

The Resurrection of the Body

Biblical Evidence for the Resurrection of the Body

Old Testament

Job 19:25-27:

"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!"

Isaiah 26:19:

"Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead."

Daniel 12:2:

"And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

New Testament

John 5:28-29:

"Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment."

1 Corinthians 15:42-44:

"So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. 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."

1 Thessalonians 4:16:

"For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first."

Jewish Beliefs in the Resurrection of the Body

Earliest Records and Manuscripts

Talmud (Sanhedrin 90b):

"All Israelites have a share in the World to Come, as it is said (Isaiah 60:21), 'Your people are all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified.' And these are the ones who have no share in the World to Come: one who says that the resurrection of the dead is not a biblical doctrine, the Torah was not divinely revealed, and an epikoros (a heretic)."

Mishnah (Sanhedrin 10:1):

"All Israelites have a share in the World to Come, for it is written (Isaiah 60:21): 'Your people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever; the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified.'"

Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q521):

This manuscript found at Qumran includes references to the resurrection:

"The heavens and the earth will listen to His Messiah ... For He will heal the wounded, and revive the dead and bring good news to the poor."

Fathers of the Church

St. Augustine:

Quote: "*We shall see in the resurrection a restoration of what was lost*" (*City of God*, XXII.21).

Reflection: St. Augustine viewed the resurrection as the restoration of the entire person, both body and soul. He believed that through the resurrection, humanity would regain the original state intended by God before the Fall. This reflects the transformative power of Christ's resurrection, which not only saves souls but also redeems and restores the body.

St. Gregory of Nyssa:

Quote: "*The resurrection promises the return of all things to their original state*" (*On the Soul and Resurrection*).

Reflection: St. Gregory of Nyssa emphasized the comprehensive nature of the resurrection. He taught that the resurrection will restore everything to its original purity and integrity, reflecting the fullness of God's creative and redemptive work. This underscores the belief that the resurrection is not just a spiritual renewal but a physical restoration as well.

Saints

St. Thomas Aquinas:

Quote: "In the resurrection, the just will rise with a glorified body" (*Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Q. 81, Art. 1).

Reflection: St. Thomas Aquinas elaborated on the nature of the resurrected body, describing it as glorified and perfected. He taught that these glorified bodies would be free from suffering and corruption, reflecting the perfection of Christ's own resurrected body. Aquinas' theology assures the faithful that their future resurrection will bring them into a perfected and glorified state.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

CCC 988-1019:

Teaching: The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that at the end of time, our bodies will be raised and reunited with our souls, glorified like Christ's resurrected body.

The CCC emphasizes the holistic redemption offered through Christ. It affirms the Church's belief in the bodily resurrection, stressing that our future state will be one of glory and immortality, mirroring the resurrection of Jesus. This teaching provides hope and a forward-looking perspective on the Christian life, emphasizing that the body and soul will be reunited and transformed.

Conclusion

The resurrection of the body is a central tenet of Christian eschatology, reflecting the fullness of God's redemptive plan. The teachings of the Fathers of the Church, saints, and the Catechism, along with scriptural evidence, highlight the transformative nature of the resurrection. The analogy of the caterpillar and butterfly further illustrates the profound change from mortality to immortality that awaits believers. This doctrine provides deep hope and assurance, encouraging the faithful to live in anticipation of the glory that is to come.