

## OF THE RESURRECTION.

JOHN v. 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.*

Qu. XXXVIII. *WHAT benefits shall believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?*

*Ans.* 1. Their bodies shall be raised up to glory.

2. They shall be openly acquitted at the day of judgment.

3. They shall be made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God for ever.

I. *The bodies of believers shall be raised up to glory.* The doctrine of the resurrection is a fundamental article of our faith; the apostle puts it among the principles of the doctrine of Christ, Heb. vi. 2. The body shall rise again: we are not so sure to rise out of our beds, as we are to rise out of our graves. The saved body shall rise again. Some hold that the soul shall be clothed with a new body; but then it were improper to call it a resurrection, it would be rather a creation, Job xix. 26. 'Though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh, shall I see God.' Not in another flesh, but my flesh, 1 Cor. xv. 53. 'This corruptible shall put on incorruption.'

Qu. 2. *By what arguments may the resurrection be proved?*

*Ans.* *Argument* 1. By scripture, John vi. 44. 'I will raise him up at the last day.' Isa. xxv. 8. 'He will swallow up death in victory.' That is, by delivering our bodies from the captivity of the grave, wherein death for a time had power over them, 1 Thess. iv. 14. 'Them which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.'

*Arg.* 2. *Christ is risen:* therefore the bodies of the saints must rise. Christ did not rise from the dead as a private person, but as the public head of the church; and the head being raised, the rest of the body shall not always lie in the grave. Christ's rising is a pledge of our resurrection, 2 Cor. iv. 14. 'Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus.' Christ is called the first-fruits of them that sleep, 1 Cor. xv. 20. As the first-fruits is a sure evidence that the harvest is coming on; so the resurrection of Christ is a sure evidence of the rising of our bodies out of the grave. Christ cannot be perfect as he is Christ mystical, unless his members be raised with him.

*Arg. 3.* In respect of God's justice. If God be a just God, then he will reward the bodies of the saints as well as the souls. It cannot be imagined, that the souls of believers should be glorified, and not their bodies: they have served God with their bodies, their bodies have been members of holiness; their eyes have dropped tears for sin, their hands have relieved the poor, their tongues have set forth God's praise; therefore justice and equity require that their bodies should be crowned as well as their souls: and how can that be, unless they are raised from the dead?

*Arg. 4.* If the body did not rise again, then a believer should not be completely happy; for though the soul can subsist without the body, yet it hath *apetium unionis*, a desire of re-union with the body; and it is not fully happy till it be clothed with the body: therefore undoubtedly the body shall rise again. If the soul should go to heaven, and not the body, then a believer should be only half-saved.

*Obj. 1.* But some say, as the Virgin Mary to the angel, 'How can this be?' so, how can it be, that the body, which is consumed to ashes, should rise again?

*Ans.* It doth not oppose reason, but transcend it: there are some resemblances of the resurrection in nature. The corn, which is sown in the ground, dies before it springs up, 1 Cor. xv. 36. 'That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.' In winter the fruits of the earth die, in spring there is a resurrection of them: Noah's olive-tree springing after the flood, was a lively emblem of the resurrection. After the passion of our Lord, many of the saints which slept in the grave arose, Matth. xxvii. 52. God can more easily raise the body out of the grave, than we can awake a man out of sleep.

*Obj. 2.* But when the dust of many are mingled together; how is it possible that a separation should be made and the same numerical body arise?

*Ans.* If we believe God can create, then he can distinguish the dust of one body from another: do we not see the chymist can, out of several metals mingled together, as gold, silver, alchimy, extract the one from the other, the silver from the gold, the alchimy from silver, and can reduce every metal to its own kind? And shall we not much more believe, that when our bodies are mingled and confounded with other substances, the wise God is able to make an extraction, and re-invest every soul with its own body?

*Q. 3.* *Shall none but the bodies of the righteous be raised?*

*Ans.* Yes, all that are in the graves shall hear Christ's voice, and shall come forth. Acts xxiv. 15. There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. Rev. xx. 12. 'I saw the dead both small and great, stand before God.' But

though all shall be raised out of their graves, yet all shall not be raised alike.

1. The bodies of the wicked shall be raised with ignominy ; those bodies which on the earth did tempt and allure others with their beauty, shall be at the resurrection loathsome to behold ; they shall be ghastly spectacles, as the phrase is, Isa. lxvi. 24. ' They shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.' But the bodies of the saints shall be raised with honour, 1 Cor. xv. 43. ' It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory.' The saints bodies then shall shine as sparkling diamonds, Mat. xiii. 53. ' Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun.'

2. The bodies of the saints shall arise out of their graves with triumph : the bodies of the wicked shall come out of the grave with trembling ; as being to receive their fatal doom ; but the godly, when they awake out of the dust, shall sing for joy, Isa. xxvi. 19. ' Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust.' When the archangel's trumpet sounds, then the saints shall sing ; the bodies of believers shall come out of the grave to be made happy, as the chief butler came out of the prison, and was restored to all his dignity at the court ; but the bodies of the wicked shall come out of the grave, as the chief baker out of prison, to be executed, Gen. xl. 22.

*Use 1.* Believe this doctrine of the resurrection ; and that the same body that dies shall rise again, and with the soul be crowned. Without the belief of this, *tota corrumpit religio*, " all religion falls to the ground," 1 Cor. xv. 14. ' If the dead rise not, then Christ is not risen, and then our faith is vain.'

*Use 2. Comfort.* The body shall rise again ; this was Job's comfort, Job xix. 26. ' Though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.' The body is sensible of joy, as well as the soul ; and indeed we shall not be in all our glory, till the bodies are re-united to our souls. O consider what joy there will be at the re-uniting of the body and the soul at the resurrection ; look what sweet embraces of joy were between old Jacob and Joseph, when they first saw one another, Gen. xlv. 29. such, and infinitely more, will there be, when the body and soul of a saint shall meet together at the resurrection. How will the body and soul greet one another ? what a welcome will the soul give to the body ? O blessed body ! when I prayed, thou didst attend my prayers with hands lifted up, and knees bowed down ; thou wert willing to suffer with me, and now thou shalt reign with me ; thou wert sown in dishonour, but now art raised in glory. O my dear body ! I will enter into thee again, and be eternally married to thee.

*Use 3.* The resurrection of the body is a cordial when a Christian lies a-dying. Thy body, though it drop into the sepulchre, it shall revive and flourish as an herb in the resurrection :

the grave is a bed of dust, where the bodies of saints sleep; but they shall be awakened by the trump of the arch-angel. The grave is your long home, but not your last home: though death strip you of your beauty yet at the resurrection you shall have it restored again. As David, when he found Saul asleep, took away his spear and cruse of water, but when he awoke he restored them again, 1 Sam. xxvi. 22. so, tho' at death all our strength and beauty be taken away, yet at the resurrection God will restore all again in a more glorious manner.

*Qu. 4. But how shall we know that our bodies shall be raised to a glorious resurrection?*

*Ans.* If we have a part in the first resurrection, Rev. xx. 6. 'Blessed is he that hath a part in the first resurrection.' *Qu. What is meant by this?* *Ans.* It is a rising by repentance out of the grave of sin: he who lies buried in sin, can have little hope of a joyful resurrection; his body shall be raised, but not in glory. O then, ask conscience, have you a part in the first resurrection? hath the Spirit entered into you, and lifted you up? hath it raised you out of your unbelief? hath it raised your hearts above the earth? this is the first resurrection; and if your souls are thus spiritually raised, then your bodies shall be gloriously raised; and shall shine as stars in the kingdom of heaven. Regeneration makes way for a glorious resurrection.

*Use.* Seeing you expect your bodies should arise to glory, keep your bodies unspotted from sin. Shall a drunken body rise to glory? shall an unclean body rise to glory? shall a thievish body steal into heaven? O keep your bodies pure: keep your eyes from unchaste glances, your hands from bribes, your tongues from slander: defile not your bodies, which you hope shall rise one day to glory. Your bodies are the members of Christ: and hear what the apostle saith, 1 Cor. xi. 15. 'Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.' O keep your bodies unspotted, let them be instruments of righteousness, 1 Cor. vi. 20. 'Glorify God in your body.' If your bodies glorify God, God will glorify your bodies.

*Qu. 5. But seeing our bodies must be laid in the grave, and they may lie many years a rotting there before the resurrection; what may support and comfort us in this case?*

*Ans.* 1. That God will not leave his people in the grave. Our friends bring us to the grave and leave us there, but God will not: God will go to the grave with us, and watch over our dead bodies, and take care of our ashes, Rizpah watched over the dead bodies of the sons of Saul, and guarded them against the ravenous fowls of the air, 2 Sam. xxi. 10. Thus the Lord watcheth over the dead bodies of the saints, and looks to it, that none of their dust be missing. Christian, thou hast a God to watch over thy body when thou art dead.

2. The bodies of the faints in the grave, though separated from their souls, are united to Christ. The dust of a believer is part of Christ's mystical body.

3. When the bodies of the faints are in the sepulchre, their souls are in paradise; the soul doth not sleep in the body, 'but returns to God that gave it,' Eccl. xii. 7. The soul immediately partakes of those joys the blessed angels do: when the body returns to dust, the soul returns to rest: when the body is sleeping, the soul is triumphing; when the body is buried, the soul is crowned: as the spies were sent before to taste of the fruits of the land, Numb. xiii. so at death the soul is sent before into heaven, to taste of the fruit of the holy land.

4. When God's time is come, the 'graves shall deliver up their dead,' Rev. xx. 13. When the judge sends, the goaler must deliver up his prisoners, as God said to Jacob, Gen. xlvi.

4. 'I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will surely bring thee up again.' So the Lord will go down with us into the grave, and will surely bring us up again.

5. Though the bodies of the faints shall rot and be loathsome in the grave, yet afterwards they shall be made illustrious and glorious. Concerning this, consider,

1. The bodies of the faints, when they arise, shall be comely and beautiful. The body of a faint in this life may be deformed: those whose minds are adorned with virtue, yet may have misshapen bodies; as the finest cloth may have the coarsest list; but this deformed body shall be amiable and beautiful. This beauty consists in two things; 1. Perfection of parts. There shall be a full proportion of all the members; in this life there is oft a defect of members; the eye is lost, the arm is cut off; but in the resurrection all parts of the body shall be restored again: therefore the resurrection is called the time of restoring all things, Acts iii. 19. Malchus' ear cut, *restitut.* 2. Clarity and splendor: the bodies of the faints shall have a graceful majesty in them; they shall be like Stephen, whose face shone as if it had been the face of an angel, Acts vi. 15. Nay, they shall be made like Christ's glorious body, Phil. iii. 21.

2. The bodies of the faints, when they arise, shall be free from the necessities of nature, as hunger and thirst, Rev. vii. 16. 'They shall hunger no more.' Moses on the mount was so filled with the glory of God, that he needed not the recruits of nature. Much more in heaven shall the bodies of the faints, so filled with God's glory, be upheld without food.

3. The bodies of the faints, when they arise, shall be swift and nimble. Our bodies on earth are dull and heavy in their motion; then they shall be swift, and made fit to ascend, as the body of Elias, in the air. Now the body is a clog; in heaven it shall be a wing: we shall be as the angels, Mat. xxii. 30.

And how nimble are they? The angel Gabriel in a short time came from heaven to the earth, Dan. ix. 21. As the helm turns the ship instantly whither the steersman will: so the body in an instant will move which way the soul will.

4. The bodies of the faints, at the resurrection, shall be very firm and strong, 1 Cor. xv. 43. 'It is raised in power.' Through frequent labour and sickness, the strongest body begins to languish: but at the resurrection we shall be of a strong constitution; then there will be no weariness in the body, nor faintness in the spirits. This may comfort you who now conflict with many bodily weaknesses. This weak body shall be raised in power; the body, which is now a weak reed, shall be like a rock.

5. The bodies of the faints at the resurrection shall be immortal, 1 Cor. xv. 53. 'This mortal shall put on immortality;' our bodies shall run parallel with eternity, Luke xx. 36. 'Neither can they die any more.' Heaven is an healthful climate, there is no bill of mortality there. If a physician could give you a receipt to keep you from dying, what sums of money would you give? At the resurrection Christ shall give the saints such a receipt, Rev. xxi. 4. 'There shall be no more death.'

II. The second privilege believers shall have at the resurrection, is, They shall be openly acquitted at the day of judgment.

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## OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

Qu. XXXVIII. *WHAT benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?*

*Ans.* 1. Their bodies shall be raised up to glory, and shall be openly acquitted at the day of judgment, and crowned with the full and perfect enjoyment of God to all eternity.

2. *They shall be openly acquitted at the day of judgment.* This is to be laid down for a position, that there shall be a day of judgment, 1 Cor. v. 10. 'For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.' This is the grand assizes; the greatest appearance that ever was: Now Adam shall see all his posterity at once. We must all appear; the greatness of men's persons doth not exempt them from Christ's tribunal: kings and captains are brought in trembling before the Lamb's throne, Rev. vi. 15. We must all appear, and appear in our own persons; not by a proxy.

Q. 1. *How doth it appear that there shall be a day of judgment?*

*Ans.* Two ways. 1. By the suffrage of scripture, Eccl. xii.