

---

# Awesome Resurrection Changes

---

A reprint from *The ENJOY THE BIBLE QUARTERLY* — 1996, 3rd Quarter

— Keith R. Blades

---

Without a doubt our physical bodies are a masterpiece of God's workmanship. They are so elaborately constructed and they are composed of such multi-faceted yet interrelated parts that it literally boggles the mind. They contain numerous intricate systems of operation ranging from individual cell performance to those of organs like the heart and lungs, which work together to produce a complex organism that no feat of human engineering even comes close to matching. In fact, even one of the many sub-systems that operate within the framework of a single cell is more complex than anything man has imagined, much less produced. Without a doubt, as David declared to God in Psalm 139, we are "fearfully and wonderfully made."

But as each and everyone of us knows, there is something dreadfully wrong with these bodies of ours. They are mortal bodies, subject to death, debilitating affliction, and decay because of the "bondage of corruption" that grips all creation. Sin and its corruption works in our bodies and we are well aware of it as we experience the "sufferings of this present time" in common with the whole creation. Hence, in Romans 8 as Paul deals with the "sufferings of this present time" he affirms what we already know,...

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves,...

(Romans 8:22-23a)

Groaning within ourselves because of the effects of the "bondage of corruption" that we experience is our common lot with the whole of creation.

And that groaning and travailing in pain is never more poignant for us than when it involves the corrupting of our bodies. Likewise, the strength of that corruption is never more evident to us than when our bodies weaken over time, are beaten by disease, and we eventually succumb to death.

But thanks be to God that we do not groan in despair. We do not groan nor sorrow as one who has no hope. For though the "bondage of corruption" is experienced by us now, and sickness and death is not the least bit foreign to us, the total victory over sin and death that Christ has accomplished for us includes "the redemption of our body." Therefore, Paul says,...

"...even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body."

(Romans 8:23b)

The "redemption of our body" is coming and we will receive it at "the day of redemption," when the Lord ends this dispensation of His grace by His coming for us. Then the total victory over sin will be ours in all its fullness. Then the "bondage of corruption" will have no effect whatsoever upon us. In that day mortality will be "swallowed up of life" and "the sufferings of this present time" will be no more.

However, amazingly this is not all there is to "the redemption of our body." As Paul teaches, when we receive the "redemption of our body" then we will also have the fullness of our "adoption." Hence, he says we are,...

"...WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION, *to wit*, the redemption of our body."

(Romans 8:23b)

Right now we possess the standing of adoption, or sonship, and are being treated by God as adult sons, as Paul stated earlier in verses 14-15. However, when God ends this dispensation we will then have the inheritance portion of our "adoption" and will be manifested in that inheritance as the sons of God. Hence, verse 19 refers to "the manifestation of the sons of God." In accordance with this, the "redemption of our body" will not only involve mortality being swallowed up of life, but it will also involve a number of other changes to our bodies commensurate with our inheritance as "joint-heirs with Christ" and with the special heavenly vocation unto which God has called us.

## 5 Particular Changes

In I Corinthians 15, as he deals with the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, Paul sets before us 5 particular changes to our bodies that will take place when they are resurrected.

42 So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven.

48 As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

(I Corinthians 15:42-49)

Let's briefly consider each one of these 5 changes and notice that, in accordance with the riches of God's grace in redemption, when our bodies are redeemed they will be infinitely better than the ones we possess right now.

**It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:** This is the most fundamental change of all and is the issue of mortality being swallowed up of life. Our redeemed bodies will be incorruptible bodies. Decay and death will be no more. They will no longer be subject to the present "bondage of corruption" with all of its sufferings and afflictions. They will no longer be mortal bodies.

**It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory:** "Dishonour" is attached to our present bodies, for they still bear the unmistakable stigma of fallen man. Though we belong to Christ, having trusted Christ as our Saviour, by sheer outward appearances that is not obvious. We still bear the image of fallen man. We are not the manifest sons of God yet. But when our bodies are redeemed, they will be raised "in glory." The visible glory of God will be revealed in us bodily and by sheer appearance our identity with Christ will be manifested. Our bodies will then bear witness to the glory of God, being vessels for its manifestation.

**It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:** Weakness is a word that describes the sum and substance of man. Though man professes himself to be wise and strong, in reality the exact opposite is true. And when it comes to the body, weakness is all too obvious. Though this is evident in a number of ways, the epitome of this is shown by time. Time takes its toll on our bodies. Even on a daily basis we must rest our bodies for an extended period of time just to be able to face another day. And as time moves on the capacity of our body to do work lessens and lessens. Eventually so little energy is left, and then even this gives out. Our bodies are defeated by the burden of time. In weakness they admit defeat.

But power will be a characteristic of our redeemed bodies. We will not only possess powers and capabilities that far exceed those that we now possess. But power itself will be a hallmark of our redeemed bodies. Hence, time will no longer be the burden that it is to us now. Eternity will exact no toll upon our bodies.

**It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body:** This is one of the more amazing changes that will take place, and one for which we have no real frame of reference. Hence, Paul's extended teaching on it. Our present body is a "natural body," being of the same nature as that of Adam's. Adam was "made a living soul" and as such had a body fit for the soul. And so do we. Our bodies respond to our souls and are more or less governed by the soul. However, our redeemed body will be "a spiritual body." It will be fit for the spirit instead of the soul. This will be in accordance with Christ, as "the last Adam," being made a "quickening spirit."

**We shall also bear the image of the heavenly:** This is the most amazing change of all and one again for which we have no real frame of reference. Our present bodies bear "the image of the earthy" being descended from "the first man" who was "of the earth, earthy." But, as Paul says, "the second man is the Lord from heaven." Paul here calls the Lord Jesus Christ "the second man." He just called Him "the last Adam" in connection with Him functioning as our substitute Redeemer who came to destroy death. But now he calls Him "the second man." Paul calls Christ this in connection with the new species of man that He is in His resurrection. Christ was resurrected from the dead in a heavenly body, fit to exist and operate in heaven from which He came. And this was done in accordance with it being God's plan and purpose to make "in Christ" a "new creation," "one new man," through which the heavenly places will be reconciled back to God. This required a new species of humanity. This required a "second man." This is who Christ also is. And with us being the "one new man" in Him, we will

therefore "bear the image of the heavenly." Our bodies will be changed and made fit to exist and operate in the heavenly places, enabling us to fulfill the heavenly vocation unto which God has called us.

Though only briefly considered, these resurrection changes are indeed wonderful and awesome to think about. If our present bodies are "fearfully and wonderfully made," how much more our changed bodies in "the day of redemption." These changes comprise a great portion of "the glory that shall be revealed in us," the knowledge of which is designed by God to enable us to endure the "sufferings of this present time." Hence, Paul says,...

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

(Romans 8:24-25)

And also,... — *Keith R. Blades*

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

(II Corinthians 4:17-18)