

CHAPTER FIVE

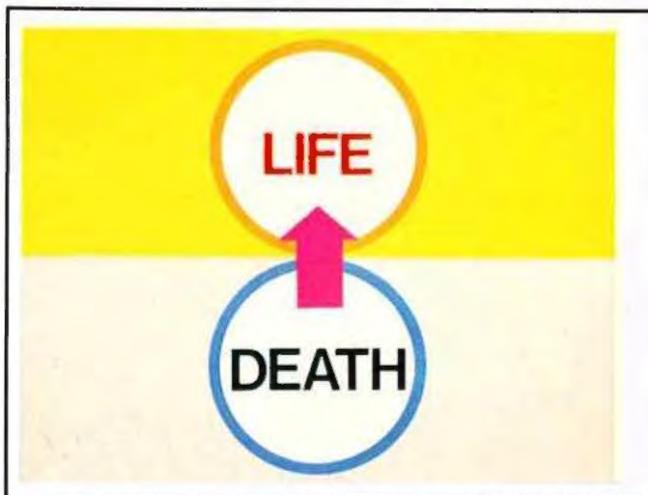
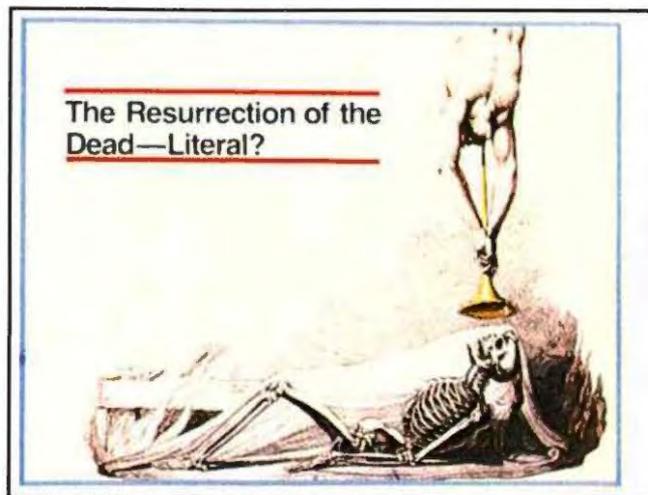
Resurrection

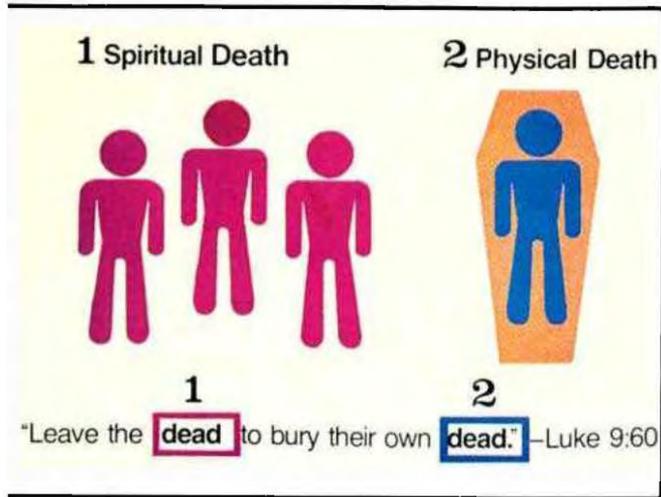
If we were to take everything in the Bible literally, then we would have to believe that at the Second Coming the buried and decomposed physical bodies of all the past believers will be restored to their original state of life in the flesh (1 Thes 4:16, Mt 27:52). But can we believe this? To resolve this question let us first look into the meaning of resurrection.

I. THE MEANING OF RESURRECTION

The word 'resurrection' means passing from death to life. To understand the meaning of 'passing from death to life', let us consider the meaning of the words 'life' and 'death'.

In Luke 9:60 we read that to the disciple who wanted to go home for his father's funeral, Jesus said, ". . . Leave the *dead* to bury their own *dead* . . ." (emphases added). In these words of Jesus we find two different concepts of life and death. One concept is concerned with the physiological functioning of the physical body. The other is concerned with the people who would gather for the burial of the disciple's father. Why did Jesus indicate that those people who would attend the funeral were dead when they were actually alive? It was because, being under Satan's dominion, they were ignorant of the purpose of life and did not know God, who is the source of life. Revelation 3:1 says, ". . . you have the name of being alive and you are dead." From this verse we can see that even though a person is physically alive, if he is under Satan's dominion, then from Jesus' point of view he is dead. With this view of death, life would then mean to be within God's dominion, fulfilling the God-given purpose of life. In John 11:25,26 Jesus says, ". . . he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never





die.' " This tells us that whoever is connected to God's dominion through Christ is alive, regardless of whether his physical body is dead or alive and regardless of whether he is on earth or in the spirit world.

A. The Death Caused by the Fall

The need for resurrection is a result of the death caused by the Fall. Let us consider which of the two kinds of death mentioned above is the death resulting from the fall of the first human ancestors. Man's physical body is destined to return to the earth after it becomes old and dies. If God had intended human beings to live eternally on earth in their physical bodies, there would have been no need to create the spirit world for spirit selves to go to. God created the spirit world before man fell; he did not create it after the Fall simply to provide a dwelling for the spirit selves of fallen people. It was always God's plan that man's physical self return to the earth and that his spirit self dwell eternally with God in the spirit world (Eccles 12:7). Physical death is not the death caused by the Fall.

When God told Adam and Eve that they would surely die on the day that they ate of the Fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen 2:17), the death referred to was not physical death. We see in Genesis that Adam and Eve continued to be active and alive and to have children for more than nine hundred years after they ate the Fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Yet, if we are to believe God's Word, then in some sense they must have died the moment they broke God's commandment.

God's love is the source of life. Therefore leaving the realm of God's love and entering into Satan's realm, where there is no true love, is death. In 1 John 3:14 we learn that "He who does not love abides in death." Also, Romans 8:6 and Romans 6:23 respectively tell us, "To set the mind on the flesh [to be carnally minded] is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace," and "... the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus. . . ." So from the Bible's viewpoint, the death which was caused by the Fall is the state resulting from sin—the state of being separated from God's love.

B. The True Meaning of Resurrection

Let us draw our conclusion as to the meaning of resurrection. If the physical body's return to the earth is *not* the death caused by the Fall, then it is obvious that the meaning of 'passing from death to life'—that is, resurrection—cannot be

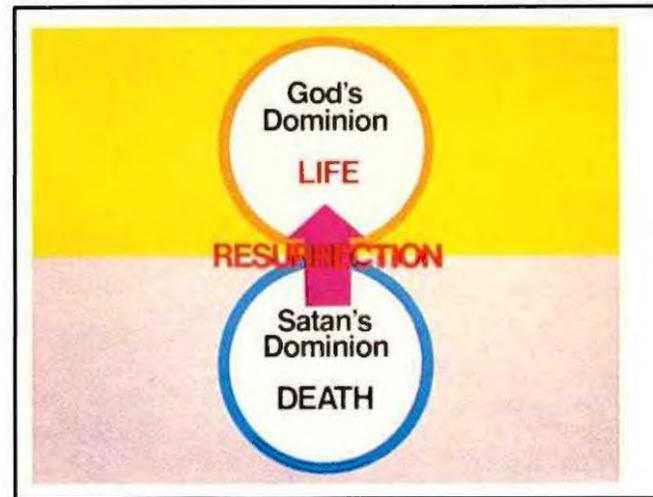
revival of a decomposed body. According to "The Principles of the Creation," it was God's original intention that man's physical body die and return to the earth when it becomes old (Eccles 12:7). So once the physical body decomposes, it will not be resurrected to its original state.

Since resurrection does not refer to physical life and death, it must refer to the life and death of man's spirit. Therefore resurrection is the process of man's being restored from Satan's dominion to God's direct dominion through the Dispensation for Restoration. If a person repents of his sins and becomes a better person today than he was yesterday, then he is resurrected to that extent. Jesus said, "... he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (Jn 5:24). This shows that resurrection, or passing from death to life, begins from the point of hearing Jesus' words and believing in God. The Bible says, "... as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor 15:22). Because of the fall of Adam, his entire lineage has been a satanic one, and therefore dead. So, to be resurrected means to become one of God's lineage, through Christ.

Based on this understanding of resurrection, we should not expect a major external change to result from resurrection. Although Adam and Eve were different after the Fall in that they were spiritually dead, no significant physical change took place. Thus there is no external difference between a man who possesses eternal life because of rebirth through the Holy Spirit and a thief who is still under the dominion of death.

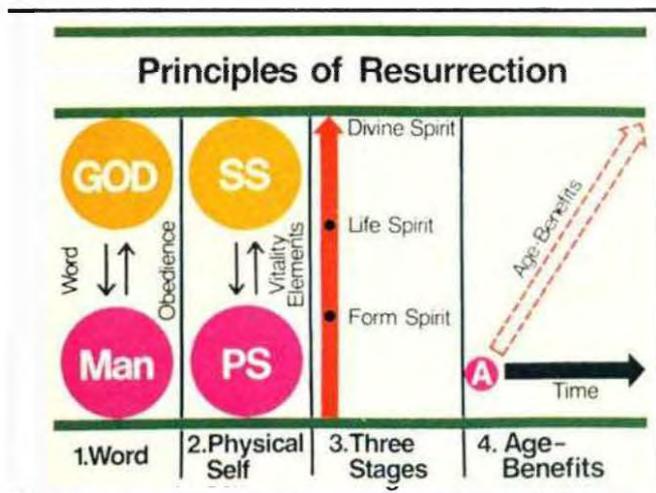
However, Matthew 27:52 seems to support belief in resurrection of the physical body. Let us examine this passage. It says, "... the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his [Jesus'] resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many." However, if this had taken place literally, then the history of persecution in early Christianity would not have taken place. Even though the Israelites had become faithless and had crucified Jesus, they had done so believing that he was *not* the Lord. However, if they had witnessed the prophets rising from their tombs and had heard them testifying that Jesus was the Messiah, wouldn't they have believed in Jesus? Then why would they have persecuted the disciples of Jesus?

Also, since resurrection is said to result in eternal life, then shouldn't we be able to see many of those resurrected Old Testament prophets alive today? And wouldn't those brought to life through the grace of resurrection have testified to many about God and Jesus? Then certainly there would have been



some record of this in the Book of Acts. However, there is only one passage in the Bible that mentions them—the one in Matthew which tells of their rising from their tombs and appearing to many (Mt 27:52).

An understanding of the true meaning of resurrection will easily solve this problem. Since resurrection does not mean bringing corpses back to life, it could not have been physical bodies that “arose from the grave” and “came back to life.” Through the grace of God, the inner selves, or spirit selves, of the passed-away saints had grown closer to perfection. Matthew and other disciples, inspired by the Holy Spirit, had their spiritual sight temporarily restored, and were thus able to see those spirit people. Those who remained untouched by the Holy Spirit had only their normal physical sight, and thus could not see the spirit selves of the Old Testament prophets.



II. THE PRINCIPLES OF RESURRECTION

Since resurrection means the phenomena occurring in the course of restoring fallen man's nature to the standard originally created by God, the dispensation for resurrection is actually the Dispensation for Restoration. The Dispensation for Restoration is also the dispensation for re-creation. Consequently the dispensation for resurrection is carried out according to what is explained in “The Principles of the Creation.”

First of all, according to “The Principles of the Creation,” the Purpose of the Creation is fulfilled when man accomplishes his responsibility, by believing in and living God's Word. Therefore in resurrection, which is re-creation, God gives man His Word—he gave the Old Testament and the New Testament, and he promised to give the complete testament when Christ returns. In order to be resurrected, man must fulfill his responsibility—to believe in and live the Word. Thus, resurrection is accomplished by God's giving His Word (truth) to man together with man's fulfilling his responsibility to believe in and live the truth.

Secondly, according to “The Principles of the Creation,” each person's spirit self is created to grow and become perfect only on the basis of a relationship with the physical self. In accordance with this principle, the resurrection (purification, growth, and perfection) of a person's spirit self must also be realized based on his physical self, and thus, while he is living on earth. Actually, until today, resurrection has usually been conceived of as the reviving of the physically dead at Christ's return. But this is incorrect; God's dispensation for resurrection is an ongoing process that has focused on the people who

are alive on earth. It is to them that he has sent prophets with the Truth.

Thirdly, according to "The Principles of the Creation," man is created to become perfect by growing through the three stages of the growing period. Therefore, the dispensation for the resurrection of fallen man is to be accomplished through three dispensational stages.

Fourthly, although the various central persons in God's Dispensation for Restoration could not fully carry out their responsibilities, they did their best with the deepest loyalty to God. Their loyalty and devotion has accumulated as merit on earth. Based on this foundation of heart laid by faithful people of earlier ages, people of later generations have been able to receive certain merits in each age (*merits of the age*) in the dispensation for resurrection. The dispensation for resurrection is carried out according to the merits of the age. In other words, the degree of resurrection possible in a given age is based on the historical foundation of heart established by the faithful of earlier ages.

III. THE DISPENSATION FOR THE RESURRECTION OF THE PEOPLE ON EARTH

A. God's Dispensation for Resurrection is Based on the People on Earth

Until today, when Christians thought of resurrection, they usually thought of the physically dead receiving new life at Christ's return. Yet once we understand the true meaning of resurrection and the principles of God's dispensation for resurrection, we understand that God works his dispensation for resurrection primarily based on the people on earth. From the viewpoint of man, history may seem to be merely the repetition of one generation after another. From the viewpoint of God, who is carrying out the dispensation, the succession of generations is not significant. From God's viewpoint the whole of history is nothing but the work to resurrect one dead person, Adam. If the first human ancestor, Adam, had not fallen but had grown through the three stages of the growing period, his spirit self would have grown through the stages of form spirit and life spirit to finally become a divine spirit, the spirit of one who is fulfilling the Purpose of the Creation.

However, as a result of the Fall, man's spirit self plummeted from the perfection level of the growth stage to a very base state—that is, he fell below the level at which he was

originally created. Adam and Eve fell into the non-Principle realm and inherited the Fallen Nature from the fallen archangel.

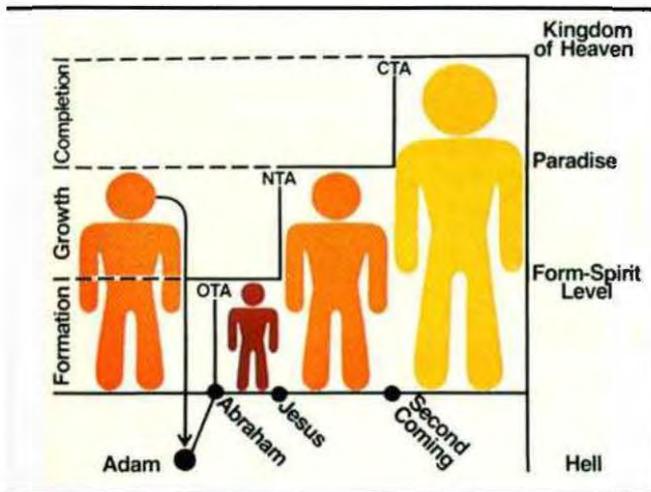
B. The Three Stages in the Dispensation for Resurrection

God began his dispensation for resurrection with Adam's family, which had fallen into the non-Principle realm. However, since persons in Adam's and Noah's families failed to carry out their responsibilities, resurrection itself did not begin until Abraham's family. So in retrospect the two thousand year period from Adam to Abraham ended up being the period during which only the foundation for God's dispensation for resurrection was established. Thus, this period is called the *Dispensational Age of the Foundation for Resurrection*.

On this foundation, God carried out the formation stage of the dispensation for resurrection, which again, because of man's repeated failures, ended up taking two thousand years, from Abraham to Jesus. People on earth who received the merits of the age of formation stage resurrection were to fulfill their responsibility by keeping and living the Old Testament Law, the formation stage Word of re-creation. Since people were to be justified by their practice of the Law (Word), this age is called the *age of justification by keeping the law*. If a person fulfilled that responsibility, based on his physical self, his spirit self would grow through the formation stage of resurrection and become a form spirit. When a person who has attained the form spirit level on earth leaves his physical self, his spirit self goes to live at the *form spirit level of the spirit world*.

Complete resurrection should have taken place through Jesus, the Messiah; however, because of man's failure to accept Jesus, the period after his death has been the period for only growth stage resurrection. Because of the Israelites' faithlessness toward Jesus, Jesus was crucified and the completion of the dispensation for resurrection was delayed until the Second Coming. In retrospect, we can see that the period from Jesus' time up to the time of his Second Coming has been the *age for only growth stage resurrection*. During this age, people on earth could receive the merits of the age of growth stage resurrection and carry out their responsibility by believing and living the New Testament, God's growth stage Word of re-creation. Therefore, this age is called the *age of justification by faith*. People of that age could pass through the growth stage of resurrection and attain the life spirit level by believing and living the New Testament Word. When a person who has attained the life spirit level leaves his physical self, he goes to live in Paradise, which is the *life spirit level of the spirit world*.

The *Dispensational Age of Completion Stage Resurrection*



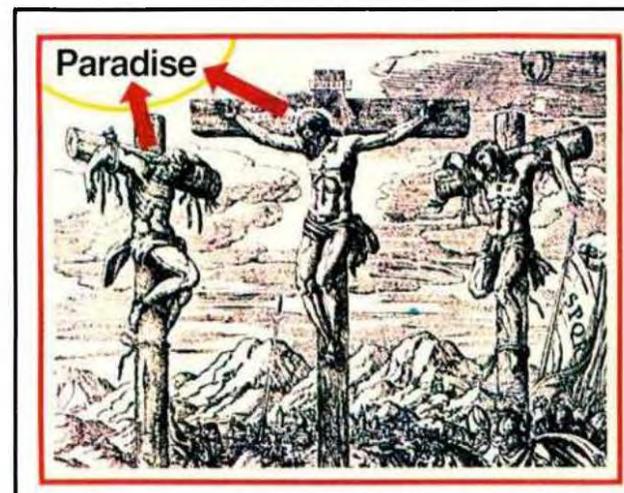
will be completed with the resurrection of both spirit and body* (spirit self and physical self) by the Messiah at the Second Coming. The Messiah will bring the Completed Testament, which is to bring about the fulfillment of the Old Testament and the New Testament. People on earth can receive the merits of the age of completion stage resurrection by accomplishing their responsibility to believe in and incarnate the new Word and directly attend the Messiah with full sincerity of heart. Therefore, the age is called the *age of justification by attendance*. When a person believes in and attends the Messiah at the Second Coming, his spirit self reaches the perfection level of resurrection and becomes a divine spirit. The place on earth where the people of this divine spirit stage live is called the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. When a perfected person living in the Kingdom of Heaven on earth leaves his physical self, he goes to live in the *Kingdom of Heaven in the spirit world*, which is the region of the spirit world belonging to divine spirits.

C. Heaven and Paradise

Traditionally, Christians have understood Heaven and Paradise to be the same. However, as was already explained, the Kingdom of Heaven is the spirit world dwelling place of spirit persons who have attained the divine spirit level while in their physical selves on earth. Although Jesus, the Messiah, came to complete the salvation of man, because of his death on the cross the Purpose of the Creation, which is fulfilled in the Kingdom of Heaven in the spirit world *and* on earth, was not fulfilled at that time. There has never been a person who achieved the divine spirit level while on earth, and therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven in the spirit world remains vacant—not one person has entered it, since it is the divine spirit level of the spirit world. Why then did Jesus say that whoever believed in him would enter the Kingdom of Heaven? He said that because his original purpose was to bring about the Kingdom of Heaven. However, because of the faithlessness of the people of Israel, he died on the cross without realizing the Kingdom of Heaven.

At the time Jesus was crucified, two thieves were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. When the thief on the right showed that he believed in Jesus, Jesus told him that he would be with him in Paradise (Lk 23:43). Paradise is the life spirit level of the spirit world—the level which people believing in Jesus reach after leaving their physical

* Though Jesus brought spiritual salvation to man, as can be seen in Romans 7:14-25, the Original Sin remains within man. The actual elimination of Original Sin will take place at the Second Coming.



selves. Those in Paradise must pray for the goal of perfection and wait for the opening of the gates to the Kingdom of Heaven.

D. Spiritual Phenomena Occurring in the Last Days

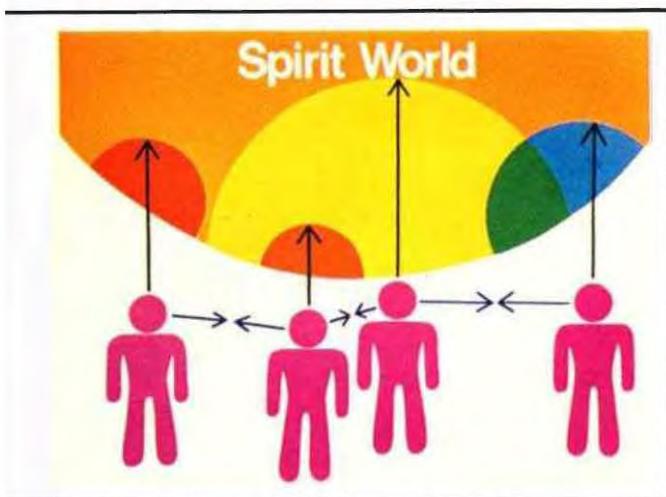
Man fell from the perfection level of the growth stage. As man enters the Last Days, he enters the age in which he can restore himself to the perfection level of the growth stage. By believing and living the Word of the New Testament Age, a person's spirit self can attain the perfection level of the growth stage, the position of man immediately prior to the Fall.

The Last Days is when man restores on a world-wide scale the level just prior to the Fall—the life spirit level, which is the level at which Adam attained the ability to deeply communicate with God. For this reason, in the Last Days, as the top of the growth stage is approached there will be many people who develop the ability to communicate with the spirit world. Seeing things from this viewpoint we can understand God's promise to pour out his spirit on all flesh in the Last Days (Acts 2:17).

In the Last Days, there will be many people who receive the revelation, "You are the Lord." This does not mean that they are the Lord of the Second Coming, but means that they are being re-established in the position of lord of the Creation, that position having been lost because of the Fall of Adam. In other words, they are restoring the level of spiritual development that Adam had reached just prior to the Fall.

Just as John the Baptist was to prepare the way for Jesus, there will be many people with various missions who are to prepare the way for the Lord of the Second Coming. Since these persons responsible for certain missions represent the Lord of the Second Coming, they each receive the revelation, "You are the Lord," though they may be working in an age or in a field different from that of the Lord. If at such a time a person receiving the spiritual communication does not understand the principle behind it and mistakenly thinks that he is the Lord of the Second Coming and acts as if he is the Lord, he becomes an antichrist. This is the reason for the biblical prophecy that many antichrists will appear in the Last Days.

Also, although people capable of spiritual communication communicate with the same spirit world, since the spiritual level, circumstances, and individual character are different in each spiritually open person, the level of the spirit world with which they communicate and the contents of the revelations they receive differ from one another (1 Cor 15:41, 12:8-10). Because of this there is often disagreement and conflict among spiritualists. Especially since they have only a vertical relationship with God and are responsible for only



one part of the entire Dispensation for Restoration, they are often ignorant of their horizontal relationship with others who have spiritual communication. Since each is the best in his particular area of responsibility, God gives each the revelation "You are the best" to encourage him to do his best. Yet, because they do not know the whole picture of what God is doing, they often conflict with one another. The confusion among those who can communicate spiritually will be cleared up by the new expression of truth, which will explain the overall purpose of the Dispensation for Restoration. Based on this complete understanding, spiritualists will be able to achieve reciprocal, horizontal harmony, in addition to vertical harmony with God. Their abilities should fit in with the purpose of the whole.

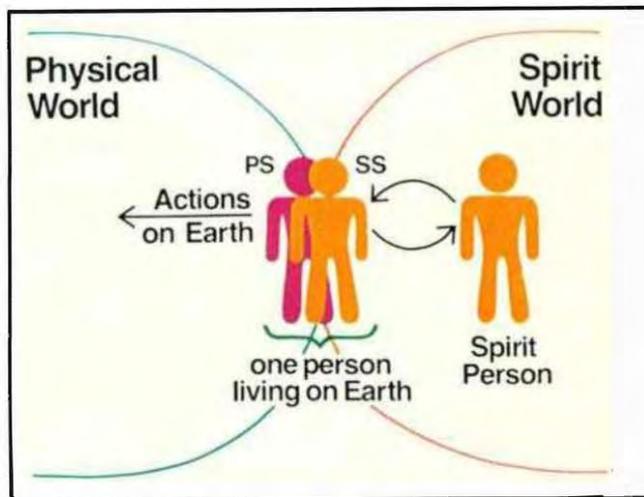
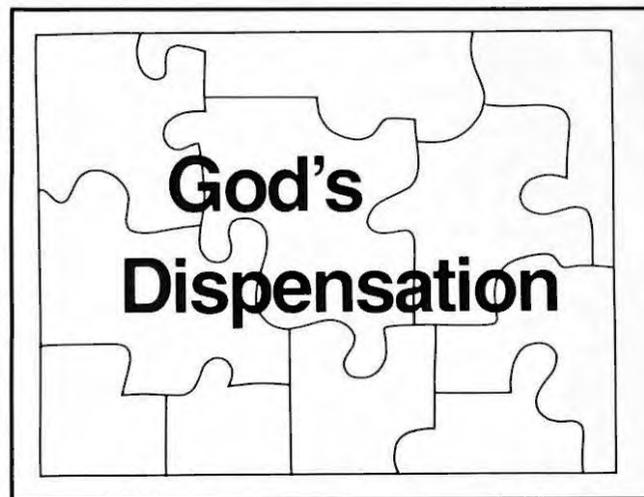
IV. THE DISPENSATION FOR THE RESURRECTION OF SPIRIT PERSONS

A. Returning Resurrection of Spirit Persons

Countless people have already passed on to the spirit world, and not one has ever perfected himself while on earth in his physical self. How can these spirit persons be resurrected? A person's spirit self can neither grow nor be resurrected apart from the physical self. So for those in the spirit world to be resurrected, they must return to earth and fulfill the responsibility that they left unaccomplished during their physical life. They accomplish this by cooperating with people on earth and working through others' physical selves to help them to fulfill their mission. This is the reason that Jude 1:14 says that in the Last Days "... the Lord came with his holy myriads. . . ." In what manner do the spirit persons cooperate with persons on earth to accomplish God's Will? When a person on earth, through prayer or spiritual activities, happens to form a base conducive to spiritual communication and partnership, then a spirit person will return and begin to cooperate with that person on earth by Give and Take Action with his spirit self. The spirit person helps the person on earth to receive revelations or to have deep experiences of truth, and sometimes helps him to experience other spiritual phenomena such as the power to cure diseases, the ability to prophesy, or spiritual fire.

B. Returning Resurrection of Spirit Persons Who Believed in God

Jesus' age two thousand years ago and the time when Christ returns in the Last Days are both special times when all the faithful on earth can be spiritually elevated (in accordance



with the Dispensation for Restoration). Especially since these are the times when God's Word of re-creation appears anew (as the Gospel and the new words respectively), then according to the principles of resurrection these times are the most significant opportunities—opportunities when man's spirit self can be resurrected at an accelerated rate. Therefore, in Jesus' time the form spirits of the Old Testament Age, who had dealt only with the Law, all longed to return and meet the condition of cooperating with the faithful on earth.

Since Elijah appeared as a spirit person to Jesus and his disciples on the mount of the Transfiguration (Mt 17:3), it is clear that Elijah is in the spirit world. Yet, Jesus indicated that John the Baptist, who was on earth, was Elijah (Mt 17:12,13; 11:14). In light of the principles of resurrection we can understand that Elijah had returned in order to complete the mission that he had left unaccomplished while on earth by cooperating with John the Baptist. According to the principles governing returning resurrection, the physical self of John the Baptist was a substitute for that of Elijah.

Matthew 27:52 says that when Jesus died on the cross many saints rose from their tombs. This is also a phenomenon of the resurrection of spirit persons—resurrection of those who had developed a form spirit while on earth. By cooperating with those on earth who believe in and attend the Lord of the Second Coming and by helping them to become divine spirit selves, spirit persons of the life spirit level (Paradise) can receive the same benefits and themselves become divine spirits.

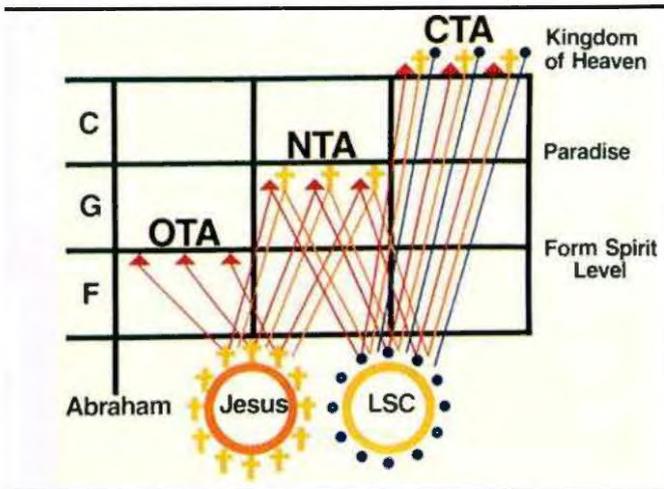
Hebrews 11:39-41 says, "And all these [saints of the Old Testament age], though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised [admission to the Kingdom of Heaven], since God had foreseen something better [the Kingdom of Heaven] for us [persons on earth], that apart from us they [spirit persons] should not be made perfect." These words demonstrate the principles of returning resurrection.

C. The Returning Resurrection of All Other Spirit Persons

The spirit persons who believed in religions other than Judaism and Christianity when they passed away also must return and cooperate with people on earth—with those who are of their respective religions. It is with them that they can easily form a reciprocal base.

Good spirit people who lived conscientiously while on earth, though not religiously, return and cooperate with good people on earth who have similar spiritual levels and circumstances.

Matthew 25:41 mentions the devil and his angels. In this

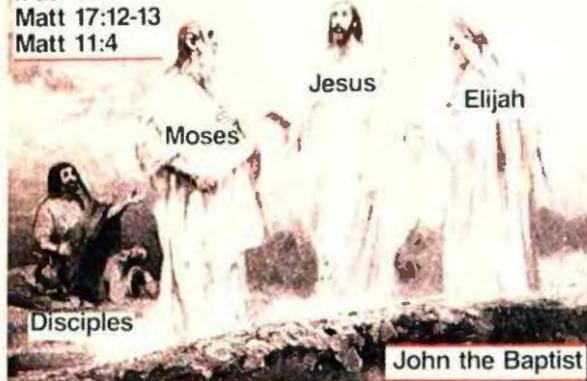


Mount of Transfiguration

Matt 17:3

Matt 17:12-13

Matt 11:4



passage, 'His [the devil's] angels' includes evil spirit persons. For evil spirit persons also, there is no way to be resurrected except through returning resurrection, which is possible only in certain ages. But evil spirit persons cannot descend to earth simply as they wish, and even if they do descend, they do not necessarily receive the benefits of returning resurrection. Before evil spirit persons can obtain the benefits of returning resurrection through the Second Coming, their work must first meet the indemnity condition* that fulfills God's will to eradicate their sins through punishing them.

D. Returning Resurrection and the Theory of Reincarnation

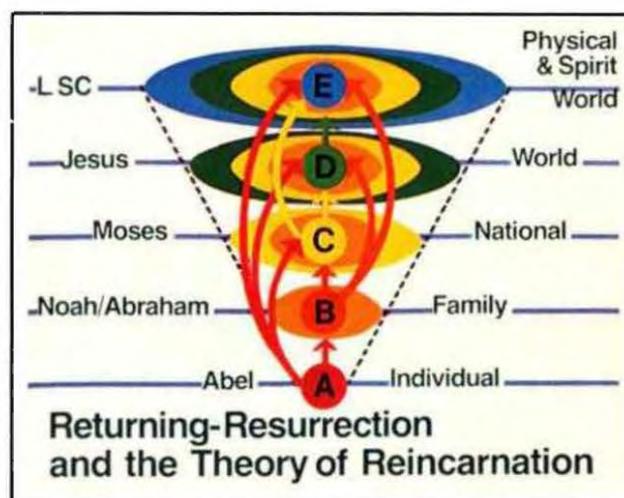
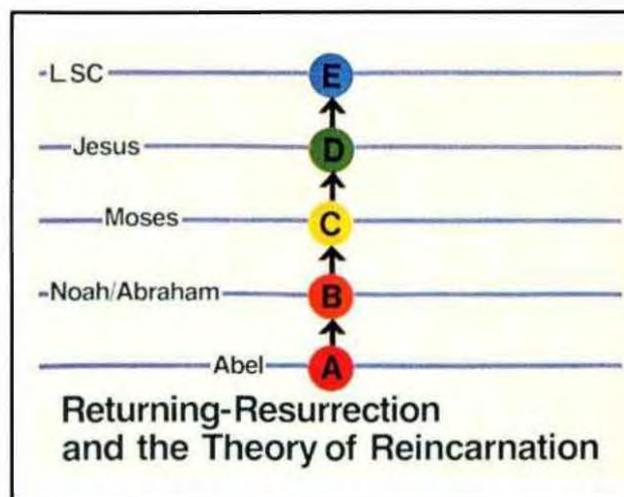
God works to accomplish the total Dispensation for Restoration by calling many individuals and giving each the portion of work that is suitable for him. As the Dispensation progresses and a new central person is chosen for a mission, God progressively broadens the scale of the Dispensation, expanding it from the individual level to the levels of the family, the nation, and the world. A person who dies without completing his mission must return and cooperate with a person on earth who has the same type of mission and the same spiritual disposition. From this mission-oriented viewpoint, the physical self of the person on earth becomes the physical self for the returning spirit person as well. In this sense, the person on earth becomes the "second coming" of the returning spirit person. When viewed with spiritual eyes, the person on earth could seem to be the reincarnation of the spirit person who is cooperating with him.

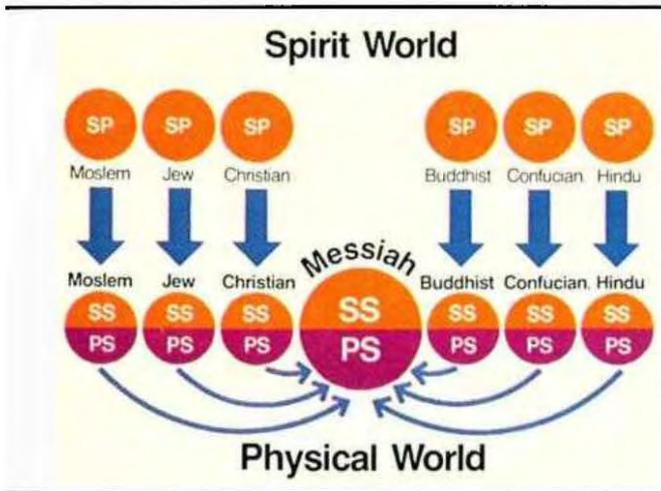
For this reason in the Last Days many people will appear claiming to be Elijah, Buddha, Confucius, or the Olive Tree. It would seem that the theory of trans-migration, or reincarnation, is the result of interpreting what is happening based on appearances, without knowing the principles of returning resurrection.

E. Unification of Religions by Returning Resurrection

Based on what was already explained in the section on the returning resurrection of spirit people, we can see that life spirit level spirit persons, who are in Paradise, must inevitably return to earth and cooperate with the faithful at the time of the Second Coming. The time and type of help that a person on earth receives from a spirit person vary depending on the person's attitude, faith, and disposition and the merits of his

* See "Overview of the Principles of the Dispensation for Restoration."





ancestors. Yet those who have strong faith will ultimately be led by spirit persons to the Lord at the Second Coming, where they can devote themselves to the Will of God. Since all of the most faithful will gather around the Lord through the influence of spirit people, the unification of Christianity will be naturally realized at the time of the Second Coming.

As will be discussed in the section on central and peripheral histories (in "Second Coming"), Christianity is not a religion for Christians alone; it is the central religion with the mission of accomplishing the ultimate purpose of all religions which pursue goodness. Accordingly, those believers of various religions who have passed on to the spirit world will return to those of their own faith who are on earth and lead them to the Lord of the Second Coming. Yet, the time when each person is connected with the central religion will vary according to the spiritual level of the spirit person and the beliefs and degree of faith of the person on earth. Even though believers of the various religions may have had no communication with each other up until now, through the influence of spirit people, all the faithful of the various religions are destined to unite centered on the Lord of the Second Coming.