



Advanced Bible Correspondence Course Lesson 17: The Exaltation of Christ

LORD'S DAY 17

Q.45. WHAT DOETH THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST PROFIT US?

ANSWER: FIRST, BY HIS RESURRECTION HE HAS OVERCOME DEATH, THAT HE MIGHT MAKE US PARTAKERS OF THAT RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH HE HAD PURCHASED FOR US BY HIS DEATH (A); SECONDLY, WE ARE ALSO BY HIS POWER RAISED UP TO A NEW LIFE (B); AND LASTLY, THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST IS A SURE PLEDGE OF OUR BLESSED RESURRECTION (C).

(A) ROMANS 4:25; I PETER 1:3; I CORINTHIANS 15:16; (B) ROMANS 6:4; COLOSSIANS 3:1&3; EPHESIANS 2:5-6; (C) I CORINTHIANS 15:20-21

The miracle of the resurrection of Christ

In the first place, it is striking that the catechism does not speak about the *fact* of the resurrection, but of its *profit* for believers. The event is an indisputable truth. In the early morning hours of Easter, after Christ had been in the grave for three days, He arose from the dead! His body arose from the grave. Then it was a glorified body, which could not suffer or die anymore. What an awesome wonder! He appeared unto His disciples and unto others. He ate before their eyes, and showed them the prints of the nails with which He had been crucified. Then they said, "*The Lord is risen indeed*" (Luke 24:34).

Earlier before His death He had raised certain persons from the dead: a youth in Nain, the daughter of Jairus, and His friend Lazarus; just like the prophets Elijah and Elisha, who had also raised youths from the dead. These were signs of the power given them by God.

But now God the Father raised Christ from the dead. This provided proof that Christ had fulfilled the demands of His Father and had completely borne the punishment for the sins of His people. However, Christ Himself also arose from the dead, because He Himself is also God. That is the difference between His resurrection and the others being raised as mentioned before.

He conquered death for others

If Adam in Paradise had remained obedient to God's command, not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would have merited the right to eternal life for himself and all his posterity, the whole human race. Adam, however, did not obey God, but yielded to the temptation of Satan and did eat from the tree. As punishment for this sin, Adam and all his posterity were subjected to death: they became mortal. They were driven out of Paradise and lost the right to eternal life.

But now by His resurrection Christ shows that He has conquered death for all His children. He bore the punishment in their place and secured their acquittal. If He had remained in death, they would not have known that the sacrifice had been accepted. And if He had not conquered death, He could not have given them eternal life. But now that He lives, He can, through Word and Spirit, give them everything He merited for them. He does not only display this to them, but He also gives it to them! He sees to it that through the workings of the Holy Spirit they become partakers of the blessings He acquired for them.

Through His sufferings and death, He merited forgiveness of sins for them. And by His perfect obedience, He merited righteousness and the right to everlasting salvation for them.

As a living Saviour, Christ also raises His people from spiritual death through the power of His resurrection. By His Spirit He regenerates them to be a new people. He works faith in the forgiveness of sins in their hearts. He effectuates conversion: He slays in them the dominating power of the sinful lusts and arouses a new life in them. Through this they desire to live according to God's law again.

The resurrection of Christ a pledge

Part of that to which somebody is entitled (e.g. a selling price), is sometimes given as a pledge. That is the guarantee that he, or his heirs, would also receive the balance. Likewise Christ's resurrection is ultimately the pledge, the guarantee, for all His children that they will also rise from the dead. He is the Firstborn from the dead. Thus He Himself is the guarantee that His people will follow. In the resurrection on the last day, when the last judgment will take place, Christ as Judge will also acquit all God's children. And He will also cause them to enter eternal life with their bodies.

Therefore the apostle Paul rightly says, *"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead"* (1 Corinthians 15:20-21)

Questions:

1. *On what day did Christ rise? (Luke 24:1)*

2. *Could every one of His disciples immediately believe His resurrection?
(Matthew 28:16-17, Mark 16:9-1, Luke 24:10-24, John 20:24-25)*

3. *How did Christ convince them of His resurrection? (Matthew 28:18, Mark
16:14, Luke 24:12, 25-32, John 20:26-28)*

4. *What are the consequences of continuing unbelief of Christ's resurrection?
(I Corinthians 15:14-18)*

5. *What threefold profit do believers have from Christ's resurrection?*

Evaluator: _____

Meditation: “*But 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).*” *Ephesians 2:4-5*

My dear brethren in Christ, and thou, O my soul, one chief reason why at any time we have so little comfort and are so low in joy is, that we do not enough believe and live upon the *love* of God. Let us never think of or look for any mercy from God without considering that it flows from love. Is God rich in mercy to any? It is because He loves them. Great love, everlasting, unchangeable love is the source and spring of rich mercy. It was rich mercy for God to give us His beloved Son to be our Saviour. This was because of His great love to us before time: He loved us from eternity in His Son: He loves us through time and under all states and circumstances: yea, when we were forlorn, helpless, hopeless, even “*dead in sins*,” He loved us with *great love*, too great to be conceived or expressed: He manifested it by bestowing *rich mercy* upon us; mercy so rich, so free, so liberal, that it came to us unsought, unasked, undeserved.

His great love for us was the parent of His rich mercy to us. Mercy without love may be exercised by an enemy; but the mercy of God flows from the heart of a Father: He saw our souls dead in sin, dead under His law, dead to Himself. Did He leave us? No. He loved us with great love, therefore in rich mercy He “quickened us.” “Quickened us!” says one. “Is that all?” A quickened soul, some think, is in a very inferior degree of grace; it is neither justified nor sanctified – but such persons are great strangers to the rich mercy and great love of God; they do not consider that souls are quickened *together with Christ*. In Him is the sweetness of quickening mercy enjoyed. Quickened souls see their sinfulness, know their poverty, feel their misery and wretchedness, and groan under a body of sin and death: but there is their glory, joy, and comfort; they are one with Christ; His life is theirs, His death is theirs, His righteousness is theirs, His holiness is theirs, His fullness is theirs. Though sin is not dead in us, yet being one with Christ, we are “dead indeed unto sin and alive to God.” *By grace ye are saved*: not by your own deeds or righteousness. Therefore, rejoice; “quickened together with Christ,” your salvation is not precarious and uncertain; you shall reign with Him. O, may love, mercy, and grace be the constant theme of our souls!