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The Resurrection of the Dead
15: 1-58



If **Chapter 13** is the great "**love** chapter" and **Hebrews 11** is the great "**faith** chapter," then this is the great "**resurrection** chapter." Unlike most of **First Corinthians**, **Chapter 15** is devoted entirely to doctrine, and to a single doctrine at that. In **these 58 verses, Paul** gives the most extensive treatment of **the resurrection** in all of Scripture. Just as the heart pumps life-giving blood to every part of the body, so the truth of **the resurrection** gives life to every other area of the Gospel. **The resurrection** is the pivot on which all believers turn, and without which none of the other truths in the Bible would matter much. Without **the resurrection**, our faith would be so much wishful thinking, taking its place alongside all other human philosophy and religious speculation.

Because it is the cornerstone of the gospel, **the resurrection** has been the target of Satan's greatest attacks against the Church. If **the resurrection** were to be eliminated, the life-giving power of the gospel would be eliminated, the deity of **Messiah** eliminated, salvation from sin eliminated, and eternal life eliminated. **If it is only for this life that we have put our hope in Messiah, we are more pitiful than anyone (15:19).** If **Messiah** did not live past the grave, those who trust in **Him** surely cannot hope to do so.[475]

Apparently, in spite of sitting under **Paul's** teaching for **eighteen months**, some of

the believers of the church in **Corinth** were confused by **false teachers** who claimed apostolic authority (see the commentary on **Second Corinthians Af – The Problem of the False Apostles**) who had infiltrated **their** congregation. Those **false teachers** had sowed seeds of confusion about **the resurrection** of **Messiah**. Consequently, some in the congregation actually denied belief in **the resurrection**. The truth of **the resurrection** had doctrinal and practical implications for life that were too important to ignore. **Paul** dealt with the issue head-on.

Others were confused about the nature of **the resurrection**, both **Messiah's** and theirs. In response, **Paul** devoted a full **fifty-eight verses** to straightening out their misunderstanding of **the** bodily **resurrection** of all of **Yeshua's** followers, ending with the victory chant borrowed from **Isaiah 25:8** and **Hosea 13:14, "When what decays puts on imperishability and what is mortal puts on immortality, then this passage will be fulfilled, "Death is swallowed up in victory. Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?"**

The resurrection of **Messiah** is absolutely central to the gospel – the Good News that **God** can save sinners. As **Paul** later wrote in this chapter**, "If the Messiah has not been raised, your trust is useless, and you are still in your sins (15:17).** It's no wonder, then, that much of the attack of our adversary – the devil – is aimed directly at **the resurrection**. Corrupt the message of **the resurrection** and you corrupt the message of the gospel itself. Remove the foundation of **the resurrection** of **Messiah**, and the Church will crumble under its own weight. Everything we hold near and dear rises or falls on the reality of **the resurrection**.[476]