

## The Resurrection Factor: Introduction: Paul's Debater's Technique Supports Resurrection, 1 Cor 15:12-19; Old Testament Heroes: Daniel, Job, Abraham

### *The Resurrection Factor*

#### *A. Introduction*

The importance of our Lord's sacrificial death on the cross is properly emphasized in the presentation of the Gospel. It is the unmerited favor of God that presented His Son as a Substitute for us and it is the unconditional love of Jesus Christ who submitted Himself to be judged for our sins. As a result of His vicarious sacrifice those who place their faith in His Person and His work will be saved.

John 3:16 is a verse that gives a concise presentation of the Gospel:

**John 3:16 -** [NASB] "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Jesus' statement to Nicodemus was concise in the basic requirement for salvation and its result. If one simply believes in Christ it will result in eternal life.

But this conversation occurred after the first Passover of our Lord's public ministry in circa A.D. 26. The Lord's crucifixion did not occur for another three years and the details of His work on the cross were not yet clear to so many of those who believed in Him and came to follow Him.

The Old Testament however contains prophetic references to these details, especially in Isaiah 53. Christians claim that this chapter is ignored by the Jews because it so clearly refers to the Passion of Christ. But the rabbis point out that the reason this chapter is not often referenced in the synagogues is because it is not considered to be an haftorah \häf-taw' rä\. On Sabbath holidays a reading of the Torah is followed by a relevant reading from one of the prophets.

The rabbis note that Isaiah 53 is not classified as an haftorah and this is the reason it is rarely read. They go on to state that the chapter is misinterpreted by Christian theologians since the masculine singular pronoun in the passage does not refer to Messiah but to the nation Israel.

The blindness suffered by present-day rabbis initially afflicted Nicodemus as well as many of the other Jews of the first century. But as the Incarnation progressed the Lord clearly revealed His Messianic identity through His miracles, His healings, and His fulfillment of various prophecies.

When He arrived at the cross He was not only qualified to become the Substitute for the human race lost in sin but He had also clearly revealed to those who were objective His claims to Messiahship.

Yet although His work on the cross was completed in precise compliance with the salvation plan of God there yet remained one more factor that had to be accomplished before salvation and eternal life could become a reality for those who believe in Christ. That factor is the Lord being physically raised from the dead in resurrection body. Without this resurrection there could be no salvation.

**1 Corinthians 15:12 -** Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

Some of the members of the Corinthian church were of the belief that believers would not acquire a literal resurrection body. They contended that there would be a "spiritual" resurrection but not a physical one.

Verse 12 begins with the conditional particle **εἰ, ei** plus the indicative mood of the verb **ἐγείρω, egeirō** which sets up the protasis of a first class condition. This is a statement of fact that calls into question the claim of some Corinthians which is expressed in the apodosis: "... how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?"

Taking this as a premise, Paul enters into a debater's technique in which he makes the assumption that their claim is true. He then systematically demonstrates the fallacy of their contention beginning in verse 13 and continuing through verse 19.

In these seven verses Paul takes the position that there is no resurrection of the dead. This debater's technique utilizes a series of first class conditions which assume for the purpose of debate that a proposition is true.

Beginning in verse 13 each verse, with the exception of verse 18, contains the protasis of a first class condition of a debater's technique and is best translated "let us assume if":

**1 Corinthians 15:13** - But let us assume if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised;

**v. 14** - and let us assume if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is also in vain.

**v. 15** - Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we witnessed against God that He raised the Messiah, whom He did not raise, if we are to assume in fact the dead are not raised.

**v. 16** - For let us assume if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised;

**v. 17** - and let us assume if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.

**v. 18** - Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

**v. 19** - Let us assume if we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

Paul successfully argues that if there is no resurrection then there is no salvation for we would be forced to conclude that even Christ was not resurrected. And without the resurrection of Christ we are still in our sins and therefore our faith in Christ is in vain.

The resurrection of Christ is proof positive that the Father was propitiated with the work of our Lord on the cross. If we are to conclude that there is no resurrection then Christ was not resurrected and thus His work on the cross is found wanting before the righteousness and justice of God.

The Corinthians who held this heretical view were not only rebuked by Paul's logic but also by the testimony of four prominent Old Testament heroes. We shall examine each and discover the power that confidence in the resurrection had on these individuals as they applied it to the spiritual life of their dispensation through its major problem-solving device, the faith-rest drill.

## **B. Daniel**

Daniel used the resurrection as a problem-solving device when he applied the faith-rest drill to the future of the Jewish people. While a teenager, Daniel was taken to Babylon as a POW following Nebuchadnezzar's capture of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Through Jeremiah, the Lord prophesied this event and revealed that the captivity would last 70 years:

**Jeremiah 25:11** - 'And this whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.'

Later the Lord makes a promise to the Jews that at the conclusion of this captivity they would be returned to the land:

**Jeremiah 29:10** - "For thus says the Lord, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.'"

In Daniel 9, Daniel realized from these prophecies that the time was drawing near for the Jews to return to Jerusalem and prays that God would confirm this to him. Gabriel is sent to Babylon to answer his prayer and his response is quite familiar to this congregation:

**Daniel 9:24** - “Seventy weeks [ שָׁבוּעַ *shavua'*: **heptads of years: 70 x 7 = 490 years** ] are determined [ חָתַךְ *chathach*: **to cut out of time** ] for your people [ **Israel** ] and for your holy city [ **Jerusalem** ], to finish the transgression [ **terminate the 5th cycle** ], to make an end to sin [ **the baptism of fire for the Jews** ], to make atonement for iniquity [ **the regathering of the Diaspora** ], to bring in everlasting righteousness [ **resurrection of Old Testament saints** ], to seal up vision and prophecy [ **terminate the dispensation of Israel** ], and to anoint the most holy place [ **the Lord’s dedication of the millennial temple** ].

This timeline is interrupted by the Church Age with seven years remaining. Israel’s dispensational clock will not begin to tick again until the Rapture of the church occurs and this final heptad called the Tribulation takes place. Details of this future dispensation which actually concludes the dispensation of Israel are prophesied in Daniel 11-12.

It is in Daniel 12 that Gabriel provides Daniel with a prophecy which he can apply as a problem-solving device. In the faith-rest drill the resurrection of Jewish believers at the Second Advent is provided as the doctrinal rationale by which Daniel can reach a doctrinal conclusion of absolute confidence regarding his and his fellow Israelites eternal future:

**Daniel 12:1** - “Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book [ **the book of life which lists all believers of the dispensations** ], will be rescued.

**v. 2** - “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.”

Daniel is therefore prophetic about the resurrection and reveals it to be a future reality for all Old Testament saints and Tribulational martyrs at the Second Advent of Messiah.

### C. *Job*

As you know Job was placed under evidence testing during which he was required to utilize maximum recall of doctrine. He, too, was sustained by his confidence in the resurrection which he expresses in:

**Job 19:23** - “Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book!

**v. 24** - “That with an iron stylus and lead they were engraved in the rock forever!

**v. 25** - “And as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives [ **First Advent** ], and at the last He will take His stand on the earth [ **millennial kingdom** ].

**v. 26** - “Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I shall see God [ **resurrection of Old Testament saints and Tribulational martyrs** ].”

### D. *Abraham*

The writer of Hebrews presents the Hall of Fame of faith-rest heroes in chapter 11. In this context we read about the exploits of Old Testament believers who utilized the faith-rest technique to resolve the challenges they faced. Conspicuous in this report is Abraham.

The first occasion we find the senior patriarch of Israel mentioned is in Hebrews 11:9-13 which chronicles the faith-rest decisions he made from his conversion in Ur through his life in Canaan.

Abraham understood that his eternal destiny was to live in heaven with the Lord and was determined that he would never cease to search for the Eternal City until he discovered it.

**Hebrews 11:8** -By means of faith-rest in a doctrinal rationale Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out [ from Ur ] to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance [ **Canaan: Abrahamic & Palestinian covenants** ]; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

**v. 9** - By faith-rest in a doctrinal rationale he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;

**v. 10** - for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

**v. 13** - All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were able to focus on the unseen future where they were confident they would reside in a permanent eternal city “whose architect and builder is God.”

If they were to live in an eternal city they would also have to have the capacity to exist in such an environment which implies an understanding of a resurrection body.

This wisdom had already been manifest by Abraham when he was ordered to offer Isaac as a sacrifice in:

**Genesis 22:1** - Now it came about after these things, that God tested [ **נִסָּה** ] **nasah** ] Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”

**v. 2** - And He said, “Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.”