

**All Enemies (Including Death) Will Be Forever Destroyed
at the Second Coming of Christ**

Ezra 7:11-12

1 Corinthians 15:22-26

September 23, 2012

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How one views the bodily Second Coming of Christ will affect the hope that a Christian has in a very practical way in his/her day to day life. Will the bodily Second Coming of Christ bring absolute and everlasting victory over all of Christ's enemies and over every aspect of the curse in creation? Or will the bodily Second Coming of Christ only bring a partial and temporary victory over Christ's enemies and over the curse in the world? That, my friends, is the difference that exists between a biblical view of Christ's bodily Second Coming and an unbiblical view of Christ's bodily Second Coming.

Dear ones, there are churches and ministers who teach that there will yet be enemies of Christ (who hate and despise Christ and that will war against Christ and encompass Him) and that there will yet be sin and death in the world after Christ's bodily Second Coming. This is a false doctrine not taught in Scripture, and a false doctrine that darkens the hope that Christ has promised us of an everlasting and total victory at His bodily Second Coming. And this is precisely the effect of the false doctrine taught by the vast majority of Christians today who embrace a premillennial coming of Jesus Christ. For as you will recall from recent sermons that have been preached, premillennialism teaches that Christ's bodily Second Coming will occur BEFORE the earthly millennium. But what is often ignored or minimized (by those who embrace premillennialism) is that there are enemies that oppose Christ upon the earth during the millennium to some degree (but especially after the millennium), and there are those in mortal bodies who die during the millennium and after the millennium. So if the Scripture teaches that at Christ's bodily Second Coming all of Christ's enemies (including death) are forever destroyed (which we shall see is the clear teaching of Scripture), then we must conclude that any teaching that denies an everlasting and complete victory of Christ, as King of kings, over every enemy, over every sin, and over death forever at His bodily Second Coming is robbing the Christian of that certain hope that belongs to him/her as God's dear child. But this is precisely what premillennialism teaches. And therefore, it must be rejected (no matter how well-intentioned and godly professing Christians may be who embrace this unbiblical view).

This Lord's Day, let us consider the following main points as we endeavor to understand how Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords at His Second Coming: (1) At Christ's Bodily Second Coming All Enemies (Including Death) Are Forever Destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:22-26); and (2) Christ Sits at God's Right Hand in Heaven until His Bodily Second Coming When All His Enemies (Including Death) Will Be Forever Destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:25).

I. At Christ's Bodily Second Coming All Enemies (Including Death) Are Forever Destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:22-26).

A. Remember that the recent series of sermons from the Book of Revelation (and today's sermon as well) actually began few weeks ago in Ezra 7:11-12, where King Artaxerxes of Persia refers to himself as "king of kings". However, that title is only a very faint and limited expression of that king's finite dominion

over a number of other kings and kingdoms of the world, but that title of “king of kings” reaches its glorious and inexhaustible realization in our only Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, who is declared to be the universal “King of kings, and Lord of lords” (in Revelation 19:16).

1. In our endeavor to understand what that title (King of kings, and Lord of lords) means when it is applied to Christ in Revelation 19:16, we first have sought to remove a prevalent and prominent error in churches today (the error of premillennialism), so that we might accurately understand Christ, as our King of kings and Lord of lords. To this end, we have in the most recent sermons demonstrated **why** Christ riding on a white horse in Revelation 19 is NOT His bodily Second Coming before the millennium mentioned in Revelation 20 (but is rather a figurative coming of Christ to judge the civil beast and the papal false prophet), and **why** it is NOT a bodily resurrection that is to be understood by the phrase, “the first resurrection” in Revelation 20 (but is rather a figurative resurrection of future Christians who come in the spirit and power of those who were martyred for Jesus Christ, and who will fill the nations with faithful Christians and faithful rulers who will covenant with God to be His people—this will be the greatest reformation in all of history, a worldwide reformation that brings the nation of Israel and all Gentile nations into the Visible Church of Jesus Christ).

2. We now continue with our study to demonstrate from 1 Corinthians 15, why premillennialism is contrary to the absolute and everlasting victory of Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords, at His bodily Second Coming, and why, therefore, it should be rejected by all Christians.

B. As we approach 1 Corinthians 15, Paul’s writes by inspiration of the Holy Spirit about the future bodily resurrection of believers so as to refute some false teachers in the Church of Corinth who were heretically teaching that there is no future bodily resurrection of the dead to be realized by believers (1 Corinthians 15:12).

C. Paul attacks this heresy by demonstrating the inseparable union between Christ and all His people. Just as Christ was raised from the dead bodily, never to undergo death again, so all His people for whom He died and for whom He was raised from the dead (without exception) will all likewise be raised from the dead bodily, never to undergo death again (1 Corinthians 15:13).

1. Paul demonstrates that without the bodily resurrection of Christ, there is no salvation; for if Christ remained in the grave and was not bodily raised from the dead, it could only mean that His sacrificial payment for the sins of His elect was insufficient to redeem them and that they are all lost and under God’s everlasting judgment (1 Corinthians 15:14-19).

2. However, the glorious truth that Christ was raised bodily from the grave never to die again means that God the Father did receive Christ’s death and suffering as payment in full for the sins of all His people; and all His people shall be saved and raised bodily from the dead (according to 1 Corinthians 15:20). Christ is, in fact, the “firstfruits of them that sleep” (1 Corinthians 15:20). In this context, “firstfruits” refers to that first gathering of harvest that guaranteed that the rest of the harvest would likewise follow (like a down-payment or a certain pledge that a greater harvest is certain to follow). Christ’s bodily resurrection, dear ones, is the down-payment of our own certain bodily resurrection. Because Christ lives, you who trust in Him alone for your eternal salvation will also be raised from the dead and live forever with Christ in the new heaven and new earth. Dear ones, the resurrected and living Christ is your guarantee that you will be bodily raised from the grave and that sin, temptation, afflictions, miseries, and death will not be victorious over you. You are more than conquerors through the resurrected Christ who loves you, who died for you, and who was raised for you, His people.

D. Now we come to consider **when** the bodily resurrection of all believers will occur (in 1 Corinthians 15:20-23). We see here that the bodily resurrection of all believers occurs at the bodily Second Coming of Christ. Note that all believers, whether those of the Old Testament era, like Abraham and David, or those in the New Testament era, are “in Christ”, chosen “in Christ” before the foundation of the world (according to Ephesians 1:4). This portion of Scripture teaches that there are only two bodily resurrection events (and no more than two): (1) Christ, the firstfruits (1 Corinthians 15:23a); and (2) all those who belong to Christ at His bodily Second Coming (1 Corinthians 15:23b). This truth of only two resurrection events in history (where the dead arise never to die again) is denied by at least the following groups.

1. First, there are at least two churches that deny there are only two bodily resurrection events in history as is taught here in Revelation 15:23: the Eastern Orthodox Church and a significant portion of the Roman Catholic Church. For these backslidden churches exalt Mary to such an exalted place that she is alleged to have been bodily raised from the dead (like Christ her Son) before her body saw corruption. This is an alleged physical resurrection, distinct and separate from the physical resurrection of all the dead in Christ at Christ’s bodily Second Coming.

“Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of death.” The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son’s Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians: ‘In giving birth you kept your virginity; **in your Dormition** [falling asleep in death—GLP] you did not leave the world, O Mother of God, but were joined to the source of Life. You conceived the living God and, by your prayers, will deliver our souls from death” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, p. 274).

Belief in the glorious destiny of the body and soul of the Lord's Mother **after her death** spread very rapidly from East to West (General Audience, # 2, Pope John Paul II, vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/1997/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_02071997_en.html).

Thus, Mary’s alleged resurrection without any biblical warrant and even contrary to the biblical warrant found here in 1 Corinthians 15:23 means that the Eastern Orthodox Church and many in the Church of Rome have likewise altered the words of Paul so that there are three resurrection events in history in which the dead are raised never to die again: Christ, Mary, and all the dead in Christ at His Second Coming.

2. But it is not only the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church that perverts the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:23 by adding more bodily resurrection events than Paul mentions, all Premillennialists likewise depart from the words of Paul as well. For they likewise have at least three resurrection events (or more, depending upon which premillennialist one talks to): The resurrection of Christ, the resurrection of the dead in Christ before the millennium, and the resurrection of the dead in Christ after the millennium (i.e. the resurrection of those who died in Christ during the millennium will be raised from the dead after the millennium). No, dear ones, there are only two resurrection events in the order laid out by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:23 (not three or more bodily resurrection events): (1) Christ’s bodily resurrection, and (2) the bodily resurrection of all the dead in Christ (not some of the dead in Christ) **at His Second Coming** (cp. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17). This, I submit, reveals the position of the Premil to be contrary to the teaching of Scripture.

E. Having considered **when** the bodily resurrection of all the dead in Christ (both Old Covenant and New Covenant believers) will occur (namely, at the bodily Second Coming of Christ), let us now look at **what** will immediately follow the bodily resurrection of believers when Christ returns.

1. First, Paul says that when Christ bodily returns and raises all the dead in Christ that “the end” of redemptive history will have finally come (1 Corinthians 15:24)—not the beginning of the millennium, or the continuation of redemptive history, but “the end.” Premils (you will recall) propose that the millennium occurs after the bodily Second Coming of Christ, thus the Premil teaches that between verse 23 and verse 24 of 1 Corinthians 15 is where the millennium occurs (even though the millennium is completely and totally passed over in silence by Paul—this is an argument from silence without any scriptural warrant).

2. The second event that occurs at Christ’s bodily Second Coming (according to 1 Corinthians 15:24) is that Christ delivers up to God the Father the kingdom of grace. In other words, Christ completes the salvation of all His elect whom the Father in eternity gave to the Son to save throughout history (John 6:39). Thus, none will be saved after the Second Coming of Christ, for the bodily Second Coming of Christ brings all of redemptive history and the salvation of sinners to an “end”. Whereas the Premil believes there is still a lot of redemptive history and many souls that will be saved after the Second Coming of Christ (during the millennium).

3. The third event that occurs at Christ’s bodily Second Coming is that all (not some, not most, but all) Christ’s enemies are destroyed (the last enemy being death) according to 1 Corinthians 15:24-26). Thus, after Christ’s bodily Second Coming (according to 1 Corinthians 15:24-26), there are no enemies left upon the earth that have not been destroyed. So how is it (according to premillennialism) that the arch-enemy Satan is released from the bottomless pit and goes forth to deceive the rebellious nations of the world (identified as Gog and Magog) after the Second Coming of Christ (Revelation 20:7-10)? For there are no enemies to oppose Christ and His people any longer after the bodily Second Coming of Christ. Furthermore, how is it (according to premillennialism) that there is still death after the bodily Second Coming of Christ in the millennium (Isaiah 65:20; Zechariah 14:17)? For Paul clearly teaches that at the bodily Second Coming of Christ the last enemy, death, will be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:51-54; Revelation 21:4). Thus, the premillennial position cannot be maintained without denying the universal victory of Christ (as King of kings, and Lord of lords) over all sin, all enemies, and all death at His bodily Second Coming. In fact, as we saw from our study of Revelation 20 last Lord’s Day, the Premil will have Christians who have been resurrected from the grave in glorified bodies walking and living daily in real life in the very presence of sin and death during the millennium. Nothing of this nature is ever taught in Scripture. To the contrary, the bodily resurrection of believers in Christ will bring an end once and for all to the curse of sin and death throughout all of creation (Romans 8:19-21). However, the Premil teaches that both sin and death continue (restrained to some degree, but are still present) for at least 1,000 years after Christ’s Second Coming. You talk about anti-climactic. It is not the glorious bodily Second Coming of Christ that brings the curse of all sin and death to an end (according to the Premil). In fact, Christ (in His glorified state as King of kings) will live here upon earth in the midst of His enemies, in the midst of sin, in the midst of death. Christ in His glorified body and the souls of dead believers have been in heaven (wondrously glorified and separated from the curse of this world), but according to the Premil, Christ and those believers in glorified bodies must come back to live in a world that is still under the curse (to some degree) and must be personally exposed to the curse of enemies, to the curse of sin, and to the curse of death.

II. Christ Sits at God’s Right Hand in Heaven until His Bodily Second Coming When All His Enemies (Including Death) Will Be Forever Destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:25).

A. I very briefly would draw your attention to 1 Corinthians 15:25 as the fulfillment of what is prophesied in Psalm 110:1. As we unite Psalm 110:1 with 1 Corinthians 15:25 (since one is the fulfillment of the other), we are taught by the Holy Spirit that Christ must (as to His resurrected, glorified body) sit at God's right hand upon His royal throne in heaven until God has put all of His enemies under his feet, the last enemy being death itself. In other words, Christ will reign bodily at God's right hand in heaven and will not bodily leave God's right hand until He bodily returns at His Second Coming, at which time God will put all of Christ's enemies under His feet (even the last enemy, death). Thus, because premillennialism has Christ leaving His throne in heaven and coming to earth at His bodily Second Coming at least 1,000 years before all of His enemies are put under His feet, the premillennial position is shown to be contrary to Scripture and to denigrate the universal victory of Christ (as King of kings and Lord of lords) over all His enemies at His bodily Second Coming. The Premillennial position actually allows the resurrected and glorified King of kings to be opposed and encompassed by Satan and all the nations of Gog and Magog after the millennium (Revelation 20:7-10). However, Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 15:51-55 that at Christ's bodily Second Coming death is swallowed up in victory, death is forever abolished. Dear ones, the bodily Second Coming of Christ is our hope that all of Christ's enemies (sin, sickness, hostility or even indifference to Christ, and death) will be forever and ever gone.

B. In closing, dear ones, I ask you, what is your biblical hope firmly anchored in: a resurrected and glorified Christ and a resurrected and glorified body (like Christ's) that will be exposed to the curse of enemies, the curse of sin, and the curse of death upon the earth? Or is your biblical hope looking with an anxious eye to a resurrected and glorified King of kings who will raise you from the dead with unbelievable power and glory to be forever set apart from the curse of enemies, sin, misery, and death (Revelation 21:4). Dear ones, that is a hope that will purify you and carry you through the trials, the hardships, the physical afflictions, the family upheavals, the persecution and suffering in this life, and as you walk the valley of the shadow of death. Look with eager anticipation to that victorious Christ, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords even now.

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