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What You Need to Know in Regard to Easter

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW IN REGARD TO EASTER AS DESCRIBED IN FIRST CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION:

This chapter provides for us the most detailed historical and theological overview of the Resurrection in the entire Bible! READ IT, HEED IT, AND LIVE BY IT!

A. The Prominence of the Resurrection (15:1-4)

1. The resurrection of Christ is the focal point in reference to salvation (15:1,2)
2. The resurrection of Christ is the focal point in reference to the scriptures (15:3, 4)

B. The Proofs of the Resurrection (15:5-11)

The various appearances of the risen Christ are offered as proof.

1. His appearance to Peter (15:1-4)
2. His appearance to the apostles with Thomas absent (15:5)
3. His appearance to 500 disciples (15:6)
4. His appearance to James, the half-brother of Christ (15:7a)
5. His appearance to the apostles with Thomas present (15:7b)
6. His appearance to Paul (15:8-11)
 - a. The unworthiness of Paul (15:8, 9). It was Paul who had once persecuted the church!
 - b. The unmerited favor of God (15:10, 11). It was grace that made Paul what he was.

C. The Protest Against the Resurrection (15:12-19, 29-34)

This doctrine was under attack then as it is today!

1. The charge (15:12). In essence, the enemies of the gospel were denying it.
2. The conclusions (15:13-19, 29-32). If there is no resurrection, then one must be forced to accept the following horrible conclusions:
 - a. In regard to Christ (15:13, 16). The Easter story is a lie!
 - b. In regard to gospel preaching (15:14a). It is unclear and vain.
 - c. In regard to gospel preachers (15:15). They continue to propagate the lie.
 - d. In regard to living believers.
 - (1) Our trust in God is empty, worthless and hopeless (15:14b).
 - (2) We are still in our sins (15:17).
 - (3) We are the most miserable of all creatures (15:19).
 - e. In regard to departed believers (15:32). They are forever dead, never to rise again.
 - f. In regard to this present life (15:32). *"Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die!"*

3. The chastening (15:33, 34). Paul rebukes those Christians who had been listening to the lies of unbelievers concerning the resurrection.

D. The Program of the Resurrection (15:20-28)

1. The two representatives (15:21, 22).
 - a. The first Adam brought about ruin and death.
 - b. The second Adam brings about resurrection and deliverance!
2. The three resurrections.
 - a. The resurrection of Christ (15:20, 23a).
 - b. The rapture resurrection (15:23b).
 - c. The resurrection of Old Testament and tribulational saints (15:24a).
3. The ten-century reign (15:24-28).
 - a. The final enemy will be destroyed! This terrible foe is physical death.
 - b. The future kingdom will be established.

E. The Pattern of the Resurrection (15:35-41)

Paul illustrates the differences between the earthly and heavenly body through several analogies:

1. The difference between a planted seed and a harvested seed (15:36-38)
2. The difference between animal flesh and human flesh (15:39)
3. The difference between the moon and the sun (15:40, 41)

F. The Perfection of the Resurrection (15:42-44)

Here is described the superiority of the new body to that of the old.

1. The old body:
 - a. It is sown a perishable body (15:42a)
 - b. It is sown in dishonor (15:43a)
 - c. It is sown in weakness (15:43c)
 - d. It is sown a natural body (15:44a)
 - e. It is sown bearing the likeness of the first Adam (15:49a)
2. The new body:
 - a. It will be raised imperishable (15:42b)
 - b. It will be raised in glory (15:43b)
 - c. It will be raised in power (15:43d)
 - d. It will be raised a spiritual body (15:44)
 - e. It will be raised bearing the likeness of the second Adam (15:49b)

G. The Promise of the Resurrection (15:50-58)

1. The situation requiring this promise (15:50). Flesh and blood cannot inherit God's Kingdom.
2. The secret associated with this promise (15:51). In essence, all believers alive at Christ's coming will go to heaven without dying!
3. The suddenness of this promise (15:52a). *"In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye."*
4. The signal introducing this promise (15:52b). *"The trumpet shall sound."*
5. The schedule of this promise (15:52c, 53).
 - a. The corrupting bodies of departed believers will receive incorruptible ones.
 - b. The mortal bodies of living believers will receive immortal ones.
7. The scriptures predicting this promise (15:54-57). Both Old Testament prophets Isaiah (25:8), and Hosea (13:14) wrote of this.
8. The strength derived from this promise (15:58). Because of the resurrection, no labor done for the Lord will be in vain.

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