

162. Q. What great events are to occur in close connection with the Second Coming of Christ?
163. Q. What, then, should be the attitude of all Christians with respect to the Second Coming of Christ?

Lesson Fifty-One
IMMORTALITY

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 5:1-10, 1 Cor. 15:35-58.

Scriptures to Memorize: "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1). "But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54).

164. Q. Can we determine exactly the sequence of the events that are to occur in the last days?

A. No; because the order of their happening is not clearly revealed in the Scriptures.

The events themselves, as outlined in these last three lessons, are quite clearly described in the Scriptures. We cannot, however, determine the exact order of their occurrence. To be able to do so would require that we be prophets ourselves, and would thus presuppose an inspiration we do not claim to possess. The best we can do therefore, is to present what appears to be their order of occurrence, in the light of Scripture teaching.

165. Q. What events are to occur in connection with the close of Christ's millennial reign?

A. The following, evidently: (1) The Post-millennial Apostasy; (2) The General Resurrection;

(3) The Last Judgment; (4) The Renovation of Our Earth; (5) The New Heavens and New Earth; (6) The Consummation of All Things.

(1) The Post-millennial Apostasy, Rev. 20:7-10; a final rebellion, incited by Satan, against the sovereignty and rule of Christ. (2) The General Resurrection, i. e., the resurrection of the dead. Rev. 30:5—"the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished." Rev. 20:12—"I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne." (3) The Last Judgment, Acts 17:31; Matt. 12:41-42, 25:31-46; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5; Rev. 20:11-15. (4) The Renovation of Our Earth, 2 Pet. 3:1-13. (5) The New Heavens and New Earth, Isa. 66:22-24, 2 Pet. 3:13. (6) The Consummation of All Things, Acts 3:20-21, 1 Cor. 15:25-28, Rev. 21:1-8 (note well: "I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God;" also, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men"); Rev. 22:1-5.

166. Q. What is the scripture meaning of the term "resurrection"?

A. The term "resurrection" means that our bodies will be raised, and reunited with our spirits.

(1) That is, their constituent elements will be reassembled, at least those necessary to the construction of our celestial bodies, and will be again united with the spirit that formerly inhabited them. John 14:2—"in my Father's house are many mansions," i. e., literally, dwelling-places, tabernacles. Cf. 2 Cor. 5:1—"a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." Cf. also Rom. 8:11. (2) We see nothing incredible in this teaching. We must remember that spirit determines, unifies, vitalizes, and controls the body; not the body, the spirit. We know that in this life the spirit assembles and unifies the constituent elements of our physical bodies; therefore, we may reasonably conclude that the same spirit will have power to attract

unto itself, and unify, the elements necessary to the construction of an ethereal body. 1 Cor. 15:44, 49—"if there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body, . . . and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (It should be made clear at this point, that the various scriptures quoted here have reference only to the redeemed. Cf. Heb. 12:23—"the spirits of just men made perfect.").

167. Q. Do the Scriptures teach that the bodies of all people, of all time, are to be raised up in the last day?

A. The Scriptures teach that all humanity will be raised up, to appear in the Judgment.

(1) John 5:28, 29—"all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," etc. Rev. 20:13—"and the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works." "Hades" is, in scripture, **the unseen**. (2) All must of necessity be raised up, in order that all may appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. Matt. 25:31, 32—"he shall sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all the nations." 2 Cor. 5:10—"we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ." Cf. Matt. 12:41, 42; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:16; Heb. 9:27, 28; Rev. 20:12.

168. Q. What do the Scriptures teach regarding the resurrection of the saints?

A. The Scriptures teach that the bodies of the saints are to be resurrected and glorified.

(1) They are to be raised at **Christ's coming**. 1 Cor. 15:22, 23—"For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; then they that are Christ's at his coming." See also 1 Thess. 4:16-17, Rev. 20:4-6. (2) They are to be **glorified**. Phil. 3:20, 21—"the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion

anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." Dan. 12:3—"they that turn many to righteousness (shall shine) as the stars for ever and ever."

169. Q. What is the scripture meaning of the term "glorification"?

A. The term "glorification" describes the process by which the bodies of the saints shall be transformed by the working of Christ's mighty power, from mortal bodies into radiant immortal bodies.

(1) John 17:5—"Father, glorify thou me . . . with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 7:39—"for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." Rom. 8:21—"the creature itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." Rom. 2:7—"glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life." (2) Note, in this connection, that the body in which Jesus came forth from the tomb was the body of "flesh and bones" (i. e., evidently lacking the blood, which is the seat of animal life). It was a body in which He could pass through closed doors, i. e., it was essentially **ethereal** (Mark 16:14, Luke 24:31, John 20:19-20, 24-25). This was evidently His **resurrection body**. But the body in which He appeared to Saul of Tarsus, like that in which He was manifested on the occasion of His Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-2), was of such radiant beauty and glory, that its brilliance outshone that of the noon-day sun (Acts 9:3-8, 22:6-9, 26:12-13). This was obviously His **heavenly** (celestial, spiritual, immortal, etc.) body. (3) 1 Cor. 15:40-44, "There are also celestial 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, another glory of the moon, another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from

another star in glory. **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 in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body." Cf. v. 49—"and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (4) Emphasize the fact here, that through all these changes and transformations, as in the case of Jesus, who was recognized by His disciples, **the individual persists.** Hence, John Smith will still be John Smith in the resurrection morning, and John Jones will still be John Jones, etc. In the processes of resurrection and glorification, **no loss of individual identity will occur.**

170. Q. **By what phrase is this entire process of resurrection and glorification described in the Scriptures?**

A. **It is described as the putting on of immortality.**

(1) 1 Cor. 15:53—"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (2) By **mortality** is meant corruption, i. e., liability to dissolution. By **immortality** is meant incorruption, the antithesis of corruption. Rom. 2:7—"glory and honor and incorruption." (3) The body of man, as we have learned, **was created mortal**; but, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, **it shall be made immortal**, i. e., incapable of death, dissolution, disintegration, etc. (4) In the light of these truths, it is obvious that to speak of "the immortality of the soul" is to speak unscripturally. **Immortality** is a term which pertains only to the body.

171. Q. **What, then, is the scripture doctrine of immortality?**

A. **Immortality** is the term used in scripture to describe the glory and honor and incorruption of our heavenly bodies.

Hence it is said of Christ, the firstborn from the dead, that He "only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:16). The resurrection, ascension and glorification of Christ are God's evidences, likewise His solemn pledges, to all mankind, that His saints shall all, in like manner, ultimately be raised up and clothed in the same glory and honor and incorruption. See 1 John 3:2, 1 Pet. 1:3-5.

172. Q. But: How are those saints who may be living on the earth when Christ comes again, to come into possession of their immortal bodies?

A. The Scriptures teach that they are to put on immortality by transfiguration and glorification.

1-Cor. 15:51, 52—"Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed" (i. e., we who are living upon the earth when Jesus comes again); "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (i. e., we who are still in the flesh shall be transfigured). 1 Thess. 4:16-17—"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Cor. 15:53, 54—"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible (the saints whose bodies are in the grave) shall have put on incorruption (by resurrection and glorification), and this mortal (the saints who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord) shall have put on immortality (by transfiguration and glorification); then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory!" This entire section of the Scriptures is descriptive of the Translation of the Church.

173. Q. What, then, are the two phases of Christ's redemptive work?

A. They are: (1) the present redemption of our spirits from the guilt of sin; and (2) the final redemption of our bodies from the consequences of sin.

(1) Gal. 3:13—"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law," i. e., from the guilt and penalty of sin. Eph. 1:7—"in whom we have our redemption through his blood." (2) Rom. 8:23—"waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Thus the redemption that is in Christ Jesus includes, ultimately, our redemption from mortality itself, as well as redemption from suffering, disease, and death. 2 Cor. 5:4—"that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life." (3) No cripples in heaven, then; no deformity, disease, suffering, death, etc. Rev. 21:4—"God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away." Rom. 8:21—"the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." (4) Our race started out on this earth **innocent** and **mortal**; the redeemed race, in the new heavens and new earth, will be **holy** and **immortal**.

174. Q. In what is the superlative excellence of the Christian Religion manifested?

A. It is manifested in this blessed promise and glorious hope of the redemption of our bodies.

No other system of either philosophy or religion holds out such a precious promise, such a glorious hope, such a powerful incentive to righteousness and holiness on our part! In view of all these great truths, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God!" (2 Pet. 3:11-12).

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON
FIFTY-ONE

164. Q. Can we determine exactly the sequence of the events that are to occur in the last days?
165. Q. What events are to occur in connection with the close of Christ's millennial reign?
166. Q. What is the scripture meaning of the term "resurrection"?
167. Q. Do the Scriptures teach that the bodies of all people, of all time, are to be raised up in the last day?
168. Q. What do the Scriptures teach regarding the resurrection of the saints?
169. Q. What is the scripture meaning of the term "glorification"?
170. Q. By what phrase is this entire process of resurrection and glorification described in the Scriptures?
171. Q. What, then, is the scripture doctrine of immortality?
172. Q. But: How are those saints who may be living on the earth when Christ comes again, to come into possession of their immortal bodies?
173. Q. What, then, are the two phases of Christ's redemptive work?
174. Q. In what is the superlative excellence of the Christian Religion manifested?