

CHAPTER FIVE RESURRECTION

INTRODUCTION

Muslims live in expectation of a Resurrection Day, promised in many suras of the Koran. It is generally believed that all those who are dead will be reconstituted physically at that time in preparation for judgment by God.

This subject of resurrection must, however, be studied in the context of God's creation, man's fall, and the principles by which fallen man will be restored. God is a perfect God of perfect principles. His providence for restoring man must be in accordance with His Principle.

In this chapter we will examine the real meaning of life, death, resurrection and the phenomena related to them.

I. THE MEANING OF RESURRECTION

If resurrection means to be raised from the dead, then what is death?

There are two types of death: physical death and spiritual death. Therefore, there are two types of life (physical and spiritual) and two ways of interpreting the significance and meaning of resurrection.

The key question for us to answer is: What is God's view of life and death?

Through science we know that the physical world has limits in time and space, and that, therefore, our physical life itself is limited, not eternal. In the first chapter it was explained that man's physical life was essential for the growth of his spirit man to perfection.

Through the Fall, man failed to achieve his purpose on the earth. He failed to unite with God, and he failed to unite his own spirit and body. God is the source

and origin of all life. If we are cut off from God we are truly dead, spiritually dead.

Physical death is the inevitable conclusion of our physical life on earth. We are only meant to have one physical life. Spiritual death was a result of man's disobedience. God intended for man to live eternally, and therefore we must be resurrected from spiritual death to spiritual life.

The Koran has many passages that indicate that there are two types of life and two types of death.

They shall say, 'Our Lord, Thou hast
caused us to die
two deaths
and Thou hast given us twice to live;'

(XL 11)

... would We have let thee taste the
double of life and double of death;

(XVI 77)

How do you disbelieve in God, seeing
you were dead, and He gave you
life, then He shall make you dead, then
He shall give you life, then unto Him
you shall be returned?

(II 26)

The first death is physical death, the second is spiritual; and the first life is physical life, the second is spiritual (meaning unity with God).

The second death can be experienced while man is yet alive physically:

And those they call upon, apart from God,
created nothing, and themselves are created,
dead, not alive, and are not aware when
they shall be raised.

(XVI 20)

... disputing with thee concerning the truth
after it had become clear, as though
they were being driven into death
with their eyes wide open.

(VIII 6)

Spiritual death can also be experienced by man's spirit self in the spirit world:

. and death comes upon him from
every side, yet he cannot die; and
still beyond him is a harsh chastisement.

(XIV 20)

Whosoever comes unto his Lord a sinner,
for him awaits Gehenna
wherein he shall neither die nor live.

(XX 77)

These passages show that, as a spirit, man cannot cease to exist, but at the same time he may be spiritually dead because of his sin.

The second life is the spiritual life which comes from oneness with God:

And say not of those slain in God's way,
'They are dead'; rather they are living,
but you are not aware.

(II 149)

O believers, respond to God and the
Messenger when He calls you unto that
which will give you life;

(VIII 24)

Then We raised you up after you were
dead, .

(II 53)

How do you disbelieve in God, seeing
you were dead and He gave you life. .. ?

(II 26)

From our position of separation from God (spiritual death), we must be resurrected in order to achieve eternal, spiritual life with God.

We must now seek to understand the way by which we can be resurrected. The next section deals with the principles of resurrection.

II. THE PRINCIPLES OF RESURRECTION

Your creation and your upraising are as
but as a single soul.

(XXXI 27)

. . . we may exchange the likes of you,
and make you to grow again in a fashion
you know not.
you have known the first growth; so why
will you not remember:

(LVI 61,62)

The process of resurrection is the process of re-creation and, therefore, must follow "The Principles of the Creation." In applying these principles to resurrection, we call them the principles of resurrection.

There are four main principles that govern the phenomena of resurrection:

A. The Merit of the Age

In God's providential history many men have been chosen to play important parts in the work of restoring man. Even though they could not accomplish complete restoration, their sincere effort and achievement became part of the foundation upon which God could resurrect man.

In every age, we inherit the foundation laid by those who have gone before us, thereby progressing to higher levels.

Today we are in a position to reap the benefit of all who have worked for God before us.

B. Believing and Practicing Truth

When we believe in and practice the truth that God continues to reveal to us, we can grow spiritually and be resurrected.

It is He who looses the winds, bearing good tidings
before His mercy,

till, when they are charged with heavy clouds, **We** drive it
to a dead land
and therewith send down water, and bring forth therewith
all the fruits.
Even so We shall bring forth the dead; haply
you will remember.

(VII 55)

... He was ... sending
down on you water from heaven, to purify
you thereby, and to put away
from you the defilement of Satan, ...

(VIII 11)

The water is the truth of God that gives rebirth to dead men. As the water must be absorbed and used to actually revive the earth, so must the truth be absorbed and actualized by fallen man in order for him to be reborn and resurrected.

C. The Importance of the Physical Body

The spirit needs Vitality Elements from the physical body to be able to grow to perfection.¹ Spiritual resurrection is accomplished on the foundation of the physical body; the resurrection of the spirit self (purification, growth, and perfection) is realized in its relationship to the physical self while still living on the earth.

D. Three Stages

The three stages of growth become the three stages of resurrection in the providence of the resurrection.

The three stages are: Formation, Growth and Completion.

The age from Adam to Abraham was the period needed to make a foundation for the resurrection, which was completed by Abraham's family.

¹ See Chapter One, Section VI.

Two branches of God's providential history developed from Abraham's family through the descendants of his two sons: Ishmael and Isaac.

The first development was through the descendants of Isaac's son, Jacob. Jacob's twelve sons became the twelve tribes that, under Moses, became the nation of Israel. The work of all the prophets in the two thousand years after Jacob laid the foundation for Jesus and enabled man to grow through the formation stage. When man dies in this stage, he enters the spirit world as a form spirit and dwells in the formation stage level of spirit world.

Jesus brought a deeper truth and enabled man to resurrect into the growth stage. Those following him in principle and action have been able to resurrect to the top of the growth stage and on dying, enter Paradise as life spirits.

The sacrifices of all the Christian martyrs and saints have laid the foundation for the third Adam, who will open up the completion stage by establishing the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Heaven in the spirit world has been vacant until now because God's Kingdom has not been established on earth yet. As people follow the third Adam into the completion stage, they will be able to enter the spiritual Heaven as divine spirits.

The second providential history developed because the Kingdom of Heaven was not established at the time of Jesus. The Arab descendants of Ishmael had fallen into pre-Abrahamic idolatry before Muhammad came to them as a prophet. He laid the foundation for their resurrection into the formation stage.

The sacrifice and efforts of Muslim saints and believers have enabled Muslims to grow through the formation stage in preparation for the third Adam, who will be their means for complete resurrection.

In resurrection, man is growing closer to God. His understanding of God is deepening, and hence his capacity to respond to God is developing.

In the formation stage, man understands God through laws. By obedience to these laws we become like servants to a lord.

In the growth stage, man must act out of positive motivation in loving God and his fellow man. If man faithfully offers himself for the fulfillment of God's will, he qualifies as an adopted son or daughter of God.

In the completion stage, man must develop God's heart and share God's perspective. As we become fully mature, we can fulfill our responsibility to God

by attending Him and His true sons and daughters. The third Adam will pioneer this path.

III. THE THIRD ADAM

What are the qualifications for the third Adam?

As a true mediator between God and man, he must satisfy the needs of both. Briefly, these are:

A. For God

He must fulfill God's will by fully understanding God's heart and situation, and by applying this understanding to the solution of the world's problems and to the building of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

B. For Man

He must be able to show all men the true way to live according to God's standard. He must be able to solve all the human problems, beginning with individuals, then families, societies and nations, such that the whole world becomes one true family of man centered on one Father, God.

IV. SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA

Because spirit men need the Vitality Element to grow to perfection, the events taking place on earth in God's providence directly affect the spirit world.

In order to continue their development, spirit men must cooperate with people working on earth. By serving them and helping them in their earthly missions, spirits can gain merit and grow. To do this, the man and spirit must be fairly compatible in level of development and temperament.

'This is the Day of Decision; We have
joined you with the ancients.'

(LXXVII 38)

As God's providence unfolds on earth, there is necessarily a great deal of resultant spiritual activity, since spirits are able to further their growth at such a time. The descent of spirits to the physical world naturally results in many, diverse spiritual phenomena. Therefore, most important figures in God's providence become the center of remarkable events or miracles.

By the loosed ones successively
storming tempestuously
by the scatterers scattering
and the severally severing
and those hurling a reminder
excusing or warning,
surely that which you are promised is about to fall!

(LXXVII 1-6)

The intense activity of the spirit world, as indicated in this passage, is a sure sign of God working a new providence. The greatest change in history is to be expected at the time of the Last Day, so the spirit world must be more active than ever.

Before discussing various aspects and manifestations of this spiritual activity, we must examine more carefully the process of resurrection in the spirit world.

A. Resurrection in the Spirit World

Indeed, We chose him in the present
world, and in the world to come
he shall be among the righteous.

(II 124)

Whatever affliction may visit you is for
what your own hands have earned;

(XL II 29)

Everyone after ending his life on earth begins his life in the spirit world. He enters it at the spiritual level he has achieved in his life on earth.

Each new level is pioneered by one of God's central figures. Because spirits are dependent on the physical world for their growth to perfection, once in the spirit world, they cannot go beyond the highest level opened on earth. For this reason, since heaven has not been established on earth, it has remained "vacant" in the spirit world — spirits have not been able to achieve it.

When Jesus opened up the growth stage of resurrection, many Old Testament spirits came to his followers, so that by cooperating with them they could follow them into the growth stage. Until his coming they had been unable to go beyond the formation stage, which had been opened by Moses on the foundation of Abraham's family.

Many in the spirit world at the time of Jesus could not directly benefit from his foundation due to their lack of preparation to receive the perfected Adam (Messiah). Among these were the descendants of Ishmael to whom Muhammad was sent.

Muhammad had to do for the pagan Arabs what Abraham and Moses had done in building the nation of Israel. By opening up the formation stage for his people, Muhammad was giving many spirits the opportunity to be released from the pre-formation stage into the formation stage.

In the history of Islam (especially among the mystic Sufis), there are many instances recorded of the activity of spirits in conjunction with human endeavor.² These spirits are seeking to raise themselves by serving men on earth.

In the spirit world now, all those spirits seeking to get closer to God are waiting for the third Adam. When he establishes the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, he will open up the completion stage of resurrection and make it possible for spirits to enter the spiritual heaven. They must serve him and his followers as they pioneer the completion stage.

The fact that we are living in an age of great spiritual activity is another sign of the imminent fulfillment of God's providence and of the arrival of the third Adam.

² A. J. Arberry, Muslim Saints and Mystics

B. Unification of Religions

Mankind were only one nation, then
they fell into variance. But for a word
that preceded from thy Lord, it had
been decided between them already
touching their differences.

(X 20)

. and be not
of the idolators,
even of those who divided up
their religion, and become sects,
each several party rejoicing in
what is theirs.

(XXX 30,31)

These passages reinforce what The Principle makes absolutely clear: God created man to be one united family, but man, through the Fall, became a divisive creature, eager to quarrel with his fellow man. Only with new truth from God can the difference between sects and religions be overcome.

In the history of man's progressive resurrection, we can see that individuals are justified before God according to their response to the new central figure of their age.

Thus, for example, although the Jewish people were chosen by God to receive the Messiah, only those who united with Jesus when he came could receive God's blessing: Because the Jewish people as a whole failed God, the blessing was extended to anyone who accepted Jesus.

In the same way, the third Adam is a universal Messiah. Regardless of previous belief, those who accept and unite with him will receive the blessing of the Kingdom of Heaven.

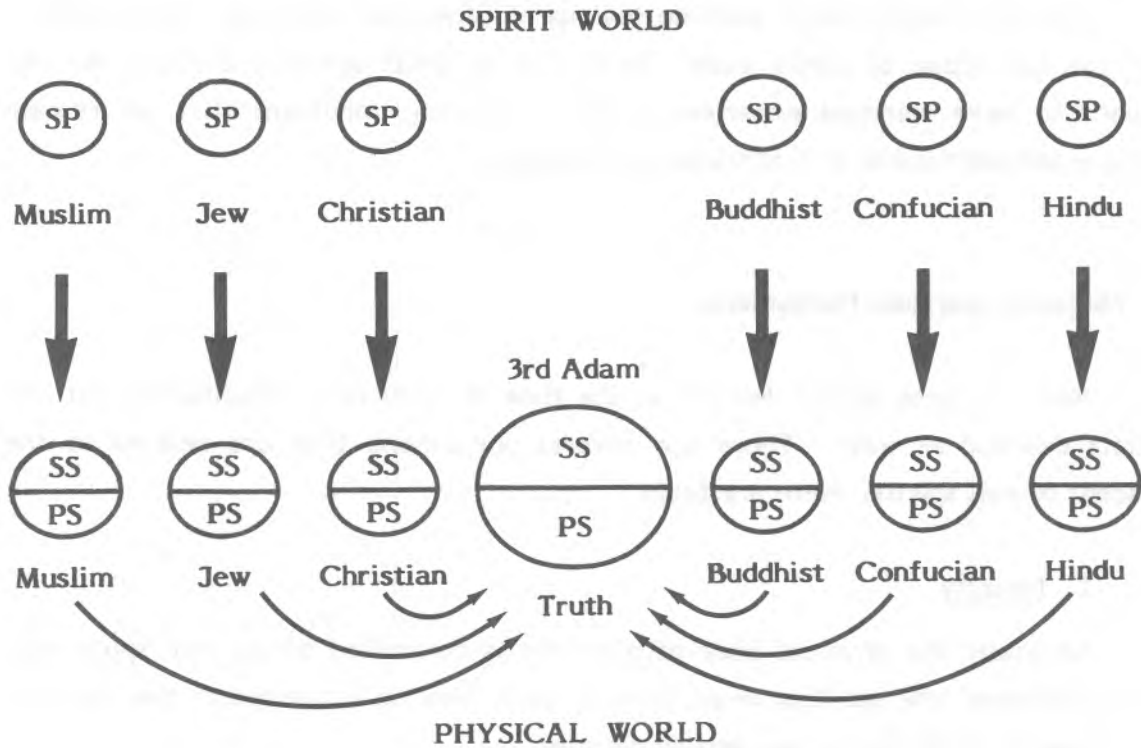
Spirits of all types and beliefs will descend to help the third Adam and his followers.

The break-down of traditional differences among religions is initiated in the spirit world. This process is reflected in the desire for unity among religions on earth. Spirits are responsible for their descendants and members of their faith. As they are enlightened in the spirit world they try to enlighten those on earth.

This pressure from the spirit world is manifest in movements for unity within and among the various religions.

The key figure to cement this unity is the third Adam. He fulfills the hopes and expectations of all religions. He will bring the Word of God that will bridge the differences that separate our present religions and theologies, and will realize the truth by fulfilling man's responsibility to God and living according to God's will perfectly.

The unification of religion then is largely initiated in the spirit world, but completed on earth centering on the life and teaching of the third Adam. The following diagram shows the various religions drawing closer to each other as they develop toward God's absolute and universal standard, and toward inevitable union.



Each religion is completed by the truth brought by the third Adam.

3 SP = spirit person
 SS = spirit self
 PS = physical self

C. False Prophets and Spiritual Jealousy

As men reach the top of the growth stage in their resurrection, they are given the same promise given to Adam and Eve at that point: to be lords over the Creation.

We are all created to be lords over the Creation; but some people who receive this revelation come to the conclusion that they are the lord, the third Adam. They may have dominion over a particular area of importance in God's providence, but if they fail to see their role in relation to God's whole providence, they are in danger of becoming a false prophet.

They also might easily become jealous of others because they can't appreciate the full scope of God's work. In an age of great spiritual activity, we can expect to have spiritual experiences, but it is very important that we remain humble and submissive to God's will and purpose.

D. Negative Spiritual Phenomena

Not only good spirits descend at the time of God's new dispensation, but evil spirits descend as well. There are several phenomena that are related to the descent of evil spirits. Here are four:

1. Insanity

Normally the physical body of a person is controlled by its own spirit self. When, however, the spirit is weak, an evil spirit may be attracted to the man and try to use his body for its own selfish purpose.

If this happens, the behavior of the man will change according to the influence of the invading spirit. In some cases several spirits invade one body making the individual appear to have a multiple personality. When he appears to be talking to himself or laughing or acting in a strange way, he is actually having give and take with the spirit or spirits possessing him.

An individual in this situation can be helped if he follows a spiritually strong person who can drive the evil influence away. Medical methods, such as using drugs or electric shock, can of ten succeed in freeing someone of evil spirits, but

such an external approach is not so effective in the long term. Ultimately, the sick man himself must have the desire to be cured, otherwise the evil spirits will quickly return to him after he has been freed of them.

2. Diseases

In addition to diseases and sickness resulting from obvious causes, such as malnutrition and accidents, there are also diseases caused by the work of evil spirits. The former can often be treated and cured with proper medical care, but the latter frequently cannot. Their cause is usually unknown.

Diseases induced through the influence of spirits have to be cured by someone with the power to heal spiritually, or by the patient himself through a change in his own spiritual condition, allowing his physical problem to be removed as a result.

Regardless of the cause of illness, the influence of good spiritual elements will always speed recovery.

3. Accidents

When a person's life is suddenly taken in an accident, their spirit is often resentful and seeks to rectify the situation by causing someone else to have a similar accident. This is why a particular place may "mysteriously" be the scene of frequent accidents.

A spirit may cause an accident by confusing a person's senses or actually controlling his body. Those not spiritually strong are particularly susceptible to this type of influence.

4. Crime

A man who commits crimes is likely to attract an evil spirit who wants to use him to fulfill its own evil purposes. Many criminals admit that they have no reason to commit crimes, but they often feel "driven" to commit them. If someone lets this type of evil spirit use him, he will find himself with an even stronger inclination to crime. He has no real motivation for it, but continues impulsively.

E. Reincarnation

Belief in the reincarnation of the human spirit is a result of the misinterpretation of various spiritual phenomena and the misunderstanding of the way a spirit gets physical energy to enable it to grow.

One result of the contact between spirits and men on earth is the feeling in man that he has lived before.

Spirits seek out people compatible with themselves, so that they can grow by cooperation with them. Someone who is spiritually sensitive may feel the presence of a spirit that is working with him. Through their mutual contact the spirit may pass on a lot of information about itself. If the receiver of this information is not aware of what is happening, he may erroneously come to the conclusion that he himself existed before and has now returned to continue his life on earth in another capacity.

It is true that we are held responsible by God for what we do to our fellow men. We have to pay for our mistakes and the suffering we cause others. However, if this debt is not paid on earth, it must be paid by serving men on earth from the spirit world. Serving men on earth enables a spirit to receive physical Vitality Elements for its growth. It is much more difficult to discharge our "debt" when we lack our physical body, because we cannot act directly. However, it is impossible to permanently enter another body, since each body is created simultaneously with its own spirit. If a spirit tries to enter a body it will be causing spiritual trouble to the person it is trying to possess.

Societies in which belief in reincarnation is prevalent usually experience a high level of mental disturbances and disease among its people, because of the numbers of spirits trying to enter bodies belonging to other spirits.

CONCLUSION

In the fourth chapter we indicated that **the world** is at the crucial time of the Last Day.

Because of this there is great spiritual activity in our world today as spirits descend and work with those on earth who are preparing for the realization of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

In this final dispensation of God, spiritually dead man will be resurrected and restored to his true place as a child of God. Not only do good spirits descend, but evil ones as well. Because of this there is a great deal of mental illness and general confusion about life in the world today. It is easy to be misguided in an age of so much external achievement amid great spiritual uncertainty.

We must seek God's truth and prepare to unite with the man He appoints to fulfill the role of the third Adam. This requires that we be humble and sincere, and pray to understand God's will.

Many are worried that the resurrection will be limited to a few people, chosen by God from the beginning of time. In the following chapter, on predestination, we will show that God intends for all of us to be resurrected and restored.

The key to restoration for each person lies in his response to God and His representative on earth. A great future is not far distant for those who can offer themselves completely to God.