 16:20; Lk. 24:48; Acts 1:8; 3:15).

The bodily resurrection of Christ thus served a unique purpose that makes Jesus’ resurrection *unlike* our own. It is interesting that in the resurrection of the saints recorded in Matt. 27:52, 53, Matthew adds the qualifying statement, saying, “the *bodies* of the saints which slept arose.” The purpose of this resurrection of the bodies of the saints was to provide *evidence* of Jesus’ resurrection and that he was the promised

Messiah. That Matthew adds the qualifying statement regarding their bodies serves only to show that there is a resurrection of the spirit or soul of which the body does not take part. It also testifies to the evidentiary purpose behind the resurrection of physical bodies, a purpose absent from the general resurrection of the souls in Hades.

The Hebrew writer speaks to the present body of Christ, setting flesh against the spirit, when he states that Jesus “in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared” (Heb. 5:7). Notice that “the days of his flesh” are set over against Jesus’ *present* form when he is ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. Jesus is no longer in fleshly form; we are joint heirs with Christ, and become partakers of his image and glory (Rom. 8:17, 29). It is unto *this* hope that believers aspire, not the reunion of their spirits with their earthly bodies

Another argument by Gentry is that the “spiritual body” of I Cor. 15:44 is every bit as tangible and material as the “natural body.”<sup>8</sup> This rather startling assertion is based upon use of the terms *pneumatikos* (spiritual) and *psuchikos* (natural) to describe the Christian over against the unbeliever:

*“But the natural (psuchikos) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual (pneumatikos) judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.” (I Cor. 2:14, 15)*

The terms “natural” and “spiritual” in this context speak to the controlling principle in the individuals’ lives and thoughts. Hence, Gentry argues that the “spiritual body” of I Cor. 15:44 speaks only to *its* controlling principle, not its material or immaterial form. Therefore, although in the resurrection, the body will actually be physical, *qualitatively* it will be “spiritual.” Or, so at least Gentry would have us believe. The better view, however, is that the term “spiritual” in I Cor. 15:44 is *substantive*, and that the body of the resurrection will be *intangible, immaterial, and eternal*. The spiritual man has a physical body *only* because he has not yet put it off in death. Upon the death of the body, the inner man lives on, clothed upon with a spiritual body of life. “But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed

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<sup>8</sup> Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., *Christ’s Resurrection and Ours*, (Chalcedon, April 2003).

day by day” (II Cor. 4:16). “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven” (II Cor. 5:1, 2; cf. II Pet. 1:13, 14). The “earthly house” is the fleshly body of this material realm. Upon the death of the Christian, it is replaced by a spiritual and immaterial house *from* heaven. Since it is from heaven, it clearly is not the “self same” earthly body put off in death. In the resurrection, we will be spirit beings with spiritual bodies (Heb. 12:23; I Cor. 5:5). We will be as the angels, intangible, immaterial, imperishable, and eternal (Matt. 22:30).<sup>9</sup>

### Material New Creation?

The reason Gentry and others argue for the resurrection of the flesh, is that they believe (with groups like the Jehovah’s Witnesses) the saints’ eternal reward is in the material realm upon a new earth. “His elect people will inherit the eternal estate in resurrected, physical bodies (Jn. 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:20-28) so that we might dwell in a material New Creation order (2 Pet. 3:8-13).”<sup>10</sup> Strimple is to the same effect, affirming cosmic redemption of the physical universe: “It is God’s ‘very good’ creation (Gen. 1:31), now groaning in sin and bondage to decay, that will be redeemed.”<sup>11</sup> This belief is utterly fantastic. It stems from Postmillennialism, which holds that God’s redemptive purpose culminates in a redeemed, *material creation*.<sup>12</sup> Never mind the many statements in scripture pointing to the fact that the saints inheritance is *in heaven* (Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1-3; I Thess. 4:17; I Tim. 6:7; II Tim. 2:11; Heb. 11:13, 16; I Pet. 1:4); never mind that Calvin, whom Gentry and Strimple claim to follow, affirmed our inheritance is in heaven,<sup>13</sup> we are now to believe that our eternal

<sup>9</sup> Heb. 2:14-16 sets flesh and blood over against the immaterial nature of angels.

<sup>10</sup> Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., *Christ’s Resurrection and Ours*, (Chalcedon, April 2003).

<sup>11</sup> *WWTB?*, p. 321.

<sup>12</sup> “God seeks the redemption of the world as a created system of men and things...Christ’s labors will eventually effect the redemption of the created system of humanity and things.” Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., *Three Views of the Millennium and Beyond* (Zondervan, 1999), p. 43. Cf. Keith A. Mathison, *Postmillennialism, An Eschatology of Hope* (P&R Publishing, Phillipsburg NJ, 1999), p. 107: “Christ’s atonement lays the foundation for the work of restoring all of man and all of creation.”

<sup>13</sup> “Our safety is ensured, for we cannot be deprived of the inheritance awaiting us in heaven.” John Calvin, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. XII, p. 189; Meyers ed.

state is upon *earth*. Little wonder Postmillennialists argue for the resurrection of the flesh!

Language mentioning a “new heaven and earth” (Isa. 65:17; 66:22; II Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1) is symbolic of the post-Parousia world, where the church reigns supreme with Christ, having triumphed over its enemies. One need only read Isaiah 65 and 66 to see this simple fact; the whole section turns upon a comparison of the fate of the disobedient Jews who persecuted believers and their destruction at Christ’s coming, over against the triumph of the faithful little flock. In the new heavens and earth, it is not the Romans and Jews that hold dominion over the earth, but the church, reigning supreme with Christ! The immanence of this passage’s fulfillment in the first century is shown in the fact that Stephen quoted it when standing trial before the Sanhedrin, when accused of saying Christ would come and destroy the temple and change the customs given by Moses (Acts 6:13, 14; 7:48-50). There is no basis for the belief that the new heavens and earth are a wondrously regenerated physical cosmos, as supposed by Postmillennialists. John makes very clear that the *wicked* are in the new heavens and earth, outside the church, the new Jerusalem, the covenantal habitation of the saints. “For without [the city] are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie” (Rev. 22:15; cf. 21:8). Furthermore, John is very clear that the gates of the city are open to the nations east, west, north, and south, to enter in through faith, repentance, and baptism; all who will are encouraged to “come” and drink from the waters of life (Rev. 21:24-27; 22:17).

This proves conclusively that the new heavens and earth are not a material new creation. Since unregenerate men are outside the city in the new heavens and earth, they cannot represent a new creation, free of sin and sinner. As with the resurrection of the body, Postmillennialists place man’s ultimate salvation upon the *wrong side* of eternity, upon earth, instead of in heaven. Since references to the new heaven and earth are symbolic, they must be interpreted and brought into harmony with plain passages of scripture elsewhere, not *vice versa*. Gentry and Strimple reverse this process, assigning a literal interpretation to these symbols, doing violence to plain statements elsewhere that our inheritance is in heaven. Simply put, the idea that our eternal state is on a redeemed earth is *frivolous*. It is the stuff we have come to associate with the literalisms of Premillennialism, not serious scholarship. The spiritually discerning will reject it out of hand.

### Scriptures for the Resurrection of the Flesh

What about the resurrection of the flesh? Do advocates of this school have any verses plainly making this claim? Here are the verses cited by Gentry and Strimple; our comments follow.<sup>14</sup>

**Job 19:25, 26:** “For I know that my redeemer liveth, 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.”

This is the *only* verse in the Bible that makes reference to the flesh in apparent connection with the resurrection. However, the Hebrew of this verse is so obscure and ambiguous that scholars cannot decide *how* it is to be translated. The marginal reading gives the rendering, “After I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet *out of* my flesh...” *etc.* In other words, two renderings, *exactly opposite* in meaning, can be sustained by the original tongue. Almost all translations note this anomaly and offer the alternate translation, and the American Standard and New American Standard give it as the reading in the actual text. Thus, it cannot be determined with certainty what Job actually stated or said.<sup>15</sup> Given that this is the *only* place in scripture referring to the flesh in the context of the supposed resurrection, we would be well advised to opt for the alternate rendering. At the very least, standing as it does alone, and more especially in view of the poetic nature of the book, no essential doctrine of scripture can be built upon it.

**Isa. 26:19:** “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.”

The historical context of this verse spoke to the restoration of Israel to its land after the captivity. The Jews were like “dead men” in the grave of captivity in Babylon. “My dead body” may refer to the Jews collectively. This same image is given by Ezekiel in the prophecy of the valley full of dry bones (Ezek. 27:1-14). This is the standard interpretation, almost universally acknowledged by commentators. However, that there is also a Messianic dimension to the passage, which looks to the resurrection of Christ and the salvation of believers cannot be denied. Even so, other than Christ’s, the resurrection of physical bodies is

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<sup>14</sup> Kenneth L. Gentry Jr, *Three Views of the Millennium and Beyond* (Zondervan, 1999), p. 55.

<sup>15</sup> Strimple admits to the textual and translation difficulties connected with this passage: “Difficult questions have been raised about the proper text and translation of Job 19:25-27.” *WWTB?* p. 294.

nowhere suggested by this poetic and highly charged passage.

**Jn. 5:28, 29:** “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

As with Isa. 26:19, no physical bodies are mentioned in this text. All Jesus says is that those in the graves will come forth. Contrary to Gentry’s assumption, Jesus did not say they would come forth on *this* side of eternity. Daniel made the like statement, saying, “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2). This language is obviously figurative and poetic: The dead do not “sleep” in the earth; their spirits go to Hades (Lk. 24:43; cf. 16:19-31). Hence, the idea of “waking” from the dust is merely accommodative; it points to a coming day of salvation when death would be vanquished and man would go to his eternal home with God and Christ in heaven.

**Rom. 8:11:** “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

“Quickenings” our mortal bodies does *not* refer to the resurrection of the body, but the regenerative effects of God’s Spirit in man by the mortification of the flesh. “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live” (Rom. 8:13; cf. Gal. 5:24). This is the more apparent in that in the immediately preceding verse Paul says “the body is dead because of sin” (Rom. 8:10). The saints at Rome were not dead, and their bodies were not dead either; the apostle is merely using a figure of speech. As the source of fleshly lusts, the body is spiritually “dead”, and is a “body of death” (Rom. 7:24). But by being brought into subjection to the Spirit, the body is figuratively quickened and made an instrument of righteousness. Peter says substantially the same thing: “For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God” (I Pet. 4:1). In other words, just as man’s spirit is quickened and made alive by the new birth (Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13), so the body is “quickenings” as it is brought into subjection to God’s Spirit, and its lusts mortified.

**Rom. 8:23:** “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we



*ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*”

There is no subject in the first clause of this verse; “they” (“not only they”) is supplied by the translators; other versions conform or depart as the translators think best. We believe that “they” is most appropriate to the context and speaks to the Gentiles, “we ourselves” to the Jews. The Jews had the firstfruits of the Spirit: The gospel message began at Jerusalem and was preached first to the Jews. Hence they were the “firstfruits unto God and the Lamb” (Rev. 14:4; cf. Acts 3:26; 13:46; Eph. 1:12, 13). James is in accord: “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (Jas. 1:18). Both Jews and Gentiles groaned, looking for the adoption and redemption of their body, which signifies receipt of their immortal body or bodies at the general resurrection (cf. Eph. 1:14, 15). The text *nowhere* mentions the resurrection or physical bodies. Needless to say, the idea of a material new creation is also entirely away from the text.

**Phil. 3:20, 21:** *“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence 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.”*

Some interpret this passage corporately of the church. It can also be interpreted individually of the believer (this writer’s view). There is no mention in any event of physical bodies being resurrected from the grave.

**I Thess. 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.”*

We need only note that physical bodies are not mentioned. The very next verse says that those living would be caught up with them in the air “and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (v. 17). Clearly, the whole thrust of the language speaks to the translation of believers *to heaven* upon the death of the body, not a purported resurrection of the flesh.

### **Scriptures against the Resurrection of the Flesh**

The verses above are relied upon by advocates of a resurrection of the flesh. As we have seen, the idea of a physical resurrection is completely away from virtually every scripture cited; the notion has no more basis than the fanciful notion of man’s eternal state subsisting in a “material New Created order.” Let us

now look at a few verses pointing to the resurrection of the spirit and the inheritance of the saints in the immaterial realm of heaven. Although dozens of verses might be marshaled, space does not allow us to consider more than a few.

**Lk. 23:43:** *“Verily I say unto thee, This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”*

These words, spoken by the Lord in the immediate reaches of death, bore the promise of the first resurrection of the spirit in Hades Paradise. Since physical bodies are no part of the first resurrection, what basis is there to believe they will be part of the second resurrection of the soul in heaven? To the contrary, “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (I Cor. 15:50).

**Jn. 3:5-7:** *“Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”*

This verse shows that there are two natures: one belonging to the kingdom of *heaven*, one belonging to the *earth*. The earthly nature and body do not enter the kingdom of God; the spirit does.

**Jn. 4:24:** *“God is a Spirit.”*

This verse is dispositive of the idea that physical bodies have any part of the heavenly kingdom. In Lk. 24:38, 39 Jesus said “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bone, as ye see me have.” Since God is a Spirit, and spirits do not have flesh and bones, it is axiomatic that God does not have flesh and bone. Moses and Elijah appeared together on the mount of Transfiguration; *neither one had a physical body* as appears from the fact that Moses died and his body was buried by the Lord (Deut. 34:5, 6). Both were inhabitants of the Hadean realm of the spirit, where corporeal bodies can neither enter nor exist. Presumably, this was equally true of the Lord upon his ascension into the heavenly realm. Christ is now a Spirit (I Cor. 15:45; II Cor. 3:17). In the resurrection, Christians are made like unto Christ and God (Ps. 17:15; Rom. 8:29; I Cor. 15:49). Hence, we will be spirit-beings without flesh and bone.

**Jn. 6:63:** *“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.”*



The flesh profits nothing in terms of man's redemption, sanctification, and salvation. It is suitable only for dwelling upon earth, where life is bounded by time and space and consigned to corruption. It is the spirit that is quickened and receives eternal life, not the flesh.

**Rom. 7:24:** *"O wretched man that I am? Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*

The physical body, with its fleshly lusts, is the source of man's temptation. This was true even before the fall; the lusts of the eyes and pride of life enticed Eve to sin. Although he did not inherit Adam's "fallenness" (having no earthly father), Jesus also experienced the pangs of bodily temptation. Hebrews says that he was in all points tempted like as we are (Heb. 4:15). Therefore, restoring man to his native condition before the fall would not remedy the temptation to sin that resides in his flesh. Men might resist temptation in a way that in our fallen condition we now cannot (for we are carnal, sold under sin – Rom. 7:14); but it would not remove the source of temptation. It is only in putting off the body that the motions of sin in our members are destroyed. However, physical death alone could not accomplish man's deliverance. Without the *legal* atonement embodied in the cross of Christ, physical death would result only in *eternal damnation*. Physical death entered by removing access to the tree of life (Gen. 3:22-24), so God could save man's soul (spirit), who could then dwell with God in heaven above.

**Rom. 8:10:** *"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."*

The body is the source of sin and temptation. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other" (Gal. 5:17). If the flesh is contrary to the Spirit, it is hardly possible that it will be saved. If men are to be restored to the original state of the creation before the fall, as Postmillennialists assert, like Adam, they will be susceptible to sin and temptation arising in the flesh. If they are susceptible to sin, the eternal state of any purported new earth will be imperiled: the race may fall again! Unless we are prepared to believe the whole race is to be exposed to the risk of a second fall, we must reject this fanciful scheme.

**I Cor. 5:5:** *"Deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."*

"Destruction" of the flesh here is best understood in terms of its mortification by denying its affections and

lusts. By excommunicating unrepentant members overtaken in sin, they may be brought to shame and repentance, leading to the denial and destruction of the flesh. By thus "crucifying the flesh" (Gal. 5:24), the spirit is restored to purity, suitable unto salvation. The flesh is expressly excluded from the spirit's salvation, and is consigned to destruction.

**I Cor. 15:44, 49, 50:** *"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body...As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."*

Here are several plain statements that set the earthly and fleshly body over against the spiritual and heavenly body. The image of the earthy consists in a natural, fleshly body and carnal mind. The image of the heavenly consists in a regenerated mind and an immaterial body. The natural and material body of earth is corruptible; the heavenly and immaterial body of the spirit is incorruptible. The promise of the resurrection is of an immaterial body, like unto Christ and the angels of God in heaven (Matt. 22:25; Heb. 2:14-16).

**II Cor. 4:16-18:** *"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."*

The material is visible and temporal; the immaterial is invisible and eternal. Although the outward and material man should perish, the inward, immaterial man is renewed day by day. The body will perish, but the spirit will inherit eternal life.

**II Cor. 5:1:** *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."*

Our "earthly house" refers to our mortal bodies of flesh; "this tabernacle" may refer either to this temporal realm, the tabernacle of the material heavens and earth (*cf.* Ps. 104:2 - *God stretches out the heavens like the curtain of a tent*) or to the body itself, probably the latter (II Pet. 1:14). Dissolution of our earthly house speaks to putting off the body in death. The "building of God, not made with hands, eternal in

the heavens” speaks to our immortal, immaterial, and spiritual bodies. These are received and enjoyed in heaven, not upon a “new earth.”

**II Cor. 5:2, 3:** “For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.”

In the resurrection, we are clothed with our immaterial and immortal house from heaven, not our fleshly, mortal bodies of earth. “Naked” speaks to putting off the body of flesh in death; “clothed” speaks to putting on the spiritual body in the resurrection of life.

**II Cor. 5:6-8:** “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”

Could the apostle have made it plainer? We would be absent from the body of flesh that we might be at home with the Lord in the spirit. If, in the resurrection we are reunited with the body, *we will be at home in the body and absent from the Lord!* Clearly, that is no part of the Christian’s hope, which does not speak well of Postmillennialism.

**II Cor. 5:10:** “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

This verse, following hard upon the heels of those going before, which so clearly proclaim that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, makes clear that in the judgment men will *not* be clothed with houses of clay. That they are to receive the things done *while in the body* clearly implies that at the judgment they would be in the body *no more*. They have passed from this life and put off their bodies of clay and gone to be judged for the things done while still in the flesh.

**Gal. 3:3:** “Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

Those who hold that the “spirits of just men made perfect” (Heb. 12:23) must be reunited with the flesh to be complete and inherit eternal life, fall under the like condemnation Paul reproaches the Galatians with. The completion of man’s salvation is the union of the

spirit with God in heaven, not being newly clothed upon with bodies of clay upon earth.

**Heb. 11:13, 17:** “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth...But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.”

Note that the patriarchs and great men of faith were *strangers upon earth* and looked for a *heavenly city and country*. The notion that man’s eternal state is in a material new earth is childish in its understanding and literalism and borders on heretical. It is the stuff of Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons. It is an express denial of the scripture.

**Heb. 12:23:** “To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.”

The spirits of the righteous who died before Christ were not wanting bodies, but *atonement*. With the “blood of sprinkling” (v. 22) they were made wholly perfect and the way into heaven opened to them. What need have they of fleshly bodies seeing they are already perfect? Moreover, the names of general assembly of the firstborn (the church) are written in heaven, not a new earth. Our conversation is in heaven (Phil. 3:20); we are to set our affections there (Col. 3:1) because that is the place of our eternal abode (Heb. 12:10, 13, 16).

**I Pet. 4:6:** “For for this cause was the gospel preached also unto them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.”

This verse seems to speak to the saints of prior ages who had the gospel preached to them in the types and similitudes of the Old Law. Although condemned by the law according to men in the flesh, they were justified by the atoning blood of Christ that they might live according to God *in the spirit*. To be reunited with bodies of clay is no part of the divine purpose.

**Rev. 20:12, 13:** “And I saw the dead, small and great stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in

*them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”*

Here is imagery portraying judgment day when Hades gave up its dead. Notice that physical bodies are conspicuously absent. The dead stand before God. That they are “dead,” signifies they are on the *other side* of eternity in the realm of the spirit, not upon earth. The “sea” is probably symbolic of Tartarus, the place of the lost dead; “hell” (Hades) speaks to Paradise, the place of the saints and martyrs. The dead come forth from Hades – both Tartarus and Paradise - to receive their respective rewards. The whole transaction is portrayed as occurring in the realm of the spirit, not the flesh, in the immaterial realm of eternity, and not time.

### Conclusion

The error of the Jews and early church has been kept alive by those today who look for a fleshly resurrection upon *earth*. The earthly resurrection of the believer is related to the error of the bodily, visible return of Christ. By very definition, the spiritual realm is eternal and immaterial. Flesh and blood bodies are bounded by time and space and therefore cannot inherit incorruption. Let us hold fast to our hope for we will reign in due time if we faint not.

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Bishop John Lightfoot on  
Romans 8:19-23

### “The Whole Creation Groaneth and Travaileth”

“At the nineteenth verse of chap. viii, he brings upon the second mystery that he hath to treat upon, - the calling of the Gentiles; whom he calls *pasa ktisij* ‘the whole creation’ or ‘every creature:’ by which title they also are called, Mark xvi. 15, Col. 1.23: and he shows, how they were subject to vanity of idolatry, and the delusions of the devil; but must, in time, be delivered from this bondage, for which deliverance they now groaned: and not they only, but they of the Jews also,

which had received the first-fruits of the Spirit, longed for their coming in, waiting for the adoption, - that is, the redemption of their whole body: for the church of the Jews was but the childlike body; and, accordingly, their ordinances were according to the childlike age of the church: but the stature of the fulness of Christ’s mystical body, was in the bringing in of the Gentiles. Being to handle this great point of the calling of the Gentiles, and rejection of the Jews, he begins at the bottom, at the great doctrine of predestination, which he handles from ver. 29 of chap. viii to chap. ix. 24: and then he falls upon the other; - that Israel stumbled at Messias and fell, seeking indeed after righteousness, but not his, but their own; and that they are cast away, but not all; a remnant to be saved, that belonged to the election of grace. As it was in the time when the world was heathen, some of them that belonged to the election, came in and were proselyted to the worship of the true God; so some of these, while all the rest of their nation lie in unbelief. And in this unbelief must they lie, till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and then all God’s Israel is completed.”

Comment: Bishop Lightfoot here argues that the “whole creation” of Rom. 8:19-23 refers to or embraces the Gentiles, finding in Mk. 16:15 and Col. 1:23 language of similar meaning and import. He finds reference to the Jews by the nomination “we who have the first-fruits of the Spirit.” The Jews were the first-fruits; the gospel is “the power of God unto salvation, unto the Jew first and also the Greek” (Rom. 1:16). John specifically calls the Jews the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb in Rev. 14:4; (*cf.* 7:1-8; Jm. 1:18; Eph. 1:12). Lightfoot sees “all Israel” (“and so all Israel shall be saved,” Rom. 11:26) in reference to the whole body of believers in Christ, not ethnic Jews as incorrectly supposed by some. Israel is defined by the obedience of faith, not ethnicity; hence, it is not ethnic Jews that are the seed of Israel, but those who receive the gospel verity. Hence, it is in the inclusion of men from every race and people that “all Israel” is saved; for there is no respect of persons with the Lord, “but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10:35).

# The Intermediate State

[Editor's note: The following appeared in the 1803 edition of the *Orthodox Churchman*. It provides a survey of all incidents of the world "hell" appearing in the Authorized Version, and is helpful in understanding the different Greek and Hebrew words translated/mistranslated "hell" in English]

1. Matt. 5:22 – “In danger of HELL-fire.” The word in the Greek, here rendered HELL, is *Gehenna*. This word *Gehenna* relates, in its primary sense, to that dreadful doom of being burnt alive in the valley of *Hinnom*, where the idolatrous Jews (in that particular spot of the valley called *Tophet*) burnt their children in sacrifice to Moloch; and in its secondary sense, it means the place, or the state, of the damned. *Beza* subjoins to this verse a note, which has an imposing air of research into Jewish polity. He enumerates the “*quatuor Suppliciorum Genera Hebraeis usitata; Strangulatio, Gladius, Lapidation, Ignis*” [four kinds of capital punishment (literal: supplication, kneeling, viz., torture) used by the Jews: strangulation, sword, stoning, and fire]. To this our excellent WHITBY seems to allude in his Commentary; and, with more straightforward simplicity, thus determines the meaning of the passage. “*He that represents and censures his brother as a child of Hell, shall be obnoxious to Hell-fire. – Gehenna mean here the place of torment in the life to come; and it occurs in a singular sense in the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> verses of this chapter.*” *Principal Campbell*, in his very curious “preliminary dissertations” to his Translation of the Four Gospels, says that the word *Geenna* does not occur in the version of the LXX. It certainly does not. But in Josh. 18:16, the word *Gaienna* represents what in our English Bible is denominated the valley of *Hinnom*: this gives us the primary meaning of the word.

2. Matt. 10:28 – “Both soul and body in HELL.” *En Geevn*. Here too the word is used in its secondary sense. – By the way, what do *materialists* say to this distinct mention of “*both soul and body,*” *xia psyxnv swma*”

3. Luke 12:5 – The parallel passage to the preceding. HELL. *Geennan*.

4. Matt. 11:23 and the parallel text, Luke 10:15 – “Shalt be brought down to HELL.” *Ews* (topon subaudit.) *Adhj* is derived from a primitive, and *idain* to see; and indeed the word was spelt *Aidhj* by the older Greek writers, at least the poets. Thus Homer IX, IL, 312. “*Aidao pulnsin,*” “the gates of hell.” *Aidao* *AEloice* for *Aide*. “The Hebrew *Sheol* the Greek *Adhj*, the Latin *orcus*, (says the very learned Bishop of St. Asaph, in his critical notes appended to his elaborate translation of HOSEA) are words of one and the same import; signifying *the place appointed for the habitation of departed souls, in the interval between death and the general resurrection*. In the New Testament two words are indiscriminately rendered, in our English Bible, by the word HELL, *Adhj* and *Geenna*: the latter a word of Hebrew origin, translated into the Greek language, as the appropriate name of the place of the damned; which was generally called so by the Jews of the Apostolic age. This use of the word HELL, in the English New Testament, has imposed a sense upon it quite foreign to its etymology, and abhorrent from its more general application.” Our English, or Saxon word HELL, means a place *concealed or unseen*; in which it agrees with the Greek word *Hades*. “Another inaccuracy (says the Bishop) obtains in our English Bible; the Hebrew *Sheol* being perpetually in the Old Testament, and the Greek *Adhj* sometimes in the New, rendered improperly by the word grave, which neither signifies. The Hebrew names of hell and the grave are never confounded, nor the Greek by the sacred writers. No two things can be more distinct; hell is the mansion of the departed spirit, the grave the receptacle of the dead body.” I find *Hades* translated grave but once in the text of the English New Testament, I Coir. 15:55; and once in the marginal rendering, Rev. 20:14. The words tomb or sepulcher are translations of *Mman*, or *mvneion*; though this latter word is more than once rendered grave

The situation of Hades is always described as far beneath the surface of the earth; where a large vacuity is represented, part of which forms *Hades*; and a part lower still, nearer the centre of the earth's hollow sphere, in the site of *Gehenna*, the place of the damned, answering to the *Tartarus* of the ancient poets. The Scriptures speak of three places inhabited by intelligent Beings; Heaven, Earth, and what is styled under the Earth. Rev. 5:3, in Heaven, en tw ouranw; in Earth, epi thj ghj; and under the Earth, uhoxatw thj ghj; are distinctly enumerated. Upokatw thj ghj, can refer to no place except one within the crust of this earth's ball. Rational beings are scripturally denominated eparanioi, epigeioi, and kataxqonioi. Thus at the name of Jesus every knee must bow eparaniwn, kai eipheioi, and kataxqoniwn Phil 2:10. To go into the lower parts of the earth, or into the pit, is to die; to come back to life, is to rise again. There is a word which may explain what I would here urge – “the DEEP” – the abyss; Rom. 10:7. “thn Abysson.” Who (say the Apostle) shall descend into the *deep*? (the abyss – Hades – the place of the separate spirits) that is, to *bring up* Christ again *from the dead*; - anagein.

The meaning of the expression then in the two text Matt 11:23 and Lk. 10:15 is this – “Thou, Capernaum, which are now very highly exalted, shalt be abased and brought low hereafter, by the just judgment of God.” – Hades is here used in a figurative sense.

I have treated upon the words *Gehenna* and *Hades* the more diffusely on their first occurrence; because if we rightly apprehend their meaning in the outset, the progress of our inquiry will be much facilitated.

5. Matt. 15:18 – “And the gates of HELL shall not prevail against it;” (see the Church of Christ) Pulai adou the gates of Hades: the confines of death. The word is here used figuratively; and the expression, as Whitby has proved at length, amounts to this; “My church shall continue for ever, it shall never perish.”

6. Matt. 18:9 – “To be cast into HELL-fire.” “Eij thn Geennan to puroj.” Here, as well as in the parallel passages, Matt. 9:43, 45, 47, the

meaning is the same with that laid down under No. 1.

7. Matt.23:15 – “The child of HELL.” “Uion Geenhj.” Verse 33. “The damnation of HELL.” “Thj krianqj thj Geenhj.” HELL here means the torment, where burns the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels “to pur to aiwnion, to etoimasmenon tw diabolq kai toi Aggelios auto.”

8. Lk. 16:23 – “In HELL he lift up his eyes, being in torments.” “En to Ado.” The rich man is here described as in torments; and therefore he must be supposed to be in that lowest abyss, (already mentioned under No. 4.) which, though in Hades, may be considered as *Gehenna* [better, *Tartarus*, Editor]. This passage occurs in a parable; but it is more than probable that it is couched in terms agreeable to truth, and coinciding with the popular belief of the Jews. The ancients, generally, held the same opinion. Homer's Hades, Virgil's infernal regions, are formed on the same model. You descend below the earth's surface; you behold the receptacle of separate spirits; and the place of the damned is comprehended beneath the same tremendous vault. The “Descensus Averni” leads to both to Elysium and Tartarus. (See No. 12.) Abraham's bosom is Paradise, the receptacle of happy, and that part of Hades which we may call *Gehenna* of guilty souls.

9. Acts 2:27 – Thou wilt not leave my soul in HELL.” “Eij adou.” Verse 31. “Not left in HELL.” “Eij Adou.” This passage refers to Ps. 16:10 where the word is Sheol, Hades. Our Lord's sufferings terminated at his death on the cross. There it was that he said, “tetelestai,” *consummatus est*, it is finished. He had nothing to undergo in the place of torment. The expression means only “Thou wilt not leave my soul in the receptacle of separate spirits; it shall be re-united to my body, and I shall rise again.” Our Lord told the repentant thief that he should be with him that day in Paradise – doubtless that place where the souls of the righteous are reserved, “in happy rest and tranquil hope,” in the enjoyment of some portion of felicity, till the day of judgment.

A great deal has been surmised, and a great deal affirmed concerning I Pet. 3:18, 19, 20. “Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometimes were

disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was preparing.” Bishop Horsley interprets it in this way, that “the soul of Christ went and preached to the souls not in prison, as we read in our English Bible; but en fulaxh “in safe keeping,” (if that text of St. Peter is to be understood literally, and I know not how it can be understood otherwise,) which had been disobedient (apeiqhssi pote); but, as the expression “one while had been” implies, were at length recovered from that disobedience, probably by the preaching of Noah, and before their death had been brought to repentance and faith in the redeemer to come. To these souls our Lord Jesus Christ went in his soul and preached. But what could he preach to them? Not repentance. They had repented of their disobedience before they were separated from the body by death, or they had not been found in the bundle of life. But, if he went and proclaimed to them (ekhrucen) the great tidings that he had actually offered the sacrifice of their redemption, and was now about to enter into glory; this was a preaching that would give new animation and assurance to their hope of the consummation, in due season, of their bliss. And this, by the way, I take to be the true sense of this text of St. Peter. (Critical notes upon Hosea, p. 158.)

But Bishop Pearson says, that “Christ preached toij en fulakh pneumasi), by the same spirit by virtue of which he was raised from the dead; but that spirit was not his soul, but something of a great power. 2dly, That those to whom he preached were such as were disobedient. 2dly, That the time when they were disobedient was the time before the flood, while the Ark was preparing. It is certain then, that Christ did preach unto those person, which in the days of Noah were disobedient all that time the long-suffering of God waited, and consequently so long as repentance was offered. It remaineth therefore, that the plain interpretation be acknowledged for the time that Christ did preach unto those men which lived before the flood, even while they lived. For though this was not done by an immediate act of the Son of God, as if he personally had appeared on earth, and actually preached to that old world; but by the ministry of a prophet, by the sending of Noah, the eighth preacher of righteousness; yet to do any thing by another not able to perform it without him, as much demonstrates the existence of the principal cause, as if he did it of himself without any intervening instrument.” (Bishop

Pearson on the Creed, p. 113, 10<sup>th</sup> edition.) The Bishop is here discussing the pre-existence of Christ before his incarnation. In his exposition of the article of the Creed “he descends into Hell;” after recapitulating this comment on the text in question, he refers his readers to the passage quoted. (p. 229.) [Editor: the better view is the latter, that Christ preached to the spirits in Tartarus *now* (when Peter wrote) through the Holy Spirit in Noah *when* the ark was preparing; not that he preached to the souls in Hades following his death upon the cross.]

I Cor. 15:55 – The word HELL occurs in the margin here. In the text we have the well-known apostrophe, “O grave! Where is thy victory?” Ho su, adh, to vikoj; Grave here, and Hell in the margin, mean only the place of separate spirits, out of which “the prisoners of hope” shall come forth at “the resurrection of the just.”

11. Jam. 3:6 – “It is set on fire of HELL.” Fylogizomenh (h’ Glwssa) upo thj Geennhs. In this passage, though used figuratively in an hyperbolic sense, the word means the place of everlasting fire, the place of torment.

12. II Peter 2:4 – “Cast them down to HELL.” “Tartarqsaj;” casting them into Tartarus. The word hell here undoubtedly signifies the place of punishment prepared for the devil and his angels, “the angels that sinned.” [Editor: Better, Tartarus was the intermediate place of punishment and confinement pending final execution of judgment and sentence in Gehenna; viz., eternal death. The “angels” who sinned should be interpreted as the “sons of God” (viz., the sons of Seth or children of faith) who apostatized before the flood by marrying unbelieving women.]

13. Rev. :18 – “And I have the keys of HELL and Death.” “Kai exw tas kleij to qanatoj kia to Adu.” Of Death and of Hades. HELL means here the place of separate spirits.

14. Rev. 6:8 – “Death and HELL followed with him.” Oqanatoj kaio Adhj akoloqei met auto.” The same.

15. Rev. 20:13 – “Death and HELL delivered up the dead which were in them. “O Qanatoj kai o Adhj edwxan tas en autoj nekros.” These two passages (the last quoted and this), says Bishop Horsley, afford the boldest personifications of Hell and which occur to my memory.” Strip of

its figurative form, and once more disembodied, Hades in each instance has the same meaning. The bishop says (p. 159), "I am inclined to think, but suggest it only to the examination of the learned, without venturing to assert, that death and hell are always conjointly personified by the sacred writers, never one without another." I submit to the learned a passage where HELL is personified alone. Isa. 14:9 0 "HELL from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee (the King of Babylon) at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee."

16. Rev. 20:14 – "And Death and HELL were cast into the lake of fire." Kai o qanatoj kai o Adhj ejlhqhsan ejj thn limhn to puroj." Hades has here the same meaning as in the two last quoted passages. It appears evidently that there is a place lower than Hades; into which abyss, being personified, together with Death, it is cast. Eij thn limhn ta puroj, is, I conceived, a phrase of the import as ejj thn Geennan ta puroj.

Gehenna and Hades are perfectly well distinguished from each other in the New Testament, and are no more confounded than Sheol and Keber in the Old. Bishop Horsley, to whom the Christian world is under lasting obligation for his translation of Hosea, specifies six instances where Sheol may seem to be used for Keber. We have found but one where Hades appears to have the sense of Gehenna; that which I have already explained under No. 8.

#### Gehenna

1. Matt. 5:22
2. Matt. 5:29
3. Matt. 5:30
4. Matt. 10:28
5. Luke 12:5
6. Matt. 18: 9
7. Mark 9:43
8. Mark 9:45
9. Mark 9:47
10. Matt. 23:15
11. Matt. 23:33
12. James 3:6
13. I Pet. 2:24

I have noticed twenty-three places where the word HELL occurs in the text in our English Bibles, and one where it is found in the margin; which we may call twenty-four in all. In *thirteen* of these, the word in the original is Geenna, and in one Tartarobj; for this later word is wrapt up in the participle tartarwsaj; and in these it is to be deemed *the place of torment*; and in the remaining eleven, including the instance where it stands in the margin, it must be counted *the receptacle of separate spirits*.

Bishop Horsley, I perceive, (Hosea, p. 46) says, "we find the word Hell in our English Bibles in twenty-one passages." His lordship, though he counts three verses in Matt. 5 22, 29, 30, in which the word occurs; counts but on in Mark 9, viz, verse 47; but it occurs also in verses 43 and 45; and stands in the margin opposite the word grave in I Cor. 15:55.

The bishop says, it signifies simply the region of departed spirits in twelve places. Now, even taking in the marginal instance, I can find but eleven places where it has this signification; and in proof of my assertion, I refer, very humbly, to the above recital of particular passages. His lordship has not specified the texts where it has this latter meaning.

I subjoin a table of all the places in the New Testament wherein the word HELL is found; distinguishing those expressed in the original by the word Gehenna, from those where the word in the Greek is Hades.

#### Hades

1. Matt. 11:23
2. Luke 10:15
3. Matt. 16:18
4. Luke 16:23
5. Acts 2:27
6. Acts 2:31
7. I Cor. 15:55 margin
8. Rev. 1:13
9. Rev. 6:8
10. Rev. 20:13
11. Rev. 20:14



# The General Resurrection and The Book of Daniel

In this article we explore the general resurrection: what was it and when did it occur?

## The Five Deaths Identifiable in Scripture

In order to identify what the general resurrection was or consisted in, it will be useful to briefly survey the five deaths identifiable in scripture, so that we can safely rule out what it was not.

- 1) Moral/Spiritual death. Man was created in the image of God; he participated in the divine image and likeness by the indwelling of God's Spirit (inspiration – Heb. “neshamah”, Strong's # 5397) breathed into our first ancestor at his creation (Gen. 2:7). This inspiration allowed man to rise above his carnal nature. When man sinned, he lost the indwelling of God's Spirit (neshamah). He became carnal, sold under sin. He possessed the ability to see and to choose right from wrong, but his affections so far inclined in favor of his flesh, that he was estranged from God in his heart, and followed after his lower appetites. Paul describes this, saying, “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Gal. 5:17; cf. Rom. 7:14ff). Man's carnality is treated as a type of “death” in scripture from which man must be awakened or raised. Thus, Paul says in Ephesians “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light” (Gal. 5:14). Here we see that moral estrangement from Christ is characterized as a type of death, from which man is raised by turning from sin to Christ.
- 2) Legal/Juridical death. This is best comprehended as the sentence handed down by God for all that commit sin (the idea of imputed sin or condemnation is unbiblical and rejected). All that sin come under the sentence of eternal death, and are treated as dead, or as “good as dead” in contemplation of law. Paul alludes to this death when he says “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins...God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in

sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:1, 4-6). We take the phrase “dead in sins” to signify that we were under judgment of sin and the sentence and punishment of eternal death. However, unwilling that any perish, God gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins (“*Christ died for all; salvation is freely available to all; and God wants all to be saved*”). The sentence being satisfied by Jesus' substitutionary death and atoning sacrifice, we are acquitted of guilt and “quickened” together with Christ. We thus pass from a condition of legal and juridical condemnation and death, to one of justification and life by the obedience of faith and power of Christ's cross.

- 3) Physical death. Physical death was the result of Adam's being barred from the tree of life (Gen. 3:22-24). It is not the ultimate penalty for sin, but it is clearly one of its immediate consequences and a perquisite to eternal death: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return” (Gen. 3:19). Since physical death was the immediate doom brought in by sin and bespoke the greater doom of eternal death that potentially followed, it is from the *consequence* of physical death that the promise of resurrection was given. This promise was made in veiled, poetic terms when God said that the woman's seed would bruise the head of the serpent, signifying that Jesus would crush the power of sin and death by his cross and resurrection (Gen. 3:15). It is to the *consequence* of physical death Martha referred when Lazarus died, saying, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection of the last day” (Jn. 11:21). The resurrection of the last day was therefore from *consequence* of physical death. Similarly, it is to the physically dead the Greek collectively refers when it describes Jesus' resurrection saying he was raised from “among the dead” (Lk. 24:46; cf. Acts 17:32). Jesus was the firstfruit of the general resurrection. But Jesus' resurrection

was from among the physically dead. Therefore, the general resurrection is from physical death and its consequences. However, a resurrection from physical death does *not* imply a resurrection to physical life. Our inheritance is in heaven, where physical bodies cannot enter. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven (I Cor. 15:50, 51; *cf.* 35-44). The natural body shed at death is replaced by a spiritual body suited to ethereal realms above – immortal, intangible, and immaterial.

- 4) Hadean death. Death and Hades are closely associated in scripture. The phrase “death and Hades” occurs with some frequency in Revelation, showing that these were inseparably related (Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14; *cf.* I Cor. 15:55). Called “Sheol” in the Old Testament, Hades was to the soul or spirit of man what the grave was to the body. The soul could not enter the presence of God in heaven without the atoning sacrifice of Christ, so the dead were sequestered in Hades until the general resurrection. The righteous dwelt in a place of comfort called “paradise” or “Abraham’s bosom” (Lk. 16:23; *cf.* 23:43; II Cor. 12:4); the wicked dwelt in a place of doom and punishment called “Tartarus” (Lk. 16:23, 24; II Pet. 2:4). Jesus’ spirit was in Hades with the repentant thief after their deaths upon the cross (Lk. 23:43; Acts 2:27). The inherent connection in previous times between death and Hades meant that resurrection from consequence of physical death was in reality a resurrection from Hades. (See Rev. 20:11-15; *cf.* I Cor. 15:55.) *Hadean death was the last enemy standing between the saints and entrance into the presence of God in heaven.* Hadean death was done away at the general resurrection. The saints now go directly to heaven upon decease, the lost to eternal punishment.
- 5) Eternal death. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Death was the punishment annexed to sin from the very garden (Gen. 2:17). But physical death was not the ultimate consequence of sin. Rather, physical death entered because access to the tree of life was removed, lest man eat of the tree of life and live forever a sinner (Gen. 3:22-24). For the righteous, physical death held the promise of resurrection to eternal life; for the alien sinner, physical death

forebodes eternal doom. Although we do not believe the soul of man is immortal (this was a Greek concept connected with the doctrine of reincarnation in which the soul was born to earthly life anew after a 1000 year sojourn in Hades), the spirit of man does survive physical death. Those who die outside of Christ are sentenced to Gehenna, also called the “lake of fire,” or “second death” (Matt. 23:33; Rev. 20:14, 15). Gehenna, or the Valley of Tophet, was a valley beyond the walls of Jerusalem. It was the place where the corpses of 185,000 Assyrians that perished before the walls of Jerusalem were buried and burned (Isa. 30:31-33; 37:36). Josephus reports that over 600,000 Jews were cast into Gehenna from the famine during the siege of Jerusalem, where their bodies were flyblown and putrefied, and eaten by kites and dogs. This is the meaning of the phrase “their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched” (Isa. 66:24; Mk. 9:44,48) *viz.*, like a garbage dump, the maggots and fires assigned to consume the wicked are never quenched, but feed continuously upon those that neglect to lay hold upon salvation.

Having reviewed the various uses made of the term “death” in scripture, it should be clear that the general resurrection consisted exclusively in resurrection from physical death and Hades. Only Hadean death was done away by the resurrection. Affirming any other “death” was done away will result in Universalism. Test it for yourself and see: if we say physical death was done away, then all men will live forever. If we say legal and juridical death was done away, then all men are justified. If we say moral and spiritual death was done away, then all men are made holy and pure. If we say eternal death was done away, then the penalty of sin has been removed. *Thus, only Hadean death was destroyed by the general resurrection.* See Rev. 20:14.

### **When was the Resurrection?**

So much for the “what” of the general resurrection. Let’s talk about the “when.” When did the prophets say the general resurrection would occur?

It is clear that the prophets and the expectation of the Jews was that the coming of the Messiah would herald the resurrection of the dead. This

was the promise made to Adam and Eve, and it was the constant theme traversing the centuries between the fall and the appearance of Christ. Hosea looks to the defeat of death when he says “I will ransom them from the power of the grave (Heb. Sheol); I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave (Heb. Sheol), I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes” (Hos. 13:14). Similarly, Isaiah says “He will swallow up death in victory” (Isa. 25:8). Both of these passages are cited by Paul with expectation of imminent fulfillment (I Cor. 15:54, 55). Thus, it would be very strange if the promise announced by the prophets that was to attend the appearance of the Messiah was still languishing 2000 years after Christ appeared! But when would this occur? And since it would transpire upon the other side of eternity, in the realm of the spirit, not this side of eternity in the realm of the flesh, how can it be known if and when it was fulfilled? The most precise time statements are provided by the prophet Daniel in his last vision.

### Daniel and the Resurrection

Daniel is a book of timelines unto the kingdom and coming of Christ. It is also a timeline unto the general resurrection. Daniel’s prophecies span four world empires that would rise and wane, and provide a gauge by which men could know when the Messiah would appear. These kingdoms, described principally in chapters 2 and 7, were Babylon, Mede-Persia, Greece, and Rome. But, as Rome did not fall until A.D. 476, long past the appearance of Christ, a second timeline of 490 prophetic years was provided to further delimit the critical period (Dan. 9:24-27). These 490 prophetic years began with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem’ walls and gates after the captivity on the one hand (454 B.C.), and concluded with the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus (A.D. 70) on the other.<sup>16</sup> The events traversing these are described in minute detail in Daniel’s final vision, recorded in chapters 10-12.

The vision begins with the Persian monarchy, the rise of Alexander the Great, and the four kingdoms or divisions that rose out of his empire upon Alexander’s death (Dan. 11:1-4). The period of the Greek Ptolemaic dominion in Egypt to the South and the Seleucid dominion in

Syria to the North of Judea are developed at length (Dan. 11:5-20), followed by the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes and the exploits of the brothers Maccabee (Dan. 11:21-39). Dan. 11:40-45 introduces the Roman power which came to dominate the region beginning with the defeat of Antiochus III the Great at Thermopylae (191 B.C.) and Magnesia (190 B.C.), and the treaty of Ampaneia (188 B.C.), but attained the greatest gains under Pompey, who defeated Mithridates, king of Pontus, followed by the conquest of Judea (63 B.C.). Julius Caesar is the king who gains control of Egypt, but “comes to his end with none to help him” (v. 45). Caesar was followed by Octavian Augustus, in whose time Christ was born into the world (Lk. 2:1). Daniel refers to the appearance of the Messiah, saying, “At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people” (Dan. 12:1; cf. Rev. 12:7-11). The crucifixion of Christ was addressed in Dan. 9:24-27 where the Messiah was “cut off,” so Daniel does not pause to repeat Christ’s earthly ministry here, but rushes ahead to the “great tribulation.”

*“And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at the time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. 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.” Dan. 12:1, 2*

Here is the resurrection of the dead, tied to the time of trouble, or “great tribulation.” The great tribulation consisted in the persecution under Nero (A.D. 64-68), the Roman civil wars that followed Nero’s death (A.D. 68-70), and the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 66-70). Jesus specifically mentioned the great tribulation in the context of the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and mentions the prophecy of Daniel by name (Matt. 24:15-21). Jesus said “This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (Matt. 24:34; cf. Matt. 23:34-39). Thus, the resurrection would come upon the heels of the fall of Jerusalem. The time frame established by Jesus occurs also in Daniel. Daniel did not understand the vision and asked when the things described would come to pass. The angel told him “unto a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished” (Dan. 12:7). This points to the destruction of Jerusalem

<sup>16</sup> There was a gap of approximately 36 years marking the period between Christ’s ascension and his return.

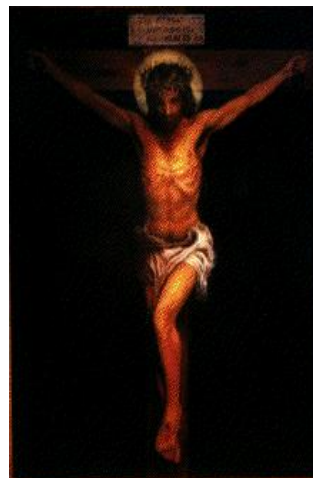
at the conclusion of the 3 ½ war with Rome. This is further corroborated by reference to the cessation of the daily sacrifice and the setting up of the abomination of desolation (Dan. 12:11-13). The daily sacrifice refers to the sacrifice offered twice daily for Caesar, which the Jews rejected and which Josephus says was the “true beginning” of the war. 1290 days would transpire from the taking away of Caesar’s sacrifice to the setting up the abomination of desolation (the Roman force assembled by Titus). This occurred when Titus marched from Egypt to Caesarea to assemble his forces. The 1335 days would be the 45 days more before Titus set up camp before Jerusalem during Passover, trapping 2.4 million Jews within the city about half of whom perished in the siege. “All these things” would be fulfilled by the time Jerusalem was razed, including the resurrection of the dead: “But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days” (Dan. 12:13). Daniel would be raised at the end of the time specified, together with the rest of the dead.

Dan. 12 is the shortest and surest route to establish the time of the resurrection. In fact, the whole issue of the timing of Christ’s second coming can just about be debated upon the strength of this one verse. When my friend Don Preston debated Mac Deaver here in Carlsbad in 2008, Deaver avoided any discussion of Dan. 12, despite Don’s repeated attempts to get him to give us his view on the passage. Don’s comment was that Deaver “didn’t even breathe on it.” That is, he could not be induced to offer one word by way of explanation how the resurrection is still future when Daniel so plainly placed it the fall of Jerusalem. This same “studied avoidance” of Daniel 12 is true of Gentry, Mathison, Strimple, and others who, confronted with the simple truth of the time for the general resurrection, cannot square it with their preconceived ideas. In their book *“When Shall These Things Be? – A Reformed Response to Hyperpreterism”*<sup>17</sup> not one of the authors had the courage to attempt an explanation. For example, Mathison, editor of the book, affirms that Dan. 12:2 is talking about individual resurrection. Yet, when he quotes Dan. 12:5-7, which states that all these things would be fulfilled when the power of the holy people was shattered, Mathison weakly offers “the specific meaning of ‘a time,

times, and half a time’ is not clear.”<sup>18</sup> But if the 3 ½ years alluded to by this verse escapes Mathison, surely the “shattering of the power of the Jews” cannot! Isn’t it, rather, that Mathison’s preconceived ideas prevent him from receiving the obvious meaning of the text? James Jordan, in his commentary on Daniel, surveys no fewer than six possibilities. He says that he believes there was a resurrection (“ascension”) of Old Testaments saints to heaven to reign with Christ in AD 70, and affirms that Dan. 12:13 appears to point to that fact. However, he rejects the idea that the resurrection of Dan. 12:2 refers to A.D. 70 for no more reason than it does not square with his understanding of the Millennia in Revelation 20. Thus, the obscurities of Revelation prevent him from receiving the plain teaching of Daniel! In the end, Jordan avoids committing to any certain answer – equivocating instead that maybe a spiritualized evangelic, teaching ministry is alluded to - a clear indication that the book is closed to all who try to force it into a futurist paradigm.<sup>19</sup>

## Conclusion

The general resurrection consisted in the release of the accumulated souls in Hades. The prophets taught that the resurrection would appear with the Messiah. Daniel sets the time for the resurrection at the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70.



<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 161, 164.

<sup>19</sup> James Jordan, *The Handwriting on the Wall* (American Vision, 2007), pp. 615-618.

<sup>17</sup> P&R (2004)