

Name: _____



Advanced Bible Correspondence Course
Lesson 22: God the Holy Ghost

LORD'S DAY 22

Q.57. WHAT COMFORT DOES THE "RESURRECTION OF THE BODY" AFFORD THEE?

ANSWER: THAT NOT ONLY MY SOUL AFTER THIS LIFE SHALL BE IMMEDIATELY TAKEN UP TO CHRIST ITS HEAD (A); BUT ALSO, THAT THIS MY BODY, BEING RAISED BY THE POWER OF CHRIST, SHALL BE REUNITED WITH MY SOUL, AND MADE LIKE UNTO THE GLORIOUS BODY OF CHRIST (B).

(A) LUKE 16:22, 23:43, PHILIPPIANS 1:21&23; (B) JOB 19:25&26, I JOHN 3:2, PHILIPPIANS 3:21

The comfort of faith in the resurrection of the body

The article of faith concerning the resurrection of the body is especially full of comfort. Our flesh is our body, which is subject to infirmities, sickness and death because of sin.

When a man dies, his body decays. Sometimes slowly, in the grave; sometimes fast, for instance, by burning. Sometimes the ashes will even be scattered. This sometimes happened with the ashes of Christians who were burned because of their faith.

However, when Christ comes back on the clouds, all the particles of such a body will be brought together again by God. Unbelief says, "That is not possible, is it?" But would He, who created the whole world out of nothing, not be able to do this? He will restore the body out of the dust again. Then the body will arise from the dead and live again, never to die again, but to continue forever in eternal bliss or eternal damnation.

For all those who have died outside of Christ, it will be an eternal terror! In hell body and soul will be under the wrath of God for ever without any relief or comfort.

However, God's children shall enter into the eternal joy, into eternal life in the new Paradise, also in their bodies. Already at their death, their souls

immediately entered into heavenly glory. There is no such thing as a sleep of the soul; neither is there a purgatory. The Lord Jesus said to the thief on the cross next to Him, *“Verily I say unto thee, Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise”* (Luke 23:43). At the resurrection, soul and body will again be united to be forever with God. When Job, the great sufferer of the Old Testament, looked beyond death and the grave, he said, *“And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God”* (Job 19:26).

The resurrection of believers

Believers who are still living when Christ returns will be changed from corruptible into incorruptible in the twinkling of an eye (I Cor. 15:51&52). At His ascension Christ was taken up into heaven. But He shall come back one time to raise all the dead, and as Judge to judge the living and the dead who have risen, and to take up His Church into heaven. Paul said, *“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: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”* (I Thess. 4:16&17)

Glorified with Christ

At the resurrection of the believers, their bodies will be made like unto the body of the risen Christ now already glorified, *“Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body”* (Phil. 3:21). Then the body will be perfect, without any infirmity and without a handicap. It will no longer be mortal. Then it will be again as when God first created it. We read in Paul’s letters: *“It (the body) is sown (as a seed in the field) in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power”* (I Corinthians 15:42&43).

Q.58. WHAT COMFORT TAKEST THOU FROM THE ARTICLE OF “LIFE EVERLASTING”?

ANSWER: THAT SINCE I NOW FEEL IN MY HEART THE BEGINNING OF ETERNAL JOY (A), AFTER THIS LIFE I SHALL INHERIT PERFECT SALVATION, WHICH “EYE HATH NOT SEEN, NOR EAR HEARD, NEITHER HAVE ENTERED INTO THE HEART OF MAN” TO CONCEIVE, AND THAT, TO PRAISE GOD THEREIN FOREVER (B).

(A)II CORINTHIANS 5:2&3; (B)I CORINTHIANS 2:9

A glimpse into eternal glory

To his inexpressible amazement, while he was still living on earth the apostle Paul was once given a glimpse of the eternal glory in heaven, with God (II Corinthians 12:1-4).

What he saw was inexpressible: so much joy and so much glory! He could not, nor was he permitted to say *what* he had seen. For human word would not clarify, but only make it more obscure. Human language and the human imagination would fall short. It is a perfect salvation, a perfect fullness of bliss. It is perfect, because there God's children will be able to serve and praise God without any sin, and they will experience a blessed communion with each other and with the angels. Then life will again be perfect, and there will be perfect righteousness and peace on the new earth according to the testimony of the old apostle John in Revelation 21:1.

A foretaste of eternal glory

The apostles Paul and John were granted a glimpse of that glory. But here God's children also have sometimes a foretaste of that glory. Then God, their heavenly Father, causes them to experience His love in a special way. This strengthens their faith and hope in a powerful way. The Bible calls this "seeing God's countenance." Then they see and experience the beginnings of the peace which they have with God: "*In thy presence is fullness of joy,*" said David (Psalm 16:11). Then, in principle, they have a foretaste of the eternal joy. And because they sometimes experience this, they can live comforted, also when the love of God is not felt as strongly. They live comforted and with longing: "*Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!*" (Revelation 22:20).

Questions:

1. *What is the difference between the body of the believer before death and that same body after the resurrection from the dead?*

2. *Mention the names of some persons from the Bible who, while living on earth, were enabled to cast a glimpse into heaven in a special way. (Isaiah 6, Acts 7:55, II Corinthians 12:1-4, Revelation 1:9-18)*

3. *Why could Paul not explain what he saw?*

4. *Why will the salvation which God's children receive at their death not be a totally unfamiliar joy for them?*

*Evaluator:*_____

Meditation: "Blessed are the dead"

Even God' children sometimes say, "Blessed are the living." It is a happy thing to live in the favour of God, to have peace with God, to frequent the throne of grace, to burn the perpetual incense of praise, to meditate on His Word, to hear the preached gospel, to serve God; even to wrestle, and run, and fight in His service is sweet. Still God says, "Blessed are the dead". If it be happy to have His smile here, how much happier to have it without a cloud yonder. If it be sweet to be the growing corn of the Lord here, how much better to be gathered into His barn. If it be sweet to have an anchor within the veil, how much better ourselves to be there, where no gloom can come.

Taken from "Gems of Robert Murray McCheyne"