

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

against us, one day the heavens will resound with the shout of the redeemed, "O death, where is Your sting? O grave, where is your victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55). "Hallelujah, We Shall Rise!"

**PRAYER NEEDS:** **Health,** Revena, & David Lundy, Kenny & Linda Mitchell, Joann & John Johnson, Lisa Maxwell, Bill Treadway, Alan Johnson, Dennis & Jean Rhodes. **Other:** We need to pray that God will raise up men to aspire to serve as deacons. We need to pray for the leaders of our country, and for those serving in the military. Pray for those saints who are weak and those going through difficult times.

**GOSPEL MEETINGS:** None known of at this time.

**SINGING EVENING:** This song service will be on Sunday evening May 9, at 5:00 pm.

**EVANGELISM:** For those of the Somerville family who would like to participate in the Bible correspondence course work, we will meet on Sunday May 2 & 16 at 6:00 pm

**THE SOMERVILLE SOWER**  
Is published by the Somerville church of Christ to promote New Testament Christianity, and for the proclamation of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ as a part of its work.

**Elders**  
Jimmy Dobbs (256) 751 9534  
George Harris (256) 340 1972  
John Maxwell (256) 482 8122

**Schedule of Services**  
**Sunday**  
Bible class 9:45 a.m.  
Morning worship 10:45 a.m.  
Evening worship 5:00 p.m.  
**Wednesday**  
Bible class 7.00 p.m.

**Evangelist & Editor**  
George W Harris  
Tel: (256) 340 1972 (H)  
(256) 340 1972 (O)  
Mobile: (256) 345 1557 (M)  
E-mail address: georgewharris@msn.com

**Somerville church of Christ**  
7 Franklin Street  
P O Box 460  
SOMERVILLE AL 35670  
Phone: (256) 340 1972

If you would be interested in a **free** Bible correspondence course, or if you would like a **free** Bible study in your home, or if you have a request for Bible information, please write to the above address or phone one of the above numbers for prompt service.

# THE SOMERVILLE SOWER

*"The seed is the word of God." (Luke 8:11)*

Volume 7, Issue 5

Date: May 2010

## The Church Teaches The Bodily Resurrection Of The Just And The Unjust

Clayton Winters edited by George W Harris

In Acts 23:6 we read: *"But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other part Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."*

Paul here expressed a hope that has sustained man through the ages of time - that there is to be a resurrection from the dead. Job, from the agony of a decaying body, could cry, *"If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. You shall call, and I will answer You: You will have a desire to the work of Your hands"* (Job. 14:14-15). As his condition worsened, his hope deepened: *"For I know that my redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God"* (Job 29:25-26).

When David was compassed by the wicked, lurking secretly as greedy lions of prey, his hope of a resurrection defied the temporal threat. *"As for me, I will behold Your face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Your likeness"* (Psa. 17:15).

In the New Testament Jesus held forth this hope in unmistakable terms: *"...The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live"* (John 3:25). Again, *"Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more; but you see Me: because I live, you shall live also"* (John 14:19). Such a hope sustained Martha in the tragic loss of her brother: *"Martha said unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day"* (John 11:24); and Paul could affirm amidst increased persecution and imminent martyrdom, *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not*

*made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" (2 Cor. 5:1-2).*

#### A GENERAL RESURRECTION OF BOTH RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED

While some would separate the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked by a thousand-year period, and others would say, "*..There is no resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor. 15:12); nevertheless, the Scriptures affirm a general and simultaneous resurrection of both. Jesus taught, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29).*

Further proof of a general rather than a separate resurrection of the just and unjust is seen from the fact that both classes will be raised and judged at Christ's second coming. The Christian dead will be raised to be with the Lord: "*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 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 which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:15-17).* At this same coming the wicked will be raised to everlasting shame and contempt: "*And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power; When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Thess. 1:7-10).*

As Jesus portrays the judgment scene at His second coming, let it be observed that all are present. "*When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:31-32).* And thus we would conclude that the resurrection will be both general and simultaneous.

But two Scriptures are often used to differentiate between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. These are 1 Thessalonians 4:6 and Revelation 20:5-6. The Thessalonian passage most certainly says, "*And the dead in Christ shall rise first.*" But the question is, first before what? It is not first before the wicked dead are raised, for that is no part of the context; but rather first before the saints who are still

living are caught up to be with the Lord. That is, the living Christians will not precede the dead ones in their being united with the Lord. This is its true context, and to make it say more than that is to abuse Scripture.

Again it is certain that Revelation 20 mentions a first and second resurrection. But we must remember that this book is symbolic in nature (see Rev. 1:1), and must not be interpreted in such a way as to conflict with literal Scriptures dealing with the resurrection. Also it should be observed that, aside from its figurative nature, Revelation 20:4-5 does not even teach a general resurrection of the righteous, as some would lead us to believe. Rather it concerns only the "*Souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus...*" This is a chapter dealing with the blessed state of those martyred for the cause of Christ, not a proof-text for separate resurrections for the righteous and wicked.

#### A BODILY RESURRECTION

There are some who presume to deny a bodily resurrection. Even Jesus' body, they say, was probably dissolved into some gaseous substance rather than being reunited with His spirit at that garden tomb.

But such a theory is in direct conflict with what the Bible presents as a resurrection. When Jesus took the hand of the dead daughter of Jairus, she arose (Mk. 5:41-42). That was a bodily resurrection. Jesus approached the tomb of Lazarus: "*And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, loose him, and let him go" (John 11:43-44).* That was a bodily resurrection. At the death of Jesus there was a great earthquake, "*And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many" (Matt. 27:52-53).* That was a bodily resurrection.

To be sure our bodies will be changed and adapted to an eternal nature (1 Cor. 15:51-54). Of this change Paul wrote, "*Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3:21).* But it will still be our body that is resurrected and changed. And so Paul could exclaim, "*And not only they but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23).*

#### DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY

By the resurrection of Jesus Christ we have been begotten again unto a lively hope (1 Pet. 1:3). He has delivered us from the bondage to which we have been subjected by the fear of death (Heb. 2:15). And no matter what forces Satan may marshal