


ENTRY TO THE ETERNAL STATE

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1. OUT OF THIS HUT OR TENT INTO A BETTER HOUSE

1. We read in **2Corinthians 5.4** that Paul considered himself "heavily weighed down" by this old tent of the aging body in which nevertheless he did exploits for the LORD. This "hut" he goes on to explain **shall have been** "dissolved" or "done away". This he says he knows very well.

What will replace it? The apostle goes on, "We hold a building of God". Our "body from heaven" is not made with hands but **spoken into life**.

There is just a cautionary note in Paul as he rounds the corner of "endowment" He uses a particle in the original which means "**We deeply desire that *once for all* endowment**" if it is so and not otherwise and being endued, we shall not be found naked." What is Paul saying? He is saying that despite the Lord's treatment of a prodigal that prodigal would feel an inner nakedness without the immediate "gift" of an eternal body!

Peter speaks of this as he expounds **resurrection hope** in **1 Peter 1 3-5** where he writes "**God the Father has begotten us for a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to and inheritance**

(1) **Incorruptible**

(2) **Unspotted**

(3) **Un-decaying**

(4) **"Reserved in heaven"** (i.e. watched for someone who is coming to it)

This hope has been ready for unveiling the moment Christ comes or calls. Peter describes himself as a having his share in the glory on the point of having been revealed which Christians share **1Peter5.2** The glory of the risen Christ has been in heaven since He ascended-it is at the ready to be revealed to home-going saints -and as such "**has been revealed**" daily and at the return of Christ to

reign it is that glory that **has been revealed** to Peter long ago. It is a "ready and has been revealed" no wonder the apostle was excited and deeply assured.

2 UNCLOTHED? To revert to the **2 Corinthians 5** passage, the Apostle Paul proceeds to tell us that *he would not choose* or will or purpose to be "unclothed" **2Cor5.4** but to be "clothed upon". He wants immediately subsequent to death to experience the victory of spring like life. He is able to tell us that the deposit of the Holy Spirit has been placed in us to give assurance of continued life and *in new birth* we are actually designed KATERGASAMENOS to be re-clothed. One of several divine purposes of the Holy Spirit who indwells this earthly temple is to identify the Spirit and Soul of the redeemed with their new clothing. Past the river of death, we need no directions on investiture. God has provided for that.

3. FINALLY AT HOME! The Apostle continues, "We are bold and ready to venture fearlessly -indeed we would be rather better pleased to be out of this home once for all and into our for-ever home with the LORD." **2Cor 5.8** This venture should be set alongside the Apostle's word in **v.6** which assures us that there is no "purgatory" (that is a peculiar "catholic invention" as "the intermediate state" is an equally scholastic "protestant invention"-but immediate passing to **glory** and this glorious body so we can appear in the LORD'S presence.

4. NOW LET US DEAL WITH "PARADISE" We know that the LORD assured the dying thief that he would be with Jesus immediately upon death in Paradise. Look next at **2 Corinthians 12.3** which is a vision of Paul involving his own experience. He is caught up to Paradise. It is a wonderful place. Is it heaven? Yes, it is the "third heaven" **2 Cor.12.2** so it is heaven alright. It is not clever to divide Paradise from heaven as if it were a third-rate place. If the first heaven is the sky above us and the second heaven the universe beyond our solar system then the third heaven takes us to a dimension of which we have no experience except by revelation.

This vision must have value. Paul shared it with the church. What is there to learn from it?

(1) **BEING"CAUGHT UP" HARPAZO** is an operation that is more than just theory. Paul talked years before about it to the Thessalonians (1**Thessalonians 4.17**) before he got a taste of what it felt like himself. The time-frame between heaven and our solar system is short. We clearly are speaking of either a very different means of conveyance such as Elijah experienced [in the famous "sweet chariot comin' for to carry me home"]and we also have to be prepared to think of a *dimension of reality* that is unseen which can be opened up by God at will.

(2) **BODY OPTION NOT DISCOUNTED.** Paul wrote the Second Corinthian letter in 56AD. He knew a man who had a vision of Paradise 14 years before. That was the year 42AD. Paul's conversion can be tentatively set at circa 33 AD. Paul was just under a decade on the Way when he had this vision. From this period of his life his "thorn in the flesh"(possibly a visual impediment) dated-as an ever-present reminder of his weakness and mortality to occasion humility. When Paul was "caught up" what did he experience? First, he experienced "a Garden" which is located in the "third heaven". He remarked that **he was quite unsure if he was in "a body" or outside "the body (his own body)"**. Paul is telling us that it **felt like he had a body** but could not be certain it was his own! Clearly an intelligent man; he must have adduced that features or incapacities he would have expected in his own body seemed uncannily absent. *The obvious implication of this is that man designed through the work of the Holy Spirit for eternity can be taken to heaven and experience its glories.* Elijah was another such man who has been over there for some time now and Enoch has been there since 2000BC -so some 4000 years without dying -and probably retained in his human form ageless!

(3) **MYSTERY REMAINS** The third matter that we learn is that God is fine-tuning plans and events-historic immediate future events- in heaven. Plans are afoot there and audiences are held which

are not known to mortal man. Words are spoken not designed for our ears (Literally "that cannot flow" on earth) Paul had it confirmed to him that God had a sovereign plan. Paul loved to teach and explain **but he was able to boast on this occasion of the obedience that kept silent.** Paul learned that the secret things belong to the LORD. Of these things he simply said "It is not permitted for a man to speak" 2Corinthians12.4. With these three lessons we leave Paradise and start again at the other end-down where we are!

5. WE MUST ALL APPEAR says Paul before the judgment seat of Christ **2 Corinthians 5.10** We do know that judgment follows death. We do know that *in our order of rank* we shall enter heaven. We know from this passage that we shall appear before the BEMA. Some years ago, I stood at the bar of a Greek Bema-you have to fancy yourself taken by a representative of the King to his presence and standing *not more than 6 feet from the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.* What ever will be said on that most awesome of occasions for each and every Christian? Will it be soon after my rank of believers joins those in glory to be welcomed with trumpets and made feel at home and introduced to the Master? Would he who soon bound up the torn heart of Peter leave you and me without addressing the fundamentals of our lives until some other time with a simple acknowledgment, or might it be HE will have us "receive" what HE has to say? I leave that imponderable with you. Each will certainly "receive" **KOMIZO** what is done in the body.

(a) We will bring what we have done with us as exiles bring their story. The Lord loves you-He will listen!

(b)We will hear those things the LORD has to say. This verb means *to attend to what is to be done*

(c) We will take back those relationships for good that had gone bad. This verb means to "get a son back"

(d)We will reap the reward of fruitful lives. This verb means to "receive a prize" (or gracious rebuke)

When you get there listen and worship-**take a loving suppliant's look at the marks He bore for you!** Trust for His kindness. Throw yourself on HIS mercy. Speak true of His grace & care!

6. STARS DIFFER

(1) Let us now proceed to **1 Corinthians 15.42ff**. The first matter of importance is that when Paul draws our attention to the stars, we are reminded that as Daniel says we shall shine for ever and ever. But how brightly? The apostle uses the word OUTO in Greek. *"Exactly so" we shall all shine but there will be degrees of glory.*

(2) Corruption Dishonour Weakness -all these are ours in the here and now. In eternity we will know no decay and no sin will continue to hold dominion over us. Instead of lack of dignity we shall shine - and such a dynamic as we never before knew will attend our endless days of joy and praise.

(3) This body will be undeniably PNEUMATION-it will be activated by things of the Spirit-its first port of call the praise of God-it will live for its redeemer in will, thought, feeling, every word and every action. Self will be for ever dethroned.

(4) The "earthly" man is gone-that "rubbish" that attaches to the term CHOIKOS is no more. We shall be as "The Heavenly Man". Not OIOS TE-possibly alike nor OIOS TIS generally like-but OIOS truly like Jesus.

(5) We carried the burden of the earthly image-and just as we bore Adam's likeness in detail so we shall bear that of our heavenly Christ. The word EPOURANOS indicates that the intermediate likeness shall be cancelled in favour of a direct image of the LORD. The word means "only the heavenly". We have no longer an Adam or sinful nature.

7. HOW ARE THE DEAD WHEN THEY ARE RAISED?

Paul said, someone will ask this question-so let's answer it.

"With what body do they come?" 1 Cor 15 55

(1) The first fruits *resurrection men* at the tomb were seen and they were clad in shining robes Mark 16.5 & Luke 24.4-5.

(2) Christ Himself appeared in a number of forms. It is not to be taken that this is a miraculous characteristic to be gifted to glorified saints. Yet shall we be **directly dependent on Christ** for our new

body. The genetic code of our life in so far as it is needed is in God's book-**Psalm 103 14 & Psalm 139.16**. God does not **clone us** from some parts of the present body.

(3) We shall be clothed upon as previously explained and this by Christ who is "the Resurrection and the Life".

(4) We do not sow the body in death that we reap in life. We cannot depend upon it that what we have now is what we shall always have in detail of form or maintenance. The belly and meat digesting system will be "destroyed" and not retained-**1Corinthians 6.13** God gives us a body "as HE wills" so that imperfections are not going to be repeated and the genetic string is not going to dictate long repeated faults. Reproductive organs change **Luke 20.35** cf No.1

(5) We shall enjoy *spring like* life. A "first-fruits resurrection man" at the tomb was described as a "*young man*" **Mark 16.5**. Eternal life is **ZOE life-spring like -at its best**

(6) It *will not be flesh with blood* cf **1Cor 15.50** Nevertheless it must be in the image and human form of Christ but as to its **substantial constitution** we know that "**we shall be like Him**"**Phil.3.21**. **He retained flesh & bone with the capacity to eat and digest. We "like Him" shall share such enfranchisement.** In paragraph 8 further some further details are given.

(7) Will we know one another? We will do better-we will quickly get to know our fellows from every age and most certainly we shall know each other. There need not be "Emmaus Road" recognition difficulties. Our eyes will be enabled-**we shall know "fully" as we are fully known.1Cor13.12**. The most intimate and excellent aids to recognition are the eyes and the voice. We shall "see" Jesus and we shall hear his "well done". These faculties will be prepared for eternity and will be sharper than ever here.

8. THE SUBSTANCE-FACTS WE POSSESS

1. We know it to be foolish to think that bare grain we sow will be what we reap. **1Cor 15.37** Paul writes "When you sow you do not plant that body that shall be".

2. We know what we are now must undergo change- however painless- should Christ appear to take His church home by voice of command cf.1 Thess. 4.16 We also know that we shall "all" be changed-**1Cor 15 51-52**

3. We do not know fully what "change" means but it involves **the atomic or even sub-atomic structure** of matter of our bodies is almost inevitable-if flesh **and blood** is not to inherit eternal life.
1Cor 15 51-52 2Cor 3.18

4. We know that God gives the resurrection body and it is "as He **has** willed" ETHELESE-there is an understanding here of that which is "in keeping with nature" of his sovereign creation plan for you.

5. We know that "to each is given **its own body**". The word is SPERMATON-thus the distinctives of parentage -or **your origins at conception**-are wonderfully and gloriously preserved in **the act of God in resurrection** by which the Lord rebuilds your frame just as He built it "curiously" in the womb in the **process of gestation**.

Psalms 139.15

6. We know from the Spirit speaking through David that the bone structure and strength of our body AZAM was known to God when we were "made to be allowed to go back to earth." There are things which inspire both reverence and terror about our creation.

NORAOH There is that which is "extraordinary"

"distinct/separate" "difficult (in our own eyes)" and "wonderful" in what we become. That embryonic "rolling together" GALAM was "seen by God's eyes" **Psalms 139 15**. He knows the process-preserves the mathematical "string" of huge detail in HIS book-**before** they - "the body details" and "days (of conception birth death and resurrection)" **had been formed** YUTZARU.

7. We know that God had foreseen better for us than the OT saints were being provided in full or receiving as they departed this life in Sheol of the departed. He who led captivity captive **Ephesians 4.7 & Psalms 68.18** from the "nether world" **κατωτερα Ephesians 4.9** gifted men with the hope of "heaven" after what was called the "harrowing of hell"-announcing as captain of salvagion the "spear-point" of "Spirit victory" of Christ in all realms. That is linked to the

"having been made perfect" τελειωθωσιν (aor. pass) of **Hebrews**
11.40

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