

## **"But Someone Will Say ..."**

*"... How are the dead raised and with what manner of body do they come?" (1 Cor. 15:35).*

Paul has, in this chapter, shown 1) the resurrection of Christ was attested to by witnesses; 2) the consequences which must follow if (as some said) there is no resurrection and 3) the inconsistent behavior of some if there is no resurrection. Now he addresses the questions of some who wanted to know what resurrected ones would be and look like.

So, in response to such a question, he wrote, *"Thou foolish one, that which thou thyself sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be ..."* (1 Cor. 15:35-37). Paul's words (*"that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die"*) reminds us that Jesus also spoke of the necessity of death for a planted seed, but for another reason. He said (using His frequent doubling of a word for emphasis), *"Verily, verily I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone, but if it die, it beareth much fruit"* (Jn. 12:24). Jesus spoke of the greatly compounding of spiritual life which believers would receive through His death: He would die but that death would be the guarantee of spiritual life to obedient believers. Paul's illustration of a grain dying was intended to show doubting skeptics at Corinth that it took the decaying of whatever body the seed was in order to be quickened into new life and that the seed they sowed emerged from the earth in an entirely different form than that which they consisted of when they were planted. Man may not have pondered this truth, but it is a fact that every person is aware of. To further strengthen this truth, the apostle proceeds to show that life does not exist exclusively in one body. So he wrote, *"All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one flesh of man, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds and another of fishes"* (1 Cor. 15:39). Man is not a beast of the field, bird of the heaven, or fish of the sea. It is readily apparent to all that the flesh of a deer, a bird, or a fish is entirely different from the other, yet man, the beast, bird and fish all are living beings illustrating the words the apostle had just spoken *"but God giveth it a body even as it pleased him"* (1 Cor. 15:38).

To further illustrate his point the apostle pointed out that *"there are also celestial (heavenly) bodies and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another in glory"* (1 Cor. 15:40-42). While it is true that celestial bodies such as sun, moon, and stars do not have "life" as we know it, God made them all and still they differ one from another in glory.

Thus he continued: *"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body"* (1 Cor. 15:42-44a). We know there are material bodies; human experiences tell us this. By faith we understand there are spiritual bodies as well. The scriptures speak of angels as well as arch angels (Jude 9; Gal. 3:19). We know there are myriad of angels but we do not know what kind of bodies they have. We know that angels have bodies which can be seen, if they choose to be. We know that Jesus was raised with a spiritual body, a body which could be touched and with which He could eat and drink (Jn. 20:27; Lk. 24:39-43). Yet, we know that in that spiritual body Jesus could pass through the walls of a house (Jn. 20:19). Still, we do not know that eating food is necessary to sustain the life of an angel, although we doubt it. So, just as God gave seed a different kind of body than what had been sown; just as Jesus had a spiritual body different from the body He had, so God is able and will at the resurrection give to His own a body fitted for the spiritual sphere He has prepared for it to dwell in.

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