

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Pet. 3-5)*

## **I. Unique Foundational Promise**

- A. The subject of resurrection is a subject that is familiar to all of us. However, the biblical theme of resurrection goes far beyond what most have considered. As we consider the resurrection today, I invite you to be open to the possibility that the 21<sup>st</sup> century view of resurrection falls extremely short of its full meaning and implications.
- B. It may surprise you to know that the belief in resurrection was a unique belief held only in Judaism. Essential to every religion in the world is a belief in some form of life after death. What sets Judaic resurrection apart was its belief in an eternal bodily life on the earth (resurrection) after some form of life after death.
  1. In modern day Christianity, the hope of going to heaven has replaced resurrection, and questions of wondering what heaven is like fills most of our discussions concerning the life after death. This focus is totally foreign to the hope and discussion of early Judaism, apostolic writings, and messaging of the early centuries of Christianity. Their writings and hope was rooted in resurrection, not in an astral form of afterlife in heaven. (Job 19:25-27; Ps. 16:9-11, 17:13-15, 71:20; Is. 26:19; Ez. 37:12-14; Dan. 12:1-3; Hos. 13:14; Jhn. 5:28-29, 11:23-26; Acts 23:6-10, 24:10-16; 1 Cor. 15:20-22, 51-54; 1 Thes. 4:14)
- C. There are three foundational truths that formed the basis for the strongly held unique belief in resurrection.
  1. The Perfection of Creation – The first biblical thing established concerning the knowledge of God was His goodness and perfection in the creation. God desired a reciprocal, wholehearted loving, and partnering relationship so He created the earth and man and dwelt with him there. The perfection of God informs us that the realities of the creation cannot be improved upon. (Gen. 1-3)
    - a. Physical – In the perfect creation, man had a physical body that was created to interact with physical creation eternally. This reality demands that in order for the perfect plan of God to continue, man must remain in a physical body, dwelling in the

physical creation with God forever. (Deut. 32:4; Ps. 138:8 Ecc. 3:14)

2. The Justice of God – The attribute of the justice or righteousness of God, by definition, demands that wrongs be made right. When the perfect creation was corrupted by sin, God’s promise was to restore it. God’s righteousness cannot abide unrighteousness or injustice. Therefore, in light of who God is, what was lost and stolen from perfect creation must be restored. (Ex. 34:6-7; Job 9:16; Is. 30:18; Jer. 9:24)
3. Abrahamic Covenant and Corresponding Resurrection Belief – The promise that God gave Abraham and his descendants, to possess and dwell in the promised land forever, demands a resurrection or God would not be a keeper of His promise. (Gen. 13:14-17, 22:1-5; Heb. 11:17-19; Lk. 3:8, 16:22, 19:40, 20:27-40)

D. The coming resurrection and fulfillment of these promises was referred to as the “Coming Kingdom” or “Messianic Age”. The language of “The Kingdom of God” did not start at the preaching of John the Baptist, or the inception of the Church, but rather was firmly rooted in the Jewish people since the days of Abraham. The centerpiece to the inheritance in the Kingdom was the hope of resurrection. Sadly, in our time the language of “Kingdom of God” had come to refer to many things outside of its foundation. (Mat. 3:2, 4:17, 4:23, 5:3, 5:10, 5:19-20, 6:10-13, 6:33, 7:21, 8:11-12, 9:35, 10:7, 11:12, 12:28, 13:11 etc.)

## **II. First Fruits Reality**

A. We know historically that Jesus gave up His spirit at the very hour that the Jews were sacrificing the Passover lamb in keeping the Passover feast of God. Three days later, the Jews were celebrating another appointed feast of God called “First fruits”. In keeping the Feast of First Fruits, God commanded that the first portion of the spring harvest be brought to the temple and offered to Him as a thankful and representative offering of the entire spring harvest. (Lev. 23:9-14) \* I have done extensive teaching concerning Jesus as our First Fruits  
(:<https://restorationfellowship.net/sermons/christ-the-first-fruits-2/> and Christ the First Fruits:<https://restorationfellowship.net/sermons/christ-the-first-fruits/>)

1. The significance of Jesus being raised from the dead in a resurrected body on the Feast of First Fruits was absolutely profound, and became the foundational truth to the entirety of the Christian doctrine and faith. This is the basis for the immediate switch we see in the disciples from

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fear to boldness and the mindset to lay down their lives for Jesus in the coming days. (Rom. 8:23, 11:16; 1 Cor. 15:20-23)

- B. Even though the disciples of Jesus firmly believed in resurrection they had no record of it ever happening. Everyone in Israel's history who had been miraculously raised from the dead was raised in their same corruptible body and sometime later died again. Historically, there were hundreds of accounts of individuals who claimed to be the Messiah. When these leaders eventually died their movement died with them, or the followers would name another leader.
1. Rather than the Jesus movement coming to an end or transitioning at the death of their leader, his disciples claimed Jesus was still leading them. Not only did they insist He had been raised from the dead, they insisted He was raised in resurrection form. The resurrection of Jesus proved and enforced the surety of the foundational belief they already had and anchored them steadily in the hope and lifestyle of the promised King and Kingdom. (Acts 1:22, 4:2, 4:33, 17:18, 17:32; Rom. 1:4, 6:5; 1 Cor. 15:1-58)

### III. Longing for Resurrection and Restoration

- A. Resurrection Lost - It is rare to find a believer today who is grounded in the full biblical truth of resurrection. Across the entirety of Christianity, the resurrection of Jesus and our hope of resurrection is synonymous with the theme of going to Heaven. Most of our talk and thoughts of our eternal life with Jesus have much more in common with Greco/Roman mythology than it does with resurrection. Worship songs and messaging abounds with the language of believers going home to be with God in Heaven where they belong.

Some of us have this week been standing by the grave; and one of our brethren, who long served his Master in our midst, was placed in the tomb. He was a man valiant for truth, self-denying in duty, and always prepared to follow his Lord, and to the utmost of his ability, serviceable to the church. Now, there were tears shed there: do you know what they were about? There was not a solitary tear shed about his soul. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul was not required to give us comfort, for we knew it well, we were perfectly assured that he had ascended to heaven. The burial service used in the Church of England most wisely offers us no comfort concerning the soul of the departed believer, but it cheers us by reminding us of the promised resurrection for the body; and when I speak concerning the dead, it is not to give comfort as to the soul, but as to the body. And this doctrine of the resurrection has comfort for the mourners in regard to the buried mortality. You do not weep because your father, brother, wife, husband, has ascended to heaven. None of you weep because your dear mother's soul is before the throne; but you weep because her body is in the grave, because those eyes can no more smile on you, because those hands cannot caress you, because those sweet lips cannot speak melodious notes of affection. You weep because the body is cold, and dead, and clay-like; for the soul you do not weep. But I have comfort for you. That very body will rise again; that eye will flash with genius again; that

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hand will be held out in affection once more. Believe me, I am speaking no fiction. That very hand, that positive hand, those cold, clay-like arms that hung down by the side and fell when you uplifted them, shall hold a harp one day; and those poor fingers, now icy and hard, shall be swept along the living strings of golden harps in resurrection. – Charles Spurgeon

1. It is absolutely astounding to study how much the scriptures talk about the eternal resurrection of believers corresponding with the restoration of creation and how very little they reference the temporary holding place of souls in heaven. (There are over 170 Chapters in the bible that have the “The Hope of the coming King and Kingdom / Resurrection and Restoration” as its main theme)

***“Lord, will you at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?” (Acts. 1:6)***

***“Whom heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:21)***

2. The truth is that both heaven and earth groan and long for resurrection and restoration. Heaven has been separated from earth; they are incomplete without each other. Disembodied souls, though they find themselves in the presence of the Lord, long for the resurrection of their bodies. God groans and longs for the day when He will restore His dwelling place upon the earth where it belongs. (Ez. 37:25-27; Mat. 16:27, 24:3, 25:6, 31; Rom. 8:19-27; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 1:23; 1 Thes. 4:13-18; 1 Tim. 2:13; 2 Tim. 4:1,8; Heb. 9:28, 11:10, 13:14; Jude 1:14-15; Rev. 3:12; 19:11-14; 21:2-3, 21:10)