

Inheritance – The Resurrection Body

Flesh and blood does not inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 15:50). Only the immortal spiritual resurrected body, made in the image of the Heavenly Man (Jesus) can operate in the Kingdom of God. Therefore, the first part of our inheritance is the body that will be ours for all eternity! The apostle Paul answers some basic questions about this glorious resurrection body in his first epistle to the church in Corinth:

1 Corinthians 15:35-58 *But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” (36) You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. (37) And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. (38) But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. (39) For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. (40) There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. (41) There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. (42) So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. (43) It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. (44) It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. (45) Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. (46) But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. (47) The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. (48) As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. (49) Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. (50) I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (51) Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. (53) For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. (54) When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” (55) “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” (56) The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. (57) But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (58) Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.*

This Passage Tells Us That:

1. The resurrection body is immortal and imperishable (v.42,53)
2. It is a powerful and glorious spiritual body (v. 43,44)
3. In the image of the Heavenly Man, Jesus Christ (v.47,49)
4. This mortal body is not the body “that is to be” (v. 37) but rather is sown like a seed, and the resurrection body is the resulting organism which will be different from the “seed” (v. 35-42).
5. The resurrection body is given by God, as He wills. (v. 38)
6. We shall all be changed (v. 52) and our powerful spiritual bodies will differ from each other just as stars differ from each other in glory. (v. 40-42)
7. This change will occur rapidly, even instantly, at the Last Trumpet (v. 52)
8. Our present natural physical body cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (v.50) because it is perishable, weak and dishonorable (v. 42,43) and is of dust (v.47,48) and mortal (v.53)

9. We must first die in order that we might come to life in the resurrection (v. 35-38)
10. However, the resurrection will give us total victory over sin, death and the law (v. 53-57)
11. The resurrection makes us members of a new humanity and a new spiritual lineage that is not "from Adam" but which is from Christ. (v. 20-23, 44-49).
12. The resurrection hope means that our labor in the Lord is not in vain! (v.58)

Other Findings

13. We will be like the angels in Heaven and will not marry or be given in marriage (Matthew 22:30) but will be sons of God (Luke 20:36)
14. Our rewards will be given out at the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:14)
15. There is a resurrection of life and a resurrection of judgment (John 5:29, Acts 24:15)
16. Jesus is the resurrection and the life (John 11:25)
17. If we believe in Jesus, we will experience His resurrection power and we will not die but live (John 11:23-27)
18. We are united with Christ's resurrection through baptism (genuine conversion) which raises us up spiritually (Colossians 2:12).
19. Baptism also indicates that we have died to sin and now live to God and therefore we will experience a resurrection like His (Romans 6:1-11)
20. We have already been mystically raised up with Christ and we are seated with Him at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:20,2:6, Colossians 3:1)
21. As a result of being mystically raised with Christ we are to seek the things that are above (Colossians 3:1)
22. The resurrection of Jesus Christ was the "first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20-23) and we are the latter fruits who will receive the physical change later on as a promise from God.
23. Just as in Adam all die, so also all those who are in Christ shall be made alive (1 Corinthians 15:22) so there is not an elite group of Christians who get resurrected rather "all who are in Christ" will experience the resurrection.
24. We will be raised from the dead by the power of God (1 Corinthians 6:14)
25. Believers are raised together, at once, at the Last Trumpet, the dead in Christ shall rise first, then those who are alive and remain will meet Christ in the air. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
26. All the saints (believing Christians) will be raised together and stand before the Presence of God (2 Corinthians 4:14)
27. Our resurrection inheritance is connected to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and is kept in heaven for us and is imperishable, undefiled and unfading (1 Peter 1:3-5).
28. The first resurrection is prior to the thousand-year reign of Christ and those who participate in this resurrection will be spared from the second death and will reign and rule with Christ during the Millennium (Revelation 20:4-6).

The Combined Picture

Christ died and rose again as the first fruits from the dead, and when we believe in Jesus we all become mystical participants in the new humanity, which is a spiritual humanity. This new humanity will be like the angels in heaven and are sons and daughters of the living God who will be fully revealed when Christ returns (Romans 8:19).

We are spiritually united with Christ through baptism, which symbolizes our death and resurrection with Christ Jesus. We are now seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. We have died to sin, death and the Jewish law. As a result, we are to seek the things that are above and not the things that are below. All those who are in Christ shall be made alive on the last day because Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life.

At present we have been mystically raised with Christ but then we will be physically raised from the dead to a new spiritual body that is like that of the angels and is powerful, immortal, imperishable, undefiled and glorious. The resurrection body will be in the image of Jesus Christ, the Man from Heaven. All Christians will be resurrected together, and those who are alive will by no means precede those who have fallen asleep.

The resurrection body will be part of our inheritance, and will differ among Christians as star differs from star in glory. The resurrection body is given by God, not created by man. It will enable us to participate fully in the eternal Kingdom of God, because normal flesh and blood cannot enter the eternal state. Once we receive our new resurrection bodies we will reign and rule with Christ for one thousand years during the Millennium. Our resurrection rewards mean that our labor for the Lord is not in vain!

Reincarnation

The Bible does not ever teach reincarnation. It teaches resurrection instead. Hebrews tells us that only die once, and then the judgement!

Hebrews 9:27-28 *And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, (28) so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.*

Some claim that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of the prophet Elijah. John the Baptist came “in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke 1:17) however this was a mystical reference not a reference to the physical and historical Elijah. John was not Elijah reincarnated. When Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration He met Moses and Elijah (Matthew 17:3), not Moses and John the Baptist. John the Baptist was “Elijah who is to come” in a mystical and prophetic sense (Matthew 11:14, 17:11,12) and not in a literal sense.

The saints who have passed away have gone directly into the presence of Christ (Philippians 1:23) and they have stayed there as souls before God (Revelation 6:9).

Revelation 6:9-11 *When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. (10) They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” (11) Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.*

The martyrs under the altar are still in Heaven, they have not left Heaven in order to come back as fish, goats or even as other people. When Christ returns many of His holy ones return with Him at the Last Trumpet (1 Thessalonians 3:13, Jude 1:14,15). Then their bodies will rise from the dead and they will be “fully clothed” (2 Corinthians 5:4). It is clear that the martyrs are conscious souls and can communicate with Christ and even ask Him questions. This passage also disproves the idea of “soul sleep” where we are completely unconscious until the Resurrection. Jesus tells us that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are still alive with God in Heaven. They have obviously not been reincarnated.

Matthew 22:29-33 *But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. (30) For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in*

marriage, but are like angels in heaven. (31) And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: (32) ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’ He is not God of the dead, but of the living.” (33) And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching.

When Jesus said this, He was clearly indicating the Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had eternal souls that were still with God in Heaven. God could call Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob because they were still alive. Thus, Jesus proved the eternal existence of souls. They were not changed into other souls or bodies, they were still the same people, however their location was now in Heaven.

The examples of John the Baptist, the martyrs under the altar, and of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, completely disprove the idea of reincarnation as a biblical teaching.

The Christian’s Hope

The resurrection is the Christian’s hope (Acts 23:6, 24:15, 1 Peter 1:3). If there is no resurrection, then there is no hope and we “are of all men most to be pitied”!

1 Corinthians 15:16-20 *For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. (17) And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. (18) Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. (19) If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. (20) But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.*

Our hope is not in this life only. Our hope is in God’s love after this earthly life is over. Our hope is in the resurrection, our reward, our rule and reigning with Christ, and in the glory of the New Jerusalem that comes down out of Heaven. We have a living and eternal hope. We can endure various trials. Though we have not seen Him, we love Him:

1 Peter 1:3-9 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, (5) who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (6) In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, (7) so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (8) Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, (9) obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

Our faith is not to be in immediate joys and comforts of this life but in an eternal inheritance, that we have gained through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!