

Full Preterism Refuted

Chapter 3: The Old Testament Evidence for a Bodily Resurrection

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The Old Testament Scriptures contain few references to the hope of the bodily resurrection. This is an area of thought that becomes much clearer as revelation progresses into the New Covenant era. (This observation, however, does not at all mean that the bodily resurrection was unknown or unimportant to the Old Testament people of God.) Since the redemptive work of Christ was only gradually revealed and since the resurrection of the body unto eternal life is a result of Jesus' conquering of death, it makes perfect sense that there are only a few explicit references to the bodily resurrection in the Old Covenant Scriptures.

In the Old Testament, the language of resurrection is used to describe four types of resurrection. (1) There is the resurrection of various persons to a renewed mortal life (1 Kgs. 17:21-22; 2 Kgs. 4:32-35; 13:21). These persons were raised but then grew old and died like everyone else. (2) Vivid resurrection terminology is used in a metaphorical sense to describe a future spiritual and national restoration of God's people out of captivity and judgment (e.g., Ezek. 37:1-14, some expositors and theologians see a double fulfillment in this passage; Hos. 6:2). Some full preterists attempt to use these passages to redefine the other passages that speak of the general bodily resurrection. In other words, the passages that have been used for two thousand years as proof texts for the resurrection of the body on the last day really only refer to Israel's deliverance from sin-death in A.D. 70. The problem with this view is that national Israel was *not* delivered in A.D. 70, but rather was destroyed. Moreover, any Jews who were saved between A.D. 30 and A.D. 70, as well as throughout history, were redeemed by believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Messiah who died for them on the cross and rose from the dead for them. In addition, the only possible *en masse* conversion of Jews that the New Testament speaks of (Lk. 21:24; Rom. 11:25 ff.) clearly has not yet occurred. Although Jews here and there have been turning to Christ for almost two thousand years, the vast majority of those that call themselves Jews are still spiritually blind and are enemies of the gospel. The only way for Israel as a nation or moral person (i.e. an organic body of people) to be delivered from "sin-death" would be for a *majority* of Jews to confess Christ and join themselves to Bible-believing Protestant churches. Such a wonderful historical event obviously has not taken place. (3) There are at least three references to the resurrection of the Messiah (Isa. 53:10; Ps. 2:7; 16:9-11). These passages can only be understood through the further light of the New Testament canon. (4) There are references to the future bodily resurrection of believers to immortality (Job 19:25-27; Dan. 12:2; Ps. 16:9-11, implied; Isa. 25:8; 26:19) and unbelievers to everlasting shame (Dan. 12:2). The universal view of non-Hellenized, theologically "conservative" Jews was in a future, literal, bodily resurrection of the righteous.¹

¹ The Sadducees who denied the resurrection of the body were the theological liberals of their day. They denied the inspiration and authority of the whole Old Testament canon except the five books of Moses. They denied the existence of angelic beings and even that man had a soul or spirit (Ac. 23:8). They were skeptics that liked to come up with clever arguments to make a mockery of the Scripture (cf. Mt. 22:23-33; Mk. 12:18-27; Lk. 20:27-28).

As we study the Old Testament on the resurrection, our focus will be only on passages that speak of a general bodily resurrection. If we do not impose a theological paradigm on these passages, but instead accept what they plainly teach, we will see that the orthodox Christian understanding of the general resurrection has its roots in the Older Testament.

Before we turn our attention to the traditional, more explicit passages on the resurrection, let us consider a few passages that imply a bodily resurrection. In the song of Moses, the Israelites sang, “There is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive” (Dt. 32:39). This is not simply a statement that God is the author of life, but that God can also raise the dead. Abraham understood this truth, for the author of Hebrews says that the patriarch was willing to kill his son because he believed “that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead” (11:9). The writer of Hebrews writes that the godly patriarchs all died in faith because they were looking forward to a city prepared for them in a heavenly country (11:16). This implies more than a hope to go to Sheol or Hades. In the Old Testament there were the bodily translations and ascensions of Enoch (Gen. 5:23-24; cf. Heb. 11:5) and Elijah (2 Kgs. 2:11, 12). These men obtained eternal life with God in heaven *with their physical bodies still united to their souls*. This implies not only that God can transform our fallen physical bodies and make them fit for a heavenly environment, but also that there is a blessed future for the saints in their complete persons, both *body and soul*. If the full preterist theory were true, then only Enoch, Elijah and Jesus have true glorified, spiritual bodies that are really their own bodies. (The only way to avoid such a strange idea would be to assert that at some undetermined time they shed their bodies and put them in storage or let them dissolve. Such a view is unsupportable by Scripture, arbitrary and absurd. Moreover, it radically denigrates the true humanity of the theanthropic Mediator.)

Job 19:25-27

Perhaps the earliest explicit reference to an eschatological resurrection comes from the pen of the patriarch Job: “For I know *that* my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this *I know*, that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. *How* my heart yearns within me!” Although this passage is difficult in Hebrew and has resulted in a rather wide range of translations, conservative Bible-believing scholars agree that it presents a graphic picture of the resurrection of the body.

That Job is speaking of a bodily eschatological resurrection is supported by the following considerations: (1) Job introduces these comments by a solemn preface (vs. 23, 24) that indicate that he wants this statement recorded for all the generations to come. He wants his words written in a book. He wants these verses written in stone with an iron pen as a permanent monument. If he were only speaking about his health being restored, there would be no need of so magnificent a memorial. (2) The reference to his Redeemer living and standing at last on the earth is a reference to the second coming of Christ. (Job may not have *fully* understood the complete meaning of his own inspired words.) “The Septuagint understands Christ by *g’l* and by standing upon the earth, the resurrection itself.”² “‘Arise above the dust,’ strikingly expresses the fact that Jesus Christ *arose* first Himself *above the dust*, and then is to *raise* His people *above* it (1 Cor. xv.20, 23).”³ Job looks with faith toward the living Redeemer who will vindicate him in the last

² Turretin, 3:563.

³ A. R. Fausset, *A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical on the Old and New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 2:47.

times of all, in the close of time, at the end of the world when He comes to judge the quick and the dead. “Upon the dust in which he is now soon to be laid, into which he is now soon to be changed, will He, the Rescuer of his honour, arise...Oetinger’s interpretation is substantially the same: ‘I know that He will at last come, place Himself over the dust in which have mouldered away, pronounce my cause just, and place upon me the crown of victory.’”⁴

(3) That Job is speaking of a literal bodily resurrection is proven by his references to *skin*, *flesh*, and *eyes*. He is not a disembodied spirit when His Redeemer comes; nor does he merely see the Savior with the mind’s eyes. The whole point is that he will behold Christ with a real physical (yet spiritual) body. Long after Job dies and his body turns to dust, he will arise and look upon God with his own eyes. “Nor is it an objection that he adds, ‘whom I shall behold with mine eyes, and not another,’ as if he was speaking of a thing which pertains to himself alone. By attributing the vision to himself in particular, he does not deny it concerning others, but intimates that he, in his own body (which had died), and not another, would arise and see God.”⁵ This observation disproves the full preterist theory that at the resurrection the saints’ dead bodies do not arise from the grave, but are replaced with completely new and different bodies.

(4) That Job’s hope was in a bodily resurrection is also demonstrated by the fact that he had no faith or hope that his health was going to be restored. He had resigned himself to the probability that his sickness was unto death and, therefore, was looking forward to a far greater, nobler deliverance at the resurrection. He did not expect to be fully vindicated before his accusers until the day of judgment. The common modern objection that the idea of the bodily resurrection entered Judaism quite late is nothing more than the speculation of modernists. This passage makes it very clear that the hope of the resurrection of the body unto eternal life was a centerpiece of Job’s faith.

Daniel 12:1-2

At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, *even* to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame *and* everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. (Dan. 12:1-3)

In Daniel 12:1-2 we find a passage which speaks clearly about a simultaneous bodily resurrection of the righteous and the wicked from the dead. Although verse two is not hard to understand, the context of this verse has engendered much disagreement. Verse one refers back to the time of the end described in 11:40-45. Although it is generally acknowledged that chapter 11 up to verse 40 is discussing the period of conflict between Egypt and Syria (i.e. the Ptolemies vs. Seleucids) and the activities of the Greek tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes (Antiochus is famous for a severe persecution of the people of God and for placing idols in the Temple and sacrificing a pig in the sanctuary—the abomination of desolation), verses 40-45 are interpreted in a number of ways. Some see these verses as a continuation of Antiochus Epiphanes’ activities. Others see them as describing the activities of his ruling posterity. Still others attribute these verses to the

⁴ C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 4:354.

⁵ Turretin, 3:564.

conquest of the Roman Empire. There are dispensationalists who believe that this applies to a revived Roman Empire at the end of time. There are also a number of commentators who see a double fulfillment; in other words, these verses apply to the period before the birth of Christ as well as the end of the world. Many full preterists believe that the passage refers to the destruction of Israel in A.D. 66-70 and consequently they teach that the general resurrection is an event in the distant past.

Without taking the time to figure out precisely what is the specific history of the inter-testamental period under discussion, there are a number of important things that we can learn from verse two. First, there is a *simultaneous resurrection* of both the righteous and the wicked. This fact eliminates a number of interpretations. (1) The premillennial dispensational idea of a separate and later resurrection of the wicked explicitly contradicts this passage. (2) The idea (based on the word “many”) that this is the partial resurrection of saints that occurred when Jesus rose from the dead (c. A.D. 30) is untenable because *only saints* came out of their tombs on that wonderful day (Mt. 27:52-53). There is no indication that wicked arose with Christ and there are no good theological reasons for such an occurrence. (3) The fact that both arise at the same time rules out any idea of a figurative meaning; for example, that this refers to the restoration of the Jewish nation or that this resurrection symbolizes regeneration. (4) It refutes the full preterist interpretation because they (at least most of them) believe in a progressive view of the resurrection from A.D. 70 onward for eternity. Daniel teaches a general resurrection followed by everlasting life (*hayye olam*) or everlasting contempt (*diron olam*).

Second, note that the righteous and the wicked who are dead will awake or come forth from the dust of the earth. Those who have died and turned to dust will come out of the dust. This passage refers to *literal* graves and a *literal* bodily resurrection. Something physical is happening. This reality refutes a number of ideas. (1) This cannot be a reference only to souls being set free from Hades, either at the resurrection of Christ or in A.D. 70. Souls do not go to sleep at death and they do not arise out of the dust. (2) It cannot refer to a bodily resurrection in A.D. 70 because the dust of the earth still contains the dust of the dead—both righteous and wicked. (3) In verse 12:13 Daniel is told that he also will arise on that day and will receive his reward at the end of history. (“But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.”) This verse also contradicts any conceptions of simply a release from Hades or a spiritual experience. Daniel’s body is at rest in the grave and will arise at the end of the days, the final period (the consummation). A.D. 70 was the end of the Jewish age, but it was not the end of the days. God does not have two separate bodily resurrections, one for Old Testament saints and one for the New. Everyone who is saved by Christ will arise together at the end of the world.

Given the plain teaching of Daniel 12:2 on the nature of the resurrection, we need to ask two questions. First, why does this prophecy speak of the final resurrection of the righteous and the wicked at the end of a section dealing with inter-testamental history that involves severe hardship and persecution of the righteous Jews (i.e. those Jews unwilling to compromise ethically and religiously to get along with their Greek and/or Roman overlords)? The reason was simple. The final resurrection was a special consolation and hope for persecuted Jews, as it would be for persecuted suffering Christians. After the great storm of persecution is over, the faithful Jews who have not soiled their garments with compromise will be recompensed according to their works at the resurrection. Moreover, their wicked persecutors, and the apostate Jews who supported them to save their skin, will suffer the just punishment that they deserve. God will avenge his saints. A time of full salvation and complete justice is coming. “And the

apostle, speaking of the pious Jews that suffered martyrdom under Antiochus, tells us that though they were tortured yet they *accepted not deliverance*, because they *hoped to obtain this better resurrection*, Heb. xi.35.”⁶ Paul also grounded his hope on the resurrection of the dead (cf. Ac. 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:54-58; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; etc). The righteous awake to a resurrection of life and the rewards of grace while the wicked arise in their sins to eternal loathing and agony. Consequently, suffering for Christ and His kingdom is wise, right and definitely worth it. Our eyes must be looking forward to that great day.

Second, many expositors have been perplexed by Daniel’s use of “many” instead of using the word “all.” Some people ask, how could this be the final resurrection when the word “all” is not used in the passage? Did not our Lord say that “all” would come out of their graves (cf. Jn. 5:28)? The use of the word “many” is not a serious problem when we consider that “many” can have the sense of “all” in Scripture (e.g., Rom. 5:15, 19). The author is not emphasizing that every single person will arise, but simply that the resurrection would consist of a great number of people, a vast multitude. This is how the word is used in Psalm 97:1. An innumerable multitude of the dead will arise from the dust. As Calvin notes, “The word *many* seems here clearly put for all, and this is not to be considered as at all absurd, for the angel does not use the word in contrast with all or few, but only with one.”⁷ “Here it is clear...that reference is made to the final resurrection, in which there shall be a separation of the good and the bad; not temporal, but eternal—as to eternal life and as to death and everlasting disgrace.”⁸

Once we understand the word “many” is not designed to teach a partial resurrection, then we see a striking resemblance between Daniel 12:2 and Jesus’ statement on the resurrection in John 5:28-29:

Daniel 12:2

Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. Some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.

John 5:28-29

The hour is coming in which all who are in their graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Virtually all commentators and theologians of the Christian church throughout the ages have regarded these passages as plain statements about the final resurrection.

That Christ Himself understood the Daniel 12:2 passage as a reference to the final resurrection is demonstrated by His probable allusion to Daniel 12:3 as the end of the parable of the tares. Note the striking similarities:

Daniel 12:3

Those who are wise shall shine like (LXX, *lampousin os*) the brightness (*lamppotes*) of the firmament, (cf. Ac. 26:13 where Paul says “the brightness of the sun,” *lamproteta tou*

Matthew 13:43

Then the righteous will shine forth as (*eklampousin os*) the sun in the in the kingdom of their Father.

⁶ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 4:1112.

⁷ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Prophet Daniel*, 2:374.

⁸ Turretin, 3:565. Some commentators believe the word “many” is used because Daniel is focusing on the people who are alive at that time: the many who are righteous or faithful and the many who are wicked.

eliou)... forever and ever.

Full preterists ignore the nature of the resurrection described by Daniel and instead insist that the resurrection had to occur in A.D. 70 because Daniel connects the abomination that causes desolation (11:31; 12:11) with the resurrection (12:2). This view has serious problems and must be rejected for the following reasons. (1) In Daniel the abomination of desolation refers to the horrible sacrilege perpetrated by the infamous king Antiochus Epiphanes. “The reference is clearly to the events of 167 B.C., when Antiochus Epiphanes conquered Jerusalem and prohibited Jewish sacrificial worship, setting up an altar for pagan sacrifices (including the slaughter of pigs) on top of the altar of burnt offering (Josephus, *Ant.* 12.253).”⁹ When Jesus says, “When you see the ‘desecrating sacrilege’ spoke of by Daniel,” He is not necessarily saying that A.D. 70 is the *specific* fulfillment of Daniel, but that, just as the temple was desecrated under Antiochus, something like it will happen again. Lenski concurs, “Jesus does not say that Daniel prophesied the event that would usher in the destruction of Jerusalem. He says only that the same kind of abomination with the same kind of effect would appear in the Temple.”¹⁰

Moreover, since it is obvious that no bodily resurrection occurred at the abomination of desolation that occurred in 167 B.C. (and continued for three years), then there is no reason to insist that a resurrection took place in A.D. 70. If the full preterist was consistent and argued for some type of double fulfillment (e.g., 167 B.C. and A.D. 70), then he should argue for two resurrections and not just one in A.D. 70. The full preterist is essentially no better than the dispensational futurist who ignores the original prophecy to look for a future revived Roman Empire and the Antichrist. The fact that no resurrection took place in 167 B.C. supports the orthodox Christian view of prophecy that at times God can place crucial information about distant events next to events that are soon to come to pass for the comfort and hope of believers. The great hope of persecuted believers in *every age* is the bodily resurrection at the end of history.

(2) There is nothing in Matthew 24 about a rapture of the living saints or a literal bodily resurrection. The dead bodies of the righteous and the wicked did not come forth from the dust. It simply did not happen. The full preterist can only arrive at a resurrection by redefining physical, literal resurrection out of existence. Moreover, as we noted in our discussion of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Jesus did not leave heaven in His theanthropic Person in A.D. 70. The second bodily coming of Christ and the eschatological events that surround it are for us still future.

Psalm 17:15

As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.

In this Psalm David describes himself as a righteous man who earnestly desires the grace to be kept in a righteous and holy manner of life, even though he has enemies who desire to oppress, encircle and tear him apart. David seeks God’s loving kindness and deliverance from those who rise up against him. His inspired prayer closes with a great statement of faith in God’s

⁹ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 91.

¹⁰ R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Matthew’s Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, [1943] 1964), 936.

complete love and salvation. David will behold God's face and enjoy His presence. (The sight of God and His face is often referred to in Scripture as a great privilege that, generally speaking, is denied to believers in this present life. It is something that is reserved for the next life and the time after the consummation [cf. Ex. 33:20; Jdg. 13:22; Mt. 5:8; 1 Cor. 13:12; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Jn. 3:2; Rev. 21:3, 23; 22:3-5]). David will receive perfect and complete satisfaction when he awakes from death in his resurrected body in God's likeness.

A very small number of commentators do not see a resurrection of the body in this passage. Therefore, we would benefit from looking at their arguments. One argument is that the term awaking means to awake from a literal sleep. This is based on the reference to night in verse three. But why would David expect to see God when he wakes up the next morning, or on the morning of any other day? Such a view is absurd. Another argument is that "waking" is a metaphor for deliverance from his present time of sorrow and suffering. This interpretation, however, is a completely inadequate explanation. Suffering and affliction is never compared in Scripture to sleeping. But, waking from death and sleep, as a metaphor for death, is common in the Bible (2 Kgs. 4:21; Isa. 26:19; Jn. 11:11; 1 Cor. 15:18; 1 Thess. 4:13, 14; etc). Some interpreters argue that it cannot refer to a hope of a bodily resurrection because at this point in God's history such a clear conception of the resurrection was unknown. The problem with this view is that Job 19:25-27 as well as Psalm 16 offer very clear proof that God's people did indeed already have a hope in the resurrection and the blessedness of the hereafter.

The only interpretation that does justice to this passage and the analogy of Scripture is that David will be truly satisfied when his soul is reunited with his body that awakens from the slumber of death to behold the face of God. This is the salvific climax to the request of verse 7, "Wondrously show thy steadfast love." Spurgeon writes, "The saints in heaven have not yet awaked in God's likeness. The bodies of the righteous still sleep, but they are to be satisfied on the resurrection morn, when they awake. When a Roman conqueror had been at war, and won great victories, he would return to Rome with his soldiers, enter privately into his house, and enjoy himself till the next day, when he would go out of the city to reenter it publicly in triumph. Now, the saints, as it were, enter privately into heaven without their bodies; but on the last day, when their bodies wake up, they will enter into their triumphal chariots."¹¹

Psalm 116:9-11

Therefore my heart is glad, and my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol. Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

Although Peter applies this passage directly to Jesus Christ in his Pentecost sermon (Ac. 2:25ff.) and points out that David is still moldering in the tomb, nevertheless this prophecy is directly linked with David's own hope of the redemption of his flesh or body. "So great victory over death and the grave is gotten by faith in Jesus Christ, that a believer can lay down his body,

¹¹ Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David: An Expository and Devotional Commentary on the Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Baker, [1882-87] 1983), 1:252. "And since the doctrine of the resurrection of the just to a blessed and endless life was not unknown to the holy men of God in the Old Testament, as it were very easy to prove, nor to David in particular, as appears from Psal. xvi.10, 11, and from divers other passages, it cannot be imagined but David would support and comfort himself here opposing his hopes and portion to that of his enemies; and having noted, not without a secret reflection and reproach upon them for it, that their portion was in this life, ver. 14, it was most consonant to the place and to the thing itself, that he should seek and have his happiness in the future life." (Matthew Poole, *Commentary on the Holy Bible* [Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, (1700) 1962], 2:25.

as in a bed, to rest it there, in hope of the resurrection.”¹² “For those that are ‘in Christ’ do most assuredly share in the fruits of His resurrection has vindicated David’s bold assertion of faith.”¹³ David has consolation in the redemption of his body because all of Jesus’ own are delivered from the grave through His glorious resurrection. As our Lord said, “Because I live, ye shall also” (Jn. 14:19). If David’s hope was only that his spirit would be released from Hades as some full preterists assert; or, that he would receive a completely different body that had nothing to do with his physical body as other full preterists assert, then his hope in Jesus’ bodily-physical (yet spiritual) resurrection makes no sense. As we noted in our discussion of physical death as a consequence of spiritual death, the full preterist system cannot explain why Jesus had to die physically and then rise again in the same body (although now glorified) that died.

Isaiah 25:8

He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; the rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; for the Lord has spoken.

This passage is applied specifically by Paul to the resurrection of the saints in 1 Corinthians 15:54 (cf. Hos. 13:14). (Paul, following a common LXX idiom, translates the Hebrew word “forever” as “victory.”) The coming of Christ and the resurrection and glorification of the saints results in the abolition of death itself. After God says in verse seven that He would destroy (lit. “swallow”) the veil or covering that represents the sorrow and suffering of the nations, Jehovah uses the same verb to tell us how their suffering and mourning will cease. God, through the death and resurrection of His Son, will put away sin and conquer death forever. Edward J. Young writes,

Isaiah uses the definite article with death, to stress the fact that it is well known that death has been a terror to mankind. Hitherto, death itself had swallowed up all else. As in Genesis 2:17 so here, the word “death” includes all the evils which attend it. When death is swallowed up, so also are all the miseries that it brings. Furthermore, death is to be swallowed up forever; it will never again reappear. Paul’s interpretation is entirely true to the Old Testament: “death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:54b). The book of Revelation brings out the meaning clearly: “there shall be no more death” (Rev. 21:4b).

When God begins to reign on Zion, He will provide a feast of rich things for the nations, and He will at that time also swallow up death, so that there will not longer be any cause for mourning and sorrow. This is the entire picture in compact form. From the New Testament, moreover, we learn that with the establishment of the kingdom on Zion, the Church, the blessings herein predicted were indeed fulfilled. By His death Christ did swallow up death in victory. At the same time, we also learn from the New Testament that the effects of sin remain, and that only with the second advent of Christ will we see the promised blessings realized to their fullest extent. Isaiah is speaking of the fundamental victory of the Lord...¹⁴

Jesus Christ has defeated death once and for all. This complete victory encompasses all the people of this earth (cf. Rom. 6:14; 1 Cor. 15:12-57; 1 Thess. 4:14; Rev. 1:17, 18; 21:4; etc). If Christ had not defeated death by the cross and the empty tomb, then the consequences of Adam’s

¹² David Dickson, *A Commentary on the Psalms* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, [1653-55] 1959), 1:70.

¹³ Hengstenberg as quoted in H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of the Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Baker [1959] 1969), 153.

¹⁴ Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 2:196.

fall would still be in effect over this world and its peoples after the consummation. Moreover, as this verse makes clear, if we are not delivered from death and the sin which issues in death, then suffering and sorrow cannot be removed as well. But God promises to remove all heartache and sorrow. As a loving mother wipes away the tears of her child, Jehovah will wipe off our tear-stained faces. The removal of all forms of sorrow is obviously the consequence of the Messiah's complete victory over death. The Redeemer eliminates sin, guilt and pollution as well as all the consequences of sin at His final coming. Calvin's application of this verse is on the mark. He writes, "If we now 'sow in tears,' then undoubtedly we shall 'reap with joy' and ecstasy. (Psalm cxxvi.5). Let us not dread the insults or reproaches of men, which will one day procure for us the highest glory. Having obtained here the beginnings of this happiness and glory, by being adopted by God, and beginning to bear the image of Christ, let us firmly and resolutely await the completion of it at the last day."¹⁵

Full preterism tragically makes a complete mockery of this verse and others like it. God says that Christ will swallow up death in victory. The full preterist teaches that death is natural and will continue forever. The Bible clearly asserts that the consequences of the fall such as suffering, sorrow and tears will be obliterated and removed forever by God's Son at His coming. The full preterist worldview extends suffering tears and anguish into eternity. They have greatly reduced the salvation of Christ to an individualistic progressive saving of a few souls here and there in a world of misery and sin that extends into eternity. The defeat of Satan, sin and death and the regeneration of all things at the cross is never brought to completion. In their worldview it can never be brought to completion because they substitute a national judgment upon Israel in the middle of history for the second bodily coming of Christ at the end of history.

Isaiah 26:19

Thy dead shall arise; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead" (ASV).¹⁶

The context of this passage is that "the people have not been able to deliver themselves from oppression in all its forms and demonstrate God's power to the world by striking down the oppressive world power. As the following verse makes plain, the implication is that instead of new life resulting from the struggle, only death has resulted. This raises the underlying question of the lament: it is fine to believe that God will one day be crowned on Mount Zion and invite all saints to feast with him in the presence of their enemies, but what about all those saints who had lived and struggled and died in the meantime with no apparent result?"¹⁷

In verse 19 we see the answer to the implied question of verses 17 and 18. Isaiah gives an inspired response that God will restore what the saints have lost. All of the godly people who lived and died without seeing the victory of the Messiah will rise again out of their graves. This

¹⁵ John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*, 2:199-200.

¹⁶ The King James Version translates this verse, "Thy dead men shall live, *together with* my dead body shall they arise." The reason for the difference in translation between the KJV and the ASV is that "my dead body" is singular while the verb "shall arise" is plural. The American Standard Version translation has been chosen over the KJV and NKJV because the singular noun "my corpse" is *feminine* while the plural verb is *masculine*. This indicates that the noun is used collectively for God's people and thus very likely does not represent Christ as in the KJV (Although the KJV translation certainly follows the correct theology on this matter) "...the noun refers to the nation as a unit, the plural of the verb points to the individuals who compose the entire body" (E. J. Young, 2:226).

¹⁷ John T. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 1-39* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 485.

verse is not intended to be taken figuratively. The statement “my dead bodies shall arise” emphasizes that the dead are bodies or corpses. Isaiah is not speaking merely of spirits in Sheol, but of the raising of physical corpses out of the dust. These saints arise of the dust and come forth out of the earth. As in Daniel 12:2, “dust” is the place of the dead. In Psalm 22:15 the crucifixion of Christ brings Him “to the dust of death.” In modern Arabic the same word *turab* (dust) is a designation of the cemetery;¹⁸ the place where dead bodies sleep in death and rot in the dust. Dead believers will come out of their tombs singing praises of joy. Isaiah clearly believed and taught that God would raise the dead bodies of the saints out of their tombs.¹⁹ We must either accept the plain meaning of what the prophet here teaches or we must twist Scripture and render this passage as meaningless. Either we embrace the glorious orthodox doctrine that the living God will cause the dead bodies of the saints to arise and shout for joy or we can accept the heretical, arbitrary, presuppositions of the full preterists.

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¹⁸ See Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, 2:227, footnote 45.

¹⁹ Some may appeal to verse 14 to argue either that verse 19 must not be taken literally or that there is no general resurrection of the dead. Verse 14 reads, “They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore has thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.” Edward J. Young does a fine job of countering such a view: “It is a mistake to use this verse to support the position that no general resurrection of the dead is taught here, but only a resurrection of the just. What Isaiah is speaking of it not so much a resurrection, as the fact that those who had once acted as lords over Israel are now dead, and cannot return to life again to afflict the Israelites. He is not denying that in the general resurrection they too shall arise unto everlasting punishment. On that particular subject he is not now speaking. What he is saying, however, is of comfort to the Israelites, for it teaches them that in the kingdom founded on Zion, they shall be free from those who formerly had oppressed them” (*The Book of Isaiah*, 2:220).