

THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION, STATED AND DEFENDED (Sermon 1)

John Gill

In Two Sermons, preached at a Lecture in Lime-Street.

Sermon #1

Ac 26:8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

The doctrine of the resurrection of the body from the dead, is a doctrine of the of utmost importance; for "if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain," **1Co 15:13-14**. In this lecture, the doctrines of eternal election, original sin, particular redemption, satisfaction by Christ, efficacious grace in conversion, and final perseverance, have been well explained and defended among you; and, I hope, to your great comfort and establishment: but to what purpose are these truths taught, and what avail will they be, if there is no resurrection of the dead? The part assigned to me, in this lecture, being to explain and defend this truth, I shall attempt to do it in the following method:

I. I shall observe that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead has not been credited by some; it has been accounted incredible.

II. Notwithstanding, I shall endeavour to evince both the credibility and certainty of it.

III. I shall inquire who, and what that is which shall be raised.

IV. I shall consider the author of this stupendous work, and the particular concern which God the Father, Son, and Spirit, have therein.

V. I shall show the importance and use of this doctrine.

I. It will not be improper to observe, that the doctrine of the resurrection of the body from the dead has not been believed by some, but has been accounted absurd and incredible, though without any just reason, as will be shown hereafter, and as may be concluded from the words of my text.

This doctrine is of pure revelation, what the mere light of nature never taught men, and by which alone they being guided, have declared against. It has been denied, as Tertullian observes, by every sect of the philosophers. That the body was mortal, all agreed; that the soul was immortal, some of them asserted, though they had but dark and confused conceptions concerning its future separate existence; but that the body, when dead, should be raised again to life, was a subject of ridicule and contempt with them. Pliny calls it a childish fancy, vanity, and downright madness; as does also Caecilius, in Minucius Felix, who likewise reckons it among old wives' fables. Celsus, in Origen, represents it as exceedingly detestable and abominable; and, of all the tenets of the Christians, this was had in the greatest contempt by Julian the emperor. The maintainers and abettors of this doctrine were always accounted by the heathen vain, trifling, and babbling fellows. Thus the Athenian philosophers of the Epicurean and Stoic sects mocked at the apostle Paul, when they heard him talk of the resurrection of the dead; "And some said, What will this babbler say?" **Ac 17:18,32. "Other some, he seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods; because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection." They were so ignorant of this doctrine, that they took Jesus and the word used by the apostle for the resurrection, to be the names of some strange deities they had never heard of before; and therefore say, "He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods." The heathen had no knowledge of this truth, no faith in it, nor hope concerning it. Hence they are described by the apostle Paul, as those who had no hope; when writing to the Thessalonians,**

he says, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others, which have no hope," **1Th 4:13-14**. By whom the apostle means not Christians, who had no hopes of the salvation of their departed friends and relations, but Pagans, who had neither faith nor hope in the resurrection of the dead, and a future state: and therefore had not that to support them under the loss of relations, which Christians had: wherefore the apostle adds, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him." Much after the same manner the Ephesians, whilst they were in their heathenish and unconverted estate, are described, **Eph 2:12**, by the same apostle; "At that time, says he, ye were without Christ:" that is, without any knowledge, promise, or expectation of the Messiah; "being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise;" i.e. ye were not so much as proselytes to the Jewish religion, nor members of the Jewish church, and were entirely destitute of divine revelation; having no hope in the resurrection and future state, and so lived without God in the world, or as atheists in it, as it is in the original. And we may be the more induced to believe this to be, at least, part of the apostle's sense in these passages; since he, in his defences before Felix and Agrippa, represents the doctrine of the resurrection as the object of hope, as in **Ac 24:15**: "And have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." And in **Ac 26:6-7**: "And now I stand and am judged, for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come; for which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews." And then follow the words of my text, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"

Some, indeed, have thought that the Gentiles had knowledge of the resurrection which they collect partly from some notions and opinions of theirs, which seem to be a semblance with, and to be the broken remains of some tradition concerning it; and partly from express passages, wherein they think it is asserted. The notion of the heathen, from whence it is concluded that they had some hints of this doctrine, are these, viz. that the soul after death has a perfect human shape, and all the same parts, both external and internal, that the body has; that there is an equal duration of the soul and body after death; that there is a transmigration of souls into other bodies, especially human; that men may be translated body and soul to heaven; of which they give instances in Aristaeus, Proconnesian, Alcmena, Hercules, Helena, Romulus, Cleomedes Astypalensis, and others: and that after certain periods and revolutions, when the stars and planets are in the same configuration and respect to one another, which they formerly had, the same

men shall appear in the world, and the same things in succession shall be done in it, which formerly have been. For instance: 'Socrates shall be born at Athens of the same parents, be educated after the same manner, and eat the same food, wear the same clothes, teach the same philosophy to the selfsame scholars, be accused by the same accusers, condemned by the same council, and die by the same poison. And so, my friends, according to this notion, we are all to meet together again in this place, in the same position and situation, you to hear, and I to preach; my subject is to be the doctrine of the resurrection, and I am to give you an account of the notions of the heathen with respect to it, as I now do. But this notion seems rather expressive of a regeneration, or a new birth, or a reproduction of men and things, than a resurrection of them: and, I must confess, I cannot see what likeness there is between this, or any other of the above mentioned notions, and the Christian doctrine of the resurrection from the dead.

The passages cited out of heathen authors, to show their knowledge of this doctrine, are such as the Greek verses of Phocylides; in which he expresses his hopes, that, in a very short time, the relics of the deceased should come forth out of the earth into light. But this poem is thought, by learned men, not to be the work of the heathen Phocylides, but either some anonymous Christian, or of some ancient Jewish writer. Besides, the verses referred to are not so expressed, but that it is thought they may very well be explained, so as to design the Pythagorean transmigration, and not the Christian doctrine of the resurrection. Theopompus and Eudemus Rhodius, in Diogenes Laertius, tell us that it was the opinion of the Persian Magi, that men should live again, and be immortal; this they received from their master and the founder of their sect, Zoroaster; who foretold, "that there should be a time when there would be a resurrection of all the dead." Nor need this be wondered at, since, from the best accounts of him, it appears that he was originally a Jew, both by birth and religion; was a servant to one of the prophets of Israel, and was well versed in the Holy Scriptures; out of which, without doubt, he took this doctrine, as he did some others, and which he taught his Magi, and adopted into his new religion. It may be more surprising to hear that Democritus, a corporeal philosopher, should have any notion of the resurrection of the dead; yet Pliny ascribes it to him, and derides him for it; though it has been thought by some, that he designs another Democritus, and not the philosopher, since this opinion cannot be very easily reconciled to his philosophy. But supposing that he, and not another, is meant, it is easy to observe how he came by it, seeing he not only lived in Egypt a while and conversed with the priests there, but travelled also into Persia, and learned of the Magi, theology as well as other things. The notions of several Pagan nations concerning the

resurrection, are such as are either ascribed to them by authors not to be depended on, or plainly design transmigration, or are what they have borrowed from the Jews, either by conversing with them, or by reading of their writings; or else are the broken remains of some tradition, received from their ancestors, originally founded on divine revelation.

Some have argued from the Pagans' account of future punishments, to their belief of this doctrine; as when they represent Aridaeus and other tyrants in hell, bound neck and heels together, their skin flayed, and they dragged through thorns and briers; when they speak of Sisyphus rolling a stone up a hill, which, when he has got it to the top, revolves upon his hands; of Ixion; fastened to a wheel in continual motion; of Tityus having vultures always feeding upon his liver; and of Tantalus, in extreme thirst, standing in water up to his middle, with apples hanging over his head and near his mouth, and yet unable to extinguish his thirst with either. But, as a learned author observes, the reason why the heathen described the punishments of the damned after this manner, was not because they thought that their bodies were not left here on earth, but partly because it is the vulgar opinion, that the soul had all the same parts that the body has, and partly because such descriptions do more easily move and affect us; and it is not easy to describe the torments of the soul after any other manner. Our Lord, in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, adds the same author, speaks of them in the same manner, as if they had bodies; though what is related of them, is supposed to be before the resurrection, and their bodies are supposed to be yet in their graves.

As for some particular instances of persons who have been said to be raised from the dead to life, mentioned by heathen writers; as Alcestis by Hercules, Hippolytus by Aesculapius, with many others of the like kind; Acilius Aviola, Lucius Lamia, Aelius Tubero and others are said to revive on the funeral pile; Er Aramenius Pamphilius is reported to come to life, after he had been dead twelve days; Hercules is said to live after he had burnt himself; and Aesculapius to be raised after he had been struck with thunder, and who himself is said to restore one to life that was carrying to the pile; and much such a story is told of Apollonius Tyaneus. As for these instances, I say, they seem to be fabulous stories, and undeserving of credit. It is true, indeed, they have been credited by some of the heathen, and since they have an argument from hence may be improved against them with great force, and for the doctrine of the resurrection; for if they can believe these things, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible

with them that God should raise the dead?" It may be, I have been too long on this subject; I therefore proceed to observe,

That the Jews were peculiarly blessed by God with that revelation which discovers the truth of this doctrine. In this they had the advantage of the Gentiles, "because that unto them were committed the oracles of God," **Ro 3:1,3**; and yet there were some among them, as the sect of the Sadducees, which did not believe this truth; they said, "there was no resurrection," **Mt 22:23; Ac 23:8**, though in this, as our Lord says, "they erred, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God," **Mt 22:29**. In this the Hemero-baptists agreed with them; nor did the Essenes acknowledge the doctrine of the resurrection; yea, many of the Pharisees held the Pythagorean notion of the transmigration of souls into our bodies, which is asserted by Josephus, and, by learned men, collected from several passages of Scripture; which notion has been embraced by many of that people. Nor is it so astonishing, as that, whereas, in the writings of the New Testament, there is a more clear discovery made of this truth, yet it has been denied and opposed by some who have had the advantage of them. It was the error of Hymeneus and Philetus, "that the resurrection was past already," **2Ti 2:18**. And some in the church at Corinth held "that there is no resurrection of the dead," **1Co 15:12**. These were followed by Simon Magus, Saturninus, Basilides, Carpocrates, Valentinus, and others, too numerous to recite; and, of late, the doctrine of the resurrection of the same body is rejected by Socinians and Quakers. But to go on,

II. I shall now endeavour to evince both the credibility and certainty of the resurrection of the dead, notwithstanding it has been accounted by many absurd and incredible.

First, I shall show the credibility of it; and that,

1. From its consistence with the nature and perfections of God. If God is omnipotent and omniscient, as he certainly is, or he would not be God, the resurrection of the dead is not incredible; it is what may be. God is omnipotent, he can do all things; what is impossible with men, is possible with him: he cannot

do any thing, indeed, which argues imperfection and weakness, or implies a contradiction and falsehood: he cannot lie, or deny himself. But the resurrection of the dead is not an instance of either. It is no contradiction, that the dust, which was formed out of nothing, being reduced to dust, should again form the body which it once constituted; nor does this argue imperfection or weakness, but is a glorious instance of mighty power. A heathen once said, that it was not in the power of God to raise the dead; and to another, it seemed impossible for any to restore life to one that is dead: but if God could make all things out of nothing, as he did, and, from a dark and confused chaos, raise up such a beautiful structure as this World, and, out of the dust of the earth, form the body of man, and infuse into it, and unite it with a living and reasonable soul; then much more must he be able to raise up a dead body, the matter and substance of which now is, though in different forms and shapes, and reunite it to its soul, which still has a real existence: it is much easier to restore that which is, to its former condition; than to make to exist that which is not. God is also omniscient; he knows all things: he knows all the particles of matter, of which our bodies are composed; and, when they are dissolved into several parts, blown about by the several winds, crumbled into dust, reduced to ashes, evaporated into air, or digested into the bodies of other creatures, and have been transmuted into ten thousand forms and shapes; he knows where they are lodged, and what are the several receptacles and repositories of them, whether in the earth, air, or sea; and his all-discerning eye can distinguish those particles of matter which belong to one body, from those which belong to another; and his almighty hand can gather and unite them together in their own proper bodies, and range them in their due place and order. If God then is omnipotent and omniscient, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead ought not to be accounted incredible.

As considering the omnipotence and omniscience of God, the resurrection of the dead may be, which also is no ways contrary to his goodness; so the justice of God makes it necessary that it should be: "God is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works:" he is the Judge of all the earth, who will do right: and it is but just with him that those bodies which Christ has purchased with his blood, and the Spirit has sanctified by his grace, and which have suffered for his name's sake, should be raised again, that they, together with their souls, may enjoy that glory which is purchased for them, and which they are made meet to be partakers of; even as it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that trouble them; and so consequently it is no act of injustice in God to raise the bodies, both of the righteous and the wicked, that they may receive the things done in the body, whether they be good, or whether they be evil. These things being considered, it may be concluded, that the resurrection of the dead is

not inconsistent with the perfections of God, and so not incredible. To these considerations I add,

2. The several instances of persons who have been raised from the dead, recorded in Scripture; such as the child of the widow of Zarephath, which came to life upon Elijah's prayer; and the child of the Shunamite, upon Elisha's; as also the man that was cast into Elisha's sepulchre, who revived and stood upon his feet, upon touching the prophet's bones, mentioned in the Old Testament: likewise Jairus's daughter, the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus, who were raised by Christ; and not to forget to mention the saints, who came out of their graves, after our Lord's resurrection: and also Dorcas, who was raised by Peter; as was Eutychus by the apostle Paul: which instances are recorded in the New Testament. My argument upon these instances is this; that what has been, may be; and if these instances of particular resurrections are to be credited, then the doctrine of the resurrection of all the dead is not to be accounted incredible. And,

3. It may not be improper if I should just mention some typical and figurative resurrections. The Scriptures give us an account of Jonah's lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly; and his deliverance from thence was a type of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. The saving of Isaac from being sacrificed, was like a resurrection from the dead; and, indeed, "from thence Abraham received him in a figure," **Heb 11:19**. The redemption of the people of Israel out of the Babylonish captivity, was a metaphorical resurrection, and signified by the reviving of dry bones; which was done by laying sinews, and bringing flesh upon them, covering them with skin, and putting breath into them. The budding and blossoming of Aaron's dry rod, is thought, by some, to be a figure of the resurrection of the dead. However, be that as it will, this may be observed, that if God could deliver Jonah out of the whale's belly, save Isaac from being sacrificed, when so near it, make dry bones to live and stand upon their feet, and cause a dry rod to bud, blossom, and bring forth almonds; then why should it be thought a thing incredible with any, that God should raise the dead? But,

Secondly, I now proceed to show, that the resurrection of the dead is not only credible, but certain; and this I shall do, partly from Scripture testimonies, and partly from other Scripture doctrines.

1st, From Scripture testimonies, which shall be taken both out of the Old and New Testament. I shall begin with producing testimonies out of the former; and,

1. With the words of God to Moses: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," **Ex 3:6**. I choose to mention this scripture, and to begin with it, because with this our Lord confronted the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead, and put them to silence; insomuch, that, after that, no man durst ask any question at all; the account of which you have in **Mt 22:23**, and some following verses; and it stands thus: the Sadducees came to him with an instance of a woman, who had had seven husbands, who were brethren; and their question upon it is, whose wife she should be in the resurrection? To which Christ replies, having observed to them their ignorance of the Scriptures, and the power of God, that "in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven;" and then adds, "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." But now here lies a difficulty, how this appears to be a proof of the resurrection of the dead.

Some have thought, that our Lord's design is to prove the immortality of the soul, which the Sadducees denied, as well as the resurrection of the dead; for they that deny the former, deny the latter; and some of the same arguments which prove the one, prove the other. Menasseh-ben-Israel, a learned Jew of the last century, produces this same passage of Scripture, to prove the immortality of the soul, and argues from it much in the same manner as Christ does. But it is certain, that our Lord produced this testimony as a proof of the resurrection. In one of the evangelists, it is said, "As touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God?" &c. **Mt 22:31**. And in another, "Now, that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," &c. **Lu 20:37**. Let it be observed, then, that it is not said, I was, or I will be, but I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; which is expressive not only of a covenant which had been made, but of one that abides and continues, which must be either the covenant of grace made with them in Christ, of which they had some glorious discoveries and manifestations, or some particular covenant

respecting them and their posterity. As for the covenant of grace, this respected not their souls only, but their bodies also, even their whole persons; therefore, as their souls now live with God in the enjoyment of the promised good, it is necessary that their bodies should be raised from the dead, that, with their souls, they may enjoy the everlasting blessing of glory and happiness; otherwise, how would God's covenant be "an everlasting one, ordered in all things, and sure?" The learned Mr. Mede thinks, that Christ has respect to the covenant which God: made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in which he promised that he would give the land of Canaan to them, and to their posterity; not their posterity only, but to them also; therefore he observes, that it was necessary that they should be raised from the dead, that they, in their own persons, might enjoy the promised land. It must be acknowledged, that this is a way of arguing the Jews were used to, which may be the reason of the scribes being so well pleased with it; and therefore said, "Master, thou hast well said," **Lu 20:39**. Such kind of arguments as these, to prove the resurrection of the dead, are now extant in their Talmud: for instance; R. Simai said, "From whence is the resurrection of the dead to be proved out of the law? from **Ex 6:4**, where it is said, And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan; it is not said to you, but to them." But, not to insist any longer on this proof, I proceed,

2. To another passage of Scripture, for the confirmation of this doctrine, which is in **Job 19:25-27**, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself; and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." I shall not trouble you with the different versions of these words, some favouring, and some not, the doctrine of the resurrection: and it must be owned, that none of the Jewish writers understand the words of a real, but of a figurative or metaphorical resurrection, and suppose Job's meaning to be, that he should be delivered from the afflicted state, in which he then was, and be restored to his former health, honour, and happiness; in which sense of the words they have been followed by some learned Christian interpreters, at which the Socinians very greedily catch. Temporal afflictions are, indeed, sometimes signified by death, and a deliverance out of them must be as life from the dead; but that this cannot be Job's sense and meaning here, may be concluded from the following hints. Job was so far from having any faith in, or assurance of his restoration to his former state of health, honour, and riches, that he had no hope, no expectation of it; nay, seems entirely to despair of it, though his friends endeavoured to support him with views of it, on condition of his repentance. He declares, **Job 6:11; 7:7-8; 10:20; 16:22-17:1; 17:14-16**, that he had no reason to

hope for life, that he should quickly be gone, and therefore had made death familiar to him; that he did not expect to see any more temporal good; yea, in this very chapter, at the tenth verse (**Job 19:10**), he says of God, "He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone; and mine hope hath he removed like a tree," and continues his doleful moan to the very words under consideration; so that it must seem unlikely, that, on a sudden, he should have his expectations of outward prosperity raised. No; the words are rather expressive of what was his inward support and comfort under present afflictions, and in the views of approaching death and the grave. They are an answer to what Bildad had said, in the preceding chapter, (**Job 18:12-14**), concerning the wicked man; where, though he may not directly mean Job, yet he had his eye upon him, when he says, "His strength shall be hunger-bitten, and destruction shall be ready at his side. It shall devour the strength of his skin, even the first-born of death shall devour his strength. His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors." Well now, as if Job should say, supposing all this, yet this is my comfort, I know my interest in the living Redeemer, and am comfortably persuaded, that when he appears at the latter day, though this body of mine is now reduced to skin and bones, and will shortly be the repast of worms, yet it shall be raised again, and, in this very flesh of mine, shall I see God, and everlastingly enjoy him. The preface to the words shows, that it was something future, and at a great distance, which he had in view, even after the consumption of his own body, and at the appearance of his Redeemer in the latter day; and which was very considerable, and of moment; and therefore he says, "O! that my words were now written! O! that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever!" Besides, the vision of God with the eyes of his body, which he expected, is not suited to any state and condition in this life, but rather to the state of eternal glory and happiness, when saints shall see him in the Mediator, as he is; nor can Job's words have reference to the vision he had of God, of which he speaks, **Job 42:5**, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee." Since that issued not barely in peace, joy, and comfort, but likewise, in conviction of his folly and weakness, in self-abhorrence, and deep hu chapter, put his friends in mind of the awful judgment: "Be ye afraid of the sword; for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment;" between which and death, there must be a resurrection from the dead, of which he had before spoken, that so every one may come forth to judgment, and receive the things done in his body, whether they be good or evil. From the whole, we may conclude, that Job here declares his faith, concerning the resurrection of the dead at the last day, and not his own restoration, from outward misery to outward happiness. An ancient writer once thought, that nothing could be a

plainer proof of this doctrine: "for," says he, "no one, since Christ, speaks so plainly of the resurrection, as this man did before Christ."

3. Another testimony I shall produce for the proof of this doctrine, shall be **Isa 26:19**. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they 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 her dead." In **Isa 26:14**, the prophet says, "They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise;" the meaning of which words is either that those tyrants, who formerly had dominion over the people of Israel were dead, and should not live any more in this world, or rise again, to tyrannize over them; or that many of the people were dead, or should die by the sword, famine, &c. and not live again; which the prophet mentions by way of complaint, and as the effect of unbelief, to which these words are an answer. The person speaking is the Messiah, to whom the characters given in **Isa 26:4,12-13**, belong; who assures the prophet, that though his men or people were dead, yet they should live again; that they should be raised again, either at the time of his resurrection or by virtue of it. The words are literally true of Christ's resurrection, and of ours by him, who, as he was to be born, and die, and rise again, in order to be the Saviour of his people, so many of them were to rise along with him; therefore he says, "With my dead body shall they arise;" which was fulfilled at the time of Christ's resurrection, {**Mt 27:52-53**} when the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints, which slept, arose and came out of the graves after his resurrection. Though these words may be rendered either thus, As my dead body shall they arise, i.e in the same way and manner. Christ's resurrection is the exemplar of ours, our vile bodies shall be fashioned like unto his; he is risen from the dead, {**1Co 15:20**} and become the first-fruits of them that slept; or, as sure as my dead body shall they arise. Christ's resurrection is the pledge of ours; "because he lives, we shall live also." {**Joh 14:19; 1Th 4:14**} "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The expressions here made use of confirm this sense of the words, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs." To dwell in the dust, is expressive of the state of the dead; and a resurrection from thence is aptly signified by an awaking, since death is so frequently, in the sacred writings, compared to sleep. {**Job 7:21; 17:16; 20:11; 40:16; Da 3:2**} The power of God, in raising the dead, is fitly expressed by the dew; for as through the virtue and influence of the dew, the grass and herbs of the field spring up and grow, so, through the wonderful power of God, "our bones," to use the prophet's phrase, {**Isa 66:14**} "shall flourish like an herb," in the resurrection morn; and it is easy to observe a likeness between the last clause of this verse, "and the earth shall cast forth her dead,;" and those expressions by

which the resurrection is described in **Re 20:13**, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it: and death and hell, (or the grave,) delivered up the dead which were in them." The Jews refer this prophecy to the resurrection of the dead. But,

4. To add no more testimonies of this kind, I shall conclude the evidence of this doctrine out of the Old Testament, from the famous prophecy in **Da 12:2**, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." These words are generally understood of the resurrection of the dead, as well by Jewish as Christian interpreters. Porphyry, the acute Heathen, and sworn enemy of Christianity, would have these words design the return of some of the people of the Jews to their own cities and habitations after Antiochus's generals were cut off, who before skulked about in holes and corners, and in which sense of the text he is followed by Grotius. But surely this deliverance, or the return of this people, was not in any of them to shame and contempt, especially to everlasting shame and contempt; nor was it to everlasting life in any of them, seeing they are all since dead. Nor is it true that the doctors of the Jewish church, from that time, shone as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars of heaven; but, on the contrary, their knowledge decreased, their light grew dim, and they became vain in their imaginations. On the other hand, the whole agrees with the resurrection of the dead, when, as our Lord says, whose words are the best comment on this text, "All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, [i.e. the voice of Christ,] and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," **Joh 5:28-29**; and when the bodies of the saints shall be raised in incorruption, power and glory, and "shall shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." I might have produced several other scriptures out of the Old Testament for the confirmation of this truth, such as **Ho 6:2; 13:14**, &c. But I forbear, and pass on,

To the New Testament. And here, were I to take the whole compass of proof which this will furnish out, I must transcribe a considerable part of it. I shall only observe, that this is the doctrine of Christ and his apostles; it is a doctrine which Christ himself taught; he declared himself to be "the resurrection and the life," or to be the author of the resurrection unto life; and that not only those whom the Father had given to him, should be raised by him, but that all that are in their graves; whether good or bad, should come forth from thence at his powerful all and all-commanding voice. The same doctrine was taught by his apostles, who all jointly agree, that there will be a resurrection both of the just

and unjust. The arguments of the apostle Paul for the confirmation of this doctrine, are by him laid together, in the fifteenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians. I do not take notice of particular passages in the New Testament, partly because they are plain and obvious proofs of this truth at first view, and partly because I shall have occasion to make particular use of them in some other parts of these discourses. I proceed,

2dly, To prove the certainty of the resurrection of the dead from other Scripture truths and doctrines, which I shall little more than name; and shall begin,

1. With the doctrine of election. That there is an eternal, personal election of some to everlasting life and salvation, the Scriptures do abundantly declare. Now, this act of election regards not their souls only, but their bodies also, even their whole persons: if then their persons, body and soul, are chosen in Christ to everlasting salvation, then their bodies must be raised from the dead, that they, united to their souls, may together "inherit the kingdom, prepared for them from the foundation of the world;" otherwise the "purpose of God, according to election," will not stand; when, on the contrary, it is certain, that "his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure."

2. It is the doctrine of the Scriptures, that the same persons who were chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world, were given to him by the Father, were put into his hands, and made his care and charge. They were given to him not only to be his portion and inheritance, but to be kept, preserved, and saved by him, body and soul. This was the declared will of his Father, when he gave them to him, as he himself assures us: "And this is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, (no, not even their dust,) but should raise it up again at the last day; and this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day," **Joh 6:39-40**. Now, if these bodies of the saints, which are given to Christ, should not be raised from the dead, the Father's will would not be fulfilled, nor Christ discharge the trust reposed in him.

3. This truth may be concluded from the redemption of our bodies, as well as of our souls, by the blood of Christ. It is true, this is sometimes called the redemption of the soul, and the salvation of the soul, but not to the exclusion of the body; for that is bought with the same price the soul is. Hence the apostle says to the saints after this manner: "Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's," **1Co 6:20**. Now, if these bodies, which Christ has bought, should not be raised from the dead; he would lose part of his purchase: nor could he perfectly "see the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

4. This doctrine may be inferred from the union of the saints to Christ, body and soul. Their whole persons are united to him; "Know ye not," says the apostle, "that your bodies are the members of Christ?" **1Co 6:15**. They are part of his mystical body, they are united to him, as well as their souls, and remain in union with him after death; for, as the union of the two natures in Christ was not dissolved, when his soul and body were at death disunited, so neither is the union between Christ and his people dissolved at death: and, by virtue of this union, their bodies shall be raised from the dead; otherwise Christ must lose a constituent part of those who are his mystical body, and so the church not be "the fullness of him that filleth all in all," as she is said to be, **Eph 1:23**.

5. All those who are chosen in Christ, who are given to him, who are redeemed by him, and are in union with him, are sanctified by the Spirit of God, and that not in their souls only, but in their bodies also; for as the body, as well as the soul, is defiled by sin, it also stands in need of the sanctifying influences of divine grace. Accordingly the Spirit takes up his dwelling in the bodies, as well as in the souls of men; "What! know ye not," says the apostle, "that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you?" **1Co 6:19**. He begins and carries on the work of sanctification in the one, as well as in the other, as is needful; and will, at last, completely finish it; for which the apostle prays, saying, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," **1Th 5:23**. Now, if the bodies of these sanctified ones are not raised, the Spirit of God will not only lose that which he has taken possession of, as his dwelling-place, but also a considerable part of his glory, as a Sanctifier.

6. It will not be improper to take notice of the translations of Enoch and Elias to heaven, who were taken up thither, soul and body; nor of the saints, who came out of their graves, after our Lord's resurrection, and went with him to glory, as is very probable; nor of those who shall be alive at Christ's second coming, who shall not die, but be changed, and be caught up with the rest of the saints in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. Now, whereas it is certain, that there are some saints already in heaven with their bodies, and others that will be, it is very improbable that the rest should be without, or that there should be this difference among the spirits of just men made perfect, that some should have their bodies united to them, and others not.

7. Nothing is more certain than that there will be a general judgment. "God has appointed the day in which," and ordained the Person by whom, "he will judge the world in righteousness," when all, both great and small, shall stand before God, and the dead shall be judged according to their works. Now, in order to this, the resurrection of them is absolutely necessary, that they may "receive the things done in their body, whether good or bad."

8. Neither the happiness of the righteous will be complete, nor the misery of the wicked be proportionate to their crimes, until the resurrection. The happiness of the saints will not be complete: hence they are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body," **Ro 8:23**, when that being redeemed from the grave, and united to the soul, shall, with it, enter into the joy of the Lord. Nor will the misery of the wicked be proportionate to their crimes till then, when they shall be cast, body and soul, into hell; and as the one deserves it, as well as the other, it is proper that so it should be.

9. There will be need of, and uses for bodily organs, or for some of the members of the body in heaven; as particularly the eye, the ear, and tongue. There will be the glorified body of Christ, or the glorious Mediator in human nature, for the saints to look upon with unutterable pleasure: it will be a considerable part of their happiness to "see him as he is." This is one reason why Christ would have his people with him where he is, namely, that "they may behold his glory," even this, as well as other branches of it; and it was Job's support under his afflictions, that in his "flesh he should see God;" that is, the God-man and Mediator, or "God manifest in the flesh." There will be songs of everlasting joy

and praise sung in such melodious strains, as will delight the ear, and employ the tongue throughout the endless ages of eternity.

10. And lastly, and which is the apostle Paul's grand and principal argument for the resurrection of the dead, and which he uses with so much strength, and improves to so good a purpose, is the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, which you have at large in **1Co 15**, where he thus argues: "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God, that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up, if the dead rise not: for if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye, are yet in your sins; then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." The saints may comfortably conclude their resurrection from Christ's; for if the head be raised, the members shall: "Every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits; afterward, they that are Christ's, at his coming." Job was satisfied that he should rise again, because his Redeemer lived, and would appear at the latter day upon the earth; and the saints may be assured, that because "Christ lives, they shall live also." Other arguments might have been made use of; but as they will also prove that the same body shall be raised again, I shall therefore reserve them for their proper place.