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WHO WILL RAISE THE DEAD?

Allow us to answer this question according to our understanding of God's word. We are *all*, I trust, willing to learn more, and also to give up former ideas when a "Thus saith the Lord," *understood*, makes it necessary. When light increases we may see differently; and may we have grace in the future, as in the past, to confess our mistakes as they become apparent. At present we have a decided objection to the idea that the "Father, as distinct from the Son," will raise the dead, or do anything else which is a part of the plan of salvation. We believe the work that was done before the incarnation was, in a peculiar sense, the Father's work, and the "Word was made flesh" to "*finish* His (Father's) work." (John 4:34.) The finishing work was the harvest, and, so far as related to the Jews, in favor, it ended when Jesus had left their house desolate and said, "It is finished." Unless we are much mistaken the "Word" was not called the Son until the incarnation. The Son was called "Emmanuel—God with us." Matt. 1:23. "God was manifest in the flesh." 1 Tim. 3:16. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matt. 28:18. "It pleased the Father that in him (the Son) should all fullness dwell"—"all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 1:19, and 2:9. From these and other testimonies we believe that "God is in Christ," so that all that God does is *through* Christ, as mediator, and all that Christ does is by the power of the Father given Him. Hence he could say, "I and my Father are one," and "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." But as the Father *gave* him the power He could also say, "My Father is greater than I."

With the prayer in our hearts that the "Spirit of Truth" will help in "rightly dividing the word," let us look at John 5:21, which is thought by some to be a "Thus saith the Lord" for the idea that the "Father as distinct from the Son" will raise not only a part but all of the dead.

"As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." If the quickening by the Son refers to the work of *elevating after* the resurrection, the Son will have nothing to do, for the Father quickens all He raises. To quicken is to make alive, and the double statement gives emphasis to the idea of life by resurrection (modern resurrectionists do not give life). A careful reading of the context instead of confirming the assumption that the Father, separately, will raise the dead, will show that the work is committed by the Father into the hands of the Son. The plan of the ages will help in dividing the word.

The closing work of the Jewish age was the turning point between the work of the Father and of the Son. "My Father worketh HITHERTO, and [now] I work." Ver. 17.

Raising the dead may well be regarded as the climax of physical healing. He that can do the

greater can certainly do the less. And if Christ has not the power over physical death, he could not heal a single disease or save any person from dying. Before the incarnation the Father healed disease and raised the dead, but, says Jesus, “The hour is coming and now is (The harvest of the Jewish age was the dawn of the Gospel age) when the dead shall hear the voice of the SON of God, and they that hear shall live.” (Ver. 25.) True, “the Son can do nothing *of himself*.” (Ver. 19.) The Father shows the Son (Ver. 20), so that what the Father can do the Son can do also (Ver. 21); after which the Son does the work (Ver. 22). “That all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father.” (Ver. 23.)

“As the Father hath life in himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man.” (vs. 26,27.) Now that the *life* and *power* are given to Christ, do not be surprised if He exercises his *power* in giving the *life*.

[NOTE—Do not think because Christ was dealing with physical diseases and death, that therefore we imagine his work was *confined* to physical things “All power” (physical and spiritual) belongs to Christ, and the object of physical benefits is that men thus saved may “come to the knowledge of the truth.” The natural is the type and steppingstone to the spiritual].

He exercised that power in the raising of Lazarus, the widow’s son, and Jairus’ daughter; and not only during his earthly life and ministry but after his exaltation, also, the “*Name of Jesus*,” by the Apostles, wrought wonderful cures, and brought the dead back to natural life again. Not in their own name, nor in the name of the Father, but in the name of the Lord Jesus, be it remembered, these cures were done. The reason is obvious, as they were acting under a commission from him who had said, “All power is given to ME in Heaven and earth.” In the exercise of this power Christ, as the head of the anti-typical Elias, will in due time “restore all things.” “Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear HIS voice and shall come forth.” John 5:28,29. The context shows that the pronoun “his” in the above refers to the Son and not to the Father.

True, “merely” a resurrection is not *all* that is involved in a “Restitution of all things,” but it is certainly *included* in that work, and it seems as if all might see that Christ’s work as head of an *immortal* race is over and above his work as Redeemer—or restoring what was lost in Adam. Before Christ could complete the work of bringing man to the image of God, He must redeem man from death, as all the Father had done for man was lost by sin. Hence we are dependent on Christ for *both* “life and immortality,” which are “brought to light through the Gospel.” 2 Tim. 1:10. The recovery is by the *ransom*, and the glorification is by the *light*, “to all them that obey him.” If it be remembered that it is “*God in Christ* reconciling the world to himself,” it will be seen that we

honor *both* the Father and the Son, and there will be no more difficulty in harmonizing the statements: “I will raise him up at the last day,” John 6:40 and “He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies.” Rom. 8:11. Both are by the same spirit which, in the ninth verse, is called the “Spirit of God,” and also the “Spirit of Christ.” So, also, Jesus could say, “I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again.” John 10:18: and Peter could say truly, “God raised him from the dead.” Acts 3:15.

It is to be hoped that none will for the sake of propping up a *new idea* reject an *old truth*.

[I would not impugn the *motives* of any who differ, but we should guard against a *tendency to unconsciously strain* a passage to make it help prove a new theory. This is often done without realizing that well established truths are belittled. We would unlearn our errors but hold fast to truths.]

When Jesus was raised it was by the *Spirit*, and therefore not in the flesh, for “That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.” John 3:6; and when the Saints are raised “it is raised a spiritual body” for the same reason. Truly we have a right to exclaim: “Thanks be unto GOD, who giveth us the VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.” 1 Cor. 15:5,7.

J. H. P.

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