DEATH will be DESTROYED

I Corinthians 15:20-34

2-4-2024

Introduction:

*** The believer's hope of his/her future bodily resurrection cannot be denied**
(You can be sure that the "last enemy" to be destroyed by God will be DEATH!)

I. ***The hope of our future resurrection is...***
ANCHORED IN OUR <u>RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST</u> (v.20-22)
(Death will be destroyed IN CHRIST)

II. ***The hope of our future resurrection...***
WILL TURN TO REALITY AT <u>GOD'S APPOINTED TIME</u> (v.23-28)
(Death will be destroyed IN GOD'S "ORDER" (TIMING))

III. ***The hope of our future resurrection...***
GIVES US COURAGE TO FACE <u>DEATH WITHOUT FEAR</u> (v.29-32)
(Death will be destroyed FOR SURE!)

IV. ***The hope of our future resurrection...***
IS A BLESSED TRUTH <u>NO ONE SHOULD STEAL AWAY FROM US</u> (v.33-34)
(Death will be destroyed NO MATTER WHAT ANYONE ELSE SAYS)

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Introduction:

Every time I attend a funeral, I am reminded of the shortness of life and the reality of death.

Quote Ron Hamilton's hymns: "Now I am Born Again" and "Then Jesus Came."

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (v. 26).

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I. ***The hope of our future resurrection is...***
ANCHORED IN OUR RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST (v.20-22)
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V. 20

In order to fulfill the Old Testament festivals:

--Christ died during - Passover (Lev. 23:4-5)

--Christ was buried during - Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:6-8)

--Christ arose on the day of - First Fruits (Lev. 23:9-14)

On "First Fruits" the first portion of the barley harvest (a *"sheaf"* - 2 quarts of barley) would be waved before the Lord on the Sunday after unleavened bread (Lev. 23:11). This dedication of that grain which came up out of the earth's ground was a foreshadowing of Christ coming out of the grave. This first-fruits anticipated a larger crop which would be harvested after. Christ's resurrection marks the first resurrection unto incorruption (a glorified body), which promised more glorified resurrections to follow.

V. 21
Adam was the firstfruits of death for those related to him; whereas Christ was the firstfruits of eternal life for those related to Him.

One earthly man brought death, whereas one heavenly Man brought life.

Adam, whose name means "from the earth (ground)," reminds us that the human race came from the ground and will return to the ground. However, Christ (a title of Messiahship) will bring us out of our bondage of sin and suffering and save our souls by His grace.

V. 22
We are all related to Adam via our bloodline link to him as the head ("*father*") of the human race. We are all linked to him seminally (in seed).

Everyone linked to Adam bears his sin nature and the consequences for sin, which is death (Rom. 5:12-19).

Just as our bloodline to Adam connected us to his sin and death, so our faith line to Jesus connects us to His righteousness and life.

The resurrection to life is: ***"in Christ"*** (only those related to Him will arise to eternal life in glory. Are you in Christ? He is our "ark of protection." You must be "born" to be "in Adam." You must be "born again" to be *"in Christ."* Not everyone is "in Christ" - cp. Jn. 8:44)

The resurrection to life is: **future** (*"shall. . . be")*

The resurrection to life is: **for *"all"* believers** (*"all")*

The resurrection to life is: **God's work** (*"made alive")*
(the passive verb indicates it is God not man who is the power behind the resurrection).

--Christ is our life (Col. 3:4)

--Christ will return to receive us (Jn. 14:1-3)

--Christ will summon those who hear His voice (Jn. 5:21, 25)

--Christ will gather His elect (Mk. 13:27)

--Christ will rapture us into the clouds of His glory (I Th. 4:16-17)

ILLUS: The funeral director who said to my grandfather: "You're looking good. . . who's your undertaker?" -- I'm not looking for the undertaker, but the Upper Taker!

II. ***The hope of our future resurrection...***
WILL TURN TO REALITY AT <u>GOD'S APPOINTED TIME</u> (v.23-28)
(Death will be destroyed IN GOD'S "ORDER" (TIMING))

V. 23

There is no such thing as one all inclusive general resurrection as Amillennialism espouses.

God has a <u>sequence</u> to the Resurrection.

"Every man in his own order" - order = turn, timing, or sequence

Three glorified resurrections:

1. Christ's (*"Christ the firstfruits")*

2. The saints of this age (at Christ's return)
(*"they that are Christ's at his coming"* [appearing, presence])

3. The people of the second resurrection at the end of the Millennium (v. 24 - *"then the end"* - "end" = *telos*, meaning culmination, conclusion; refers to the completion of mortal history)

Pretribulationism generally holds to the idea that the Resurrection will occur <u>before</u> the Tribulation (for church-age saints) and <u>before</u> the Millennium (for Old Testament saints and Tribulation martyrs). According to Paul's order here, such is not the case.

V. 24

For the first and second resurrections, see: <u>Rev. 20:4-6</u>

V. 25

"For He must <u>reign</u>" - This future reign will occur according to Rev. 20:4-6 and will fulfill Psalm 2!

(Note: Ps. 2:8-9)

The word "millennium" is the Latin derivative from the Greek word "chilia" which means 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-7)

3 views of the Millennium:

1. **Post-Millennialism** - (social gospel view) Man through social effort will usher in a utopian period of peace on earth, after which time Christ will return
2. **A-Millennialism** - (covenant theology view) There is no 1,000 year kingdom. The 1,000 years of Rev. 20:1-7 are only figurative. They symbolize the time period from the cross until the imminent return of Christ (According to this view, there is no literal 7 year Tribulation either). At the cross Jesus defeated Satan and he has been bound ever since.

*3. **Pre-Millennialism** - (dispensational view) Christ will literally return for judgment and then will establish he promised, long-awaited Messianic Kingdom.

Proofs for the literal establishment of the Millennial Kingdom:

a. The Scriptures **teach** it (Rev. 20:1-7)
b. God **detailed** it (Is. 11, etc.)
c. Christ **promised** it (Mt. 26:29)
d. The Apostles **expected** it (Acts 1:6-7)
e. Creation **awaits** it (Rom. 8:19-22)
f. We are expected to **pray** for it to come (implying that it hasn't come yet-Mt. 6:10)

[Important Note: The Millennium (1,000 year Kingdom) will be the first phase of Christ's eternal kingdom - Dan. 2:44; Ezek. 37:24-28.]

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MILLENNIUM
(in general)

The 1,000 year Kingdom will be a time of:

1. Christ's sovereign reign (Rev. 20:4-7; Zech. 14:9; Haggai 2:7; Is. 9:6-7, 11:1-5, 10)
2. Believers reigning with Christ (Rev. 20:4-7; Obad. 21)
3. Holiness & righteousness (Zech. 8:3, 14:20; Is. 32:1-5)
4. Justice & peace (Is. 2:1-4, 9:6-7; Micah 4:1-5)
5. Longevity of mortal life (Zech. 8:4)
6. Worship via a new temple (Haggai 2:7-8; Ezek. 40)
(sacrifices will be memorials of Christ's finished work)
7. Peace, spirituality, & prosperity (Micah 4:4-8; Is. 60:17-20; Joel 2:18-27)
8. Rejuvenated water (Ezek. 47:1-12)
9. Storms & rain (Is. 4:6; Zech. 14:18-19)
10. No external temptation or deception (Rev. 20:1-3)
11. No violence or destruction (Is. 11:6-10)
12. Spiritual blessing (Is. 32:15-19)
13. Renovated land and desert (Is. 40:3,4; Is. 35:1-8)
14. Gentile & Jewish inhabitance (Is. 60:14-16)

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MILLENNIUM
(specifically related to Israel)

For Israel, the 1,000 year Kingdom will be a time of:

1. Unity (among the tribes of Israel) (Is. 11:13; Ezek. 37:15-22; Jer. 3:19)
2. Comfort & joy (Is. 12:1-6; 40:1ff)
3. Rest (Is. 14:3, 7-8)
4. Respect (by other nations) (Zech. 8:23; Is. 60:14-16)
5. Much land (Obad. 19-20)

V. 27

Everything will be under Christ with the exception of God the Father who is the Head of the Trinity (I Cor. 11:3).

V. 28

After Christ's Millennial reign, He will deliver His Kingdom to the Father and remain subjected to the Father, who subjected all things under Christ, so that the Father will be eternal glorified.

III. ***The hope of our future resurrection...***
GIVES US COURAGE TO FACE <u>DEATH WITHOUT FEAR</u> (v.29-32)
(Death will be destroyed FOR SURE!)

V. 29

"Baptized for the dead" - Paul is <u>not</u> teaching vicarious baptism for dead people so as to save them from sin. (He could be speaking <u>hypothetically</u>; note the *"they"* not "we"). One implied point is this: Why be identified with Christ and others who have died in Christ, if the dead are not raised? Baptism, which pictures death and resurrection (Rom. 6), is pointless if there is no resurrection.

The word translated "for" is *huper*, which means "because of" or "on behalf of" or "in the place of." Every time someone is baptized, that person is showing that he is willing to step into the ranks of those who have gone on before us (whose faith we are following - Heb. 13:7). Why is it that new converts would be willing to take the place of older ones who had died through the last 20 centuries of there was no resurrection to look forward to?

V. 30

Paul says: "If there is no resurrection, why should I jeopardize (risk, endanger) my life for a dead Savior and a dead religion?" Every day Paul's life was threatened as people hated him for his hour-by-hour testimony for Christ.

V. 31

Paul says in effect: "Just as <u>surely</u> as I am glad about how God saved you, I tell you the truth that for His cause *"I die daily."* (for the Gospel's sake, I die to self-ambition and selfish pursuits, and I am willing to die for Christ any day He chooses.)

V 32

Paul, as it were, was "thrown out to the lions" at Ephesus, when he went there and preached the Gospel. People were converted and turned from their idolatry, which killed business in Ephesus because of the silversmiths losing money over Diana figurines which saved people would no longer purchase. Hence, a riot occurred at Ephesus (cp. Acts 19:17=41).

Paul endured much for Christ (SEE: II Cor. 11:23-28).

If there is no future life to look forward to, we might as well live it up (high and wild) now, since we will soon die and that will be the end of it!

The Greek historian Thuscydides reported that when a deadly plague came to Athens, "people committed every shameful crime and eagerly snatched at every lustful pleasure." They believed life was short and there was no resurrection, so they would have to pay no price for their vice. The Roman poet Horace wrote, "Tell them to bring wine and perfume and the too short-lived blossoms of the lovely rose while circumstance and age and the black threads of the three sisters fate still allow us to do so. Another Roman poet, Catullus, penned the lines, "let's live my Lesbia and let's love, and let's value the tales of austere old men at a single half penny. Suns can set and then return again, but for us when once our brief light sets there is but one perpetual night through which we must sleep." (MacArthur, p. 429)

IV. ***The hope of our future resurrection...***
IS A BLESSED TRUTH <u>NO ONE SHOULD STEAL AWAY FROM US</u> (v.33-34)
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V. 33

Bad company ruins good morals

If you listen to false doctrine, it will result in corrupt living.

The Corinthians were listening to teaching which denied the believer's future hope. Because of this, some believers were in danger of losing the greatest incentive to avoiding the high and wild worldly party life: that incentive being our future hope.

V. 34

those who have heard the truth and know the truth have no excuse for not allowing that truth to impact their lives unto holiness. Some pagans had better lifestyles and yet had no hope of a future resurrection.

Conclusion: