

A STUDY OF FIRST CORINTHIANS 15

(PART 1: INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL)

Is the concept of resurrection taught or even referred to in the Old Testament? W. R. West wrote what most of us have been raised to believe: "There was some light given in the Old Testament on the afterlife, but the doctrine of the resurrection, life, and immortality, which Christ taught, were new" (robertwr.com/resurrection.pdf).

Next Question: Should we use the Old Testament to help us interpret the New Testament? Or should we use the New Testament to help us interpret the Old Testament?

Most today claim we should use the new to interpret the old, not vice versa. Contrariwise, however, under other circumstances, these same folks will quote this old man-devised adage: "The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, while the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed." Hmmm. Well...

I of course think that we shouldn't limit ourselves to either; i.e., we should allow all of the Bible to assist in interpreting all of the Bible. Besides, God commended the Bereans for using Old Testament Scripture to verify the teaching of the miracle-working apostle Paul. So doing such clearly isn't a flawed practice; in fact, it actually seems more logical to use that which is older, well known, and accepted to assist in the understanding and confirmation of that which is new. Don't ya think? So...

Concerning the subject of resurrection in the New Testament, should we read our ideas of it into the prophets? Or shouldn't we rather be sure that the teachings of the prophets determine our ideas of the resurrection (if indeed they did allude to this topic)?

This is, in fact, what I believe Paul did in reference to the very theme under consideration: Let's read Acts 21:27-28, 24:14-15, 26:6-8, and 21-23. So...

Not only do we find that Paul's teaching concerning the resurrection was founded in the holy writings of the Old Testament, but (and it's only logical) *all* of his teaching concerning biblical eschatology was founded in "the Law and the Prophets": Acts 14:19, 17:4, 18:4, and 19:26 for examples clearly inform us that he went into the synagogues each sabbath in order to persuade his people, Israel, by using that which was found in their own sacred scrolls. In fact, think about this:

If Paul had been providing completely new revelation on the resurrection, information that couldn't be found in the Old Testament, why don't we have a record of the Jews disputing his claim that he was teaching "nothing" but what Moses and the prophets said was (in Paul's own time) about to be fulfilled? The simple truth is this:

If we don't realize/admit that Paul did indeed reference Old Testament Scripture when he taught on the topic of the resurrection, establishing the background for a fair-minded study of the controversial chapter of First Corinthians 15, then we may as well discontinue our study right here! ... But, if you're still with me, then...

With all of this behind us, it should be no shock whatsoever when I say that Paul even referred to Hebrew Scripture when he penned First Corinthians 15, even alluding directly to Isaiah 25 and Hosea 13.

Referring back to what we read in Acts 21, 24, and 26, consider this: When Paul preached the hope of Israel based on the Old Testament's teaching of the resurrection, the people took it as an attack on the Jews, the Law, and the temple. Why? I've taught on the resurrection from First Corinthians 15 and was never accused of attacking the Jews, the Law, or the temple. So what's the connection? Could it be that it was because we haven't preached the hope of the resurrection from Moses and the prophets like Paul did? Yet that's the Gospel he preached! See...

Paul's concept of the resurrection wasn't that corpses would come out of holes in the ground at all, because that's not what Moses and the prophets spoke/wrote about! Think about it: Have you ever heard anyone preach a sermon on the resurrection and even refer to Hebrew Scripture? Yet that was Paul's foundation for what he taught.

The Old Testament foretold the resurrection quite a number of times, not the popular view of corpses poppin' up out of the ground, but a lot about the resurrection of Israel and the results of that event for every human who ever lived and would ever live. The prophets spoke of how Israel would die, be planted like a seed, and, via its viable remnant, be resurrected/transformed, which is why Paul could quote his conclusion in First Corinthians 15 from Isaiah 25 and Hosea 13, two chapters that deal with the time of fulfillment of all things which ultimately fell at the occasion of the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem with its temple.

Besides Isaiah 25 and Hosea 13 (which we'll get to later in our study of First Corinthians 15), there are other Old Testament passages which deal with resurrection (even if that particular term isn't employed):

Ezekiel 37 refers to the death of Israel, with God telling her in verse 5 that He would cause breath to enter her that she might come to life.

Daniel 9:26-27 speak of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, a passage to which Jesus referred in Matthew 24, stating that it would be fulfilled in His generation (vv. 15 & 34); then in Daniel 12:2 (a verse Jesus referred to in Mat. 13:43), Daniel foretold of a national resurrection which would occur when the power of the holy people would be completely shattered (v. 7). In fact...

If one really wants to get technical, not only did Isaiah, Hosea, Ezekiel, and Daniel speak of this resurrection, but, according to Peter in Acts 3:24, "All the prophets, from Samuel and those who followed, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days," the days of ... as he put it ... refreshment and restoration (vv. 19-21).

What's also intriguing is that hardly any (if any) scholars have ever taken such Old Testament passages as even alluding to the modern teaching of the raising of stiffs from the graves, that which we've always heard concerning First Corinthians 15. More accurately I think is the following: Israel was dead, destroyed, and in captivity to their sin; so if they were going to be saved, there had to be a resurrection which would transpire when God destroyed Jerusalem, redeeming the righteous from death and destroying the impenitent.

In our introduction so far we've shown that Paul's doctrine of resurrection was based on Old Testament teaching; in fact, he specifically said, "I have stood witnessing both to small and great, saying *nothing* besides the things that both the *prophets* and *Moses* spoke of as about to come" to pass (Acts 26:22, YLT). So...

Now that, to some extent, we've discussed resurrection in the Old Testament and Paul's allusion to such in the book of Acts, let's (before we get directly involved in First Corinthians 15 itself) spend some time focusing on this letter in general.

Keeping in mind, as pretty much everyone agrees, that the resurrection is directly associated with Jesus' coming in judgment (2 Tim. 4:1), let's consider Paul's many time statements in First Corinthians.

1:4 & 7-8: "I thank my God always ... that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Firstly, notice that these brethren lacked none of the miraculous gifts. Secondly, they were eagerly awaiting their Lord's revelation. Thirdly, they were eagerly awaiting the day of the Lord. And... Fourthly, they knew Jesus' coming would be at the end. Now...

Isn't it interesting that Paul indicated miraculous gifts would last until Jesus returned? Do we have miracles today? No. So what should that tell us about Jesus' coming? Well, not only does such signify that He's already come, but Paul's language to these brethren in Corinth in the AD 50s also indicates that he expected (at least some of) them to be alive when Jesus came, having had the power of miraculous gifts until that time.

4:5: "Judge nothing before the time [what time?], until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts; and then each one's praise will come from God."

Firstly, if we read starting back at verse 1, we see that Paul was saying, "Don't make judgments about me right now, for all about me will be made clear once the Lord has come"; i.e., Paul and what he taught would be vindicated.

Secondly, from the way this statement reads, notice how it's implied that *after* Jesus has come they'd be capable of judging Paul's motives and teachings righteously, implying that they'd still be alive after that event.

7:26-31 [Read]

Firstly, isn't it noteworthy that Paul used the same language here that Jesus used in Matthew 24:19-22 concerning His coming, indicating that what was happening in the AD 50s was partly in fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy? [Read]

Secondly, if the coming and end implied in this First Corinthians 7 passage hasn't yet occurred, then shouldn't we still be advising folks to remain unmarried, even though that 2000-year-old "distress" is past and gone?

10:5-11 [Read]

Firstly, notice that Paul applied the typology of what occurred in Old Testament times with those brethren in *that* time: "our" (vv. 6 & 11), "we" (v. 6), implied "you" (v. 7), and "us" (vv. 8-9).

Secondly, it's clearly important here to emphasize Paul's last statement: Just as the end of slavery to Egypt and the giving of the law of Moses came upon Israel before entering Canaan, so the end of slavery to sin and the giving of the law of Christ came upon those Christians before/at AD 70: Paul wrote, upon *us* "the ends of the ages have come" (v. 11). Now...

Heading back to the idea of miraculous gifts...

13:9-10: "We know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away."

Firstly, this passage indicates that, since miracles no longer exist, that which is perfect has come! When? When Jesus came and brought it, of course.

Secondly, keeping the pronoun "we" in mind, Paul was patently speaking of something that applied to them in their time, something that they would experience, corresponding perfectly back to 1:7, viz. that Jesus would confirm them with miracles until the end—when He'd return.

At this point, let's just consider more relevancies for chapter 15 throughout this letter.

Especially from 1:10-13 & 3:3-9, it's plain that the main issue in First Corinthians was dissension among Christians in Corinth, dissension related to problems between Hebrew and non-Hebrew Christians, between those who thought Peter (the apostle to the Jews) and Paul (the apostle to the Gentiles) had essentially created different Christian groups by teaching different things when they actually weren't.

In chapter 1 Paul condemned their division, thanking God that he had not baptized any more than he had since that noticeably only fueled the fire.

In chapter 2 he demonstrated that he was no greater than the other apostles, especially Peter, in order to tone down the Paul-Party; these folks, as we'll see later in First Corinthians 15, were denying the resurrection of/to "some."

In chapter 3 he explained how all the apostles built upon the one and only foundation—Jesus Christ; some just seeded, while others watered.

In chapter 4 he ended this section against their sectarian attitudes by warning them to not be making rash judgments concerning apostolic authority matters or against each other until the Lord came, by/at which time they would better understand all things.

In chapter 5 he dealt with the idea that those with whom they shouldn't associate were flagrant sinners like fornicators, not those who were merely Hebrew or non-Hebrew in origin; racism is condemned by God.

In chapter 6 he, in the same vein as chapter 5, touched on the matter of unrighteously judging one another and how that *sinner*s wouldn't be allowed into the kingdom, having nothing to do with their genetic makeups.

In chapter 7 he spoke of matters associated with "the present distress" that God's people were under (and which would only get worse), implying that they, whether Hebrew or non-Hebrew, were &/or would all be the recipients of persecution and should therefore be sticking together, not fighting among themselves.

In chapter 8 he wrote concerning Jewish and Gentile differences when it came to the eating of meats, mainly teaching them how they should treat one another when they disagreed.

In chapter 9 he spent time defending himself against those who had wrongly accused him in matters concerning his behavior toward Jews and Gentiles.

In chapter 10, somewhat related to chapter 8, he discussed the attitude of some of the Gentile Christians toward their Jewish brethren and how that the Lord's supper was a meal that was supposed to picture unity, not division.

In chapter 11 he continued discussing the Lord's supper and how that they would've been better off not even observing it if they weren't going to do so properly, viz. by including each other in it without animosity.

In chapters 12—14 he discussed their competitiveness over spiritual gifts and that they were abusing those in somewhat the same way they were the supper.

In chapter 15 he dealt with their conflict over who would and would not be resurrected, something, incidentally, that's connected with the subject of miracles in chapters 12—14. Why? Because Ezekiel 37 as well as Joel 2 tie the giving of the Spirit (with His miraculous gifts) to the resurrection of Israel; so while non-Hebrew Christians were given/allowed the use of these gifts as well, some of them were turning around and denying the resurrection of some of Israel who were promised the Spirit and His gifts. Lastly...

In chapter 16 he encouraged the Gentile Christians to make a collection of funds for their Jewish-brethren-in-need to help heal their strife, something God hates.

Let's keep this theme of dissension between Hebrew and non-Hebrew Christians of that first-generation church in mind for our next installment of these studies when we'll actually get right into First Corinthians 15.

A STUDY OF FIRST CORINTHIANS 15

(PART 2: VERSES 1-19)

Let me say right off here that in this paragraph it wasn't Paul's purpose to prove that Jesus was raised from the dead or even that there was to be a resurrection of dead ones in general; rather, his goal was to prove that *all the apostles were actually in agreement—even on the resurrection*. So please humor me for now, and allow that theme to infuse your mind as we consider these initial verses; for if that was indeed Paul's point, then...

It endorses the main point of this letter—that they had no grounds for being divided over what God-inspired men (e.g. Peter & Paul) taught ... even about the resurrection.

Verses 1-2: Brethren, I declare to you the Gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you're saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

Firstly, notice that Paul called these folks who had accepted the Gospel message "brethren," indicating that, although they had problems among themselves—even over the resurrection of the dead, *none of them were expressing a problem with the resurrection of Christ*. In fact...

In 1:7 Paul said that they believed in the coming revelation of Christ, and in 4:5 he said that they believed in Christ's return; furthermore, they didn't doubt their *own* resurrection. But we'll soon see what they *were* denying concerning the resurrection.

Although Paul jumped all over the "some" in this chapter concerning what they were saying, isn't it interesting he still recognized them all as "brethren"? If the popular view of this chapter is true—that "some" were denying the resurrection of Christ &/or denying resurrection in general, do we really believe he would've continued to affectionately refer to them as his "brethren"? Would we call such folks "brethren"? Certainly Not! In fact, I hardly think Paul (or anyone else for that matter) would've baptized anyone who denied the resurrection!

Secondly, to remind ourselves of our introductory material, Paul's preaching on the resurrection was based on nothing but the teaching of Moses and the prophets, and Moses and the prophets knew nothing about a resurrection of corpses out of holes in the ground; yet Paul said he preached what they preached or wrote about, and—on top of that—such is what the Corinthian brethren had "received." So...

These brethren knew much more about Moses and the prophets when it comes to resurrection than we generally do today; so unless we acquire the knowledge of the same background they had, we can't possibly grasp Paul's teaching in this chapter. Can We?

At the end of this chapter, Paul appealed for the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophets, including Isaiah 25 and Hosea 13; again, no one on Earth interprets those prophecies as having reference to physical, bodily resurrections! So...

Since Paul didn't preach another gospel to the Corinthians, we shouldn't expect that he advocated something that the prophets never taught; yet when folks today are asked what their hope of resurrection is, we hardly ever, if ever, hear the same answer Paul provided—that his hope of the resurrection was based on nothing but what Moses and the prophets said would come (Acts 26:22).

Verses 3-4: For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

These "Scriptures" would naturally be the Old Testament Scriptures. Right? Certainly! And of course we can find a number of passages which foretold the death of the Messiah (e.g. Isa. 53 & Psa. 16). However...

Even though we may find various passages concerning the Messiah's death, burial, and resurrection, only one Old Testament passage touches on His resurrection transpiring on "the third day": Hosea 6:1-2 have Hosea saying to God's Old Covenant people, "Come and let us return to the Lord; for He has torn, but He'll heal us; He has stricken, but He'll bind us up. After two days He'll revive us; on the third day He'll raise us up that we may live in His sight." Notice {1} this passage actually speaks of the resurrection of Old Covenant Israel, not Messiah Jesus proper; but {2} since Paul said that Christ's resurrection happened according to the Scriptures, and since Hosea 6:1-2 is the only passage that speaks of the resurrection of anyone on the third day, then Hosea must also have been speaking of Christ in the sense that He's God's Israel ... or at least was/is the representation of true Israel (cf. Gal. 6:16).

This very application by Paul is a hint at who was being denied resurrection by "some" at Corinth; i.e., they weren't seeing that Jesus was (true) Israel and that (true) Israel was Jesus or epitomized within Him—the two cannot be separated. Anyway, we'll get more into this later. Getting back to Hosea for a moment...

I think it's important to be aware of a literary device called *inclusio* in which two related references in a text "book-end" or encompass the concepts presented in another text that contains references to the first text. I.e., here, for example...

Paul alluded to Hosea 6 at the beginning of his resurrection discussion (v. 4), then Hosea 13 at the end of his resurrection discussion (v. 55), indicating to his readers that First Corinthians 15 as a whole is essentially a treatise or commentary on at least Hosea 6–13. And...

This is demonstrated by the fact that Paul's teaching in First Corinthians 15 can be found in its underlying book of Hosea: {1} sowing/planting of Israel, God's seed in 1:4 (Hosea's first child, "Jezreel," means "God sows," cf. 2:23); {2} as a seed, Israel died in 1:5; {3} a harvest was appointed at the resurrection in 6:11 & 13:14 (quoted in 1 Cor. 15:55); {4} Adam's death and transgressing of the covenant in 6:7 & 13:1; and then {5} Israel as the firstfruits in 9:10.

Verse 5: And that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.

Peter, the apostle to the Jews, the one some were calling/naming themselves after, was the first one Paul brought up here. But, even so...

Peter wasn't the only one to whom Jesus appeared after His resurrection, as Paul's chronological list goes on to demonstrate, beginning with the twelve.

Verses 6-9: After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that he was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of all the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

Even though Paul also was privileged to be an eye-witness of Jesus after His resurrection, he devalued himself, probably in order to take another shot at those who comprised the Paul-party there.

The point seems pretty clear that all the apostles and even non-apostles were of the same standing in that all of these folks were eye-witnesses of Jesus' after His resurrection. And...

Who was Jesus again according to verse 4? That's right: Israel. All these folks witnessed, in this contextual sense, the resurrection of Israel in Christ. It was only left for those of the remnant to accept their place within that Israel-Messiah before His return to demolish His rejecters.

Verses 10-11: But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I but the grace of God that was with me. Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

By the term "therefore," Paul stated his conclusion to the first section of this chapter: his argument was not that Christ died, was resurrected, or that the Corinthians would be resurrected, for they already believed those things; rather, he summarized his point by stating that all the apostles preached the same Gospel—they were all united on their Gospel, including its teaching on resurrection, and they were all preaching it from Moses and the prophets.

Peter and Paul weren't divided, only the Peter-party and the Paul-party were! How much sense did it make for the Corinthians to divide over it? As we saw in verses 1-2, the Corinthians had received the universal teaching of the apostles, embraced it, and stood in it (cf. 1 Cor. 3:5-9).

Whether or not the Corinthians believed in resurrection wasn't the issue, since Paul said they did; but, as we'll see in our study of verses 12-19, the problem at hand was that "some" were denying resurrection of/to *certain* dead ones. Again...

Paul preached the hope of Israel from Moses and the prophets, the resurrection of Israel at the coming of Christ in judgment ca. AD 70. Now...

Before we examine Paul's argument based on the consequences of the belief of some of the Corinthians about the resurrection, we need to understand a Greek verb tense and a Greek voice that Paul's readers used in their everyday language.

Once Paul got into the meat of his argument, he used this verb tense and voice in *numerous* statements, meaning that we cannot grasp the power of his argumentation if we fail to comprehend the implications of this tense and voice.

In most of our translations, the present, past, and perfect tenses are translated well, but in First Corinthians 15 the present tense with the passive voice has *not* been well translated in most versions. Why? Well (although I admit it's a judgment-call), once we see what Paul was saying in an accurate translation, I think it'll become apparent that there was/is translator bias involved.

While the present tense with an *active* voice indicates what the subject *is doing*, the present tense with a *passive* voice indicates what's *being done to* the subject; but as we consider this chapter, we'll see times when a passive is changed into an active or even *worse* when a present is changed into a future. What? Don't believe that such gall exists? Well, let me share a couple of cases with you right now.

1. Most versions translate the present passive phrase *ei vekroi ouk egeirontai* in verse 32 like this: "If the dead do not rise." Did you notice that the translation isn't passive, but active? I.e., instead of something being done *to* the dead (i.e. the dead being passive in the action), the dead are doing something of their own accord (i.e. they're activating themselves). Here's how it should be translated: "If the dead are not being raised." So why would translators alter the voice in this phrase? Because to retain the passive voice with the present tense one must translate this phrase in such a fashion that it indicates an action in the process of occurring at the time of the writing; i.e., Paul was arguing that "the dead are being raised" when he wrote First Corinthians!
2. Most versions translate the present tense sentence *eschatos echthros katarkeitai ho thanatos* in verse 26 as "The last enemy that'll be destroyed is death." Did you notice how the present tense was changed to the future tense? Now notice how this present tense statement should be translated: "The last enemy—death—is being destroyed [or more literally, is being made ineffective]." Even in my *Kingdom Interlinear*, a book which, in my experience so far, nearly always retains the tense of the original in its translation on the side, exchanged the present tense for the future. Why do that unless it's because it just doesn't correspond to one's theology or traditional belief? Well...

We'll encounter numerous other cases of mistranslation in this chapter as we continue on in our studies. Right now let's review some things from our previous discussions: {1} the main problem in the church at Corinth was division, division primarily between a Peter-party and a Paul-party over misunderstandings concerning the missions and teachings of those two eminent apostles; {2} Paul's resurrection theology was rooted in the Old Testament and its promise of the resurrection of Israel—without which all others could not claim and enjoy the same; and {3} Paul demonstrated in verses 1-11 that he and Peter (as well as all the other apostles) were actually in agreement on what they taught, implying that these Corinthian Christians should also be in agreement, but obviously they weren't. So now...

Let's consider Paul's continuing argumentation in verses 12-19. (I'm going to be reading these verses in a more literal fashion than found in our regular versions.)

Verses 12-13: Since Christ is being preached that He has been raised out from among [the] dead ones, why are some of you saying that there is (present tense) no resurrecting of [the] dead ones? But if there is (present tense) no resurrecting of [the] dead ones, then Christ also hasn't been raised. So...

The resurrection problem at Corinth was that some Christians there were denying resurrection to "dead ones." And who were these "dead ones" exactly?

Were they the dead in general? Nope, because in verse 18 Paul said, "Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished." See, by the term "also" Paul was clearly referring to another group, and by the phrase "fallen asleep in Christ" we discover that this group was made up of Christians who had died (cf. v. 6), while the "dead ones" were not "in Christ." Next question...

Were the "dead ones" of verse 12 comprised of both saint and sinner? Nope, because in verse 20 Paul wrote that "Christ has been raised out from among [the] dead ones, having become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep."

By the phrase "raised up out from among the dead ones," Paul was saying that Jesus was once part of the group to which these *some* at Corinth were denying resurrection, thus those "dead ones" must have been dead saints. And...

By the clause that Jesus has "become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep," Paul, who I believe had here merged the groups of verses 12 & 18 into one, was implying that, since Jesus was the firstfruits of this combined group, the rest of them would likewise be raised, meaning that they were also saints. (Interestingly, 1 Cor. 15 never even deals with unbelievers.) So...

Since the resurrection-deniers weren't denying resurrection to those who had died "in Christ," then what group of people can we come up with who would be considered saints but not "in Christ"? That's right—people who lived faithful to God *before* Christ came on the scene, which of course would very much upset Hebrew Christians. So...

Due to our introductory remarks about the prevailing problems in Corinth between Jewish and Gentile Christians, I believe Paul here (just as in Rom. 9–11) was dealing with the Gentile position that Old Covenant saints (those they seem to have called "dead ones" here) wouldn't be allowed a portion in the resurrection. So...

The First Consequence Paul mentioned for not accepting the truth that faithful pre-Gospel, pre-experiencing-of-the-Spirit Israelites would be included in the resurrection is that, since Jesus Himself was an Old Covenant faithful (being born under the Law, etc.), they had to also deny that Christ Himself had risen from among those dead ones who would follow His lead in resurrection (something he gets into in verse 20).

Verses 14-16: If Christ hasn't been raised, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain. Moreover, we're found false witnesses of God, because we've testified of Him that He raised up Christ whom He didn't raise up—if in fact [the] dead ones aren't being raised. For if [the] dead ones aren't being raised, then Christ hasn't been raised. So...

The Second Consequence Paul stated is in verse 14, viz. that Paul's preaching was all in vain, since (as we noted earlier in the book of Acts) it was rooted in the hope of Israel's resurrection (something the Paul-party obviously misunderstood).

The Third Consequence Paul stated is also in verse 14, viz. that if Israelites were denied resurrection, then non-Israelites also couldn't/wouldn't be resurrected, for it was to the Jew first, then to the Greek and so on; Jesus said that salvation (which is bound up in resurrection and vice versa) was/is of the Jews (John 4:22).

The Fourth Consequence Paul mentioned is in verse 15, viz. that the apostles were all false witnesses, and that would include of course Paul as well as Peter. Lastly for our study in this session...

Verses 17-19: If Christ hasn't been raised, your faith is futile, and you're still in your sins! In fact, even those who've fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we're of all men the most pitiable. So...

The Fifth Consequence Paul mentioned is in verse 17, viz. that the Corinthians were still in their sins if in fact the dead ones, the Old Covenant faithful like poor Daniel (12:13), were disallowed their promised resurrection. (This essentially means the same thing as what he said in verse 14 concerning how that, by denying resurrection to Israel, they were thereby denying it to/for themselves and thus also everyone else!)

The Sixth Consequence Paul brought up is in verse 18, viz. that if his preaching were false, then all those in Christ who had died (which of course included Gentile as well as Jewish Christians) have just been lost, since there was no resurrection for them.

Paul finished up this section in verse 19 by indicating that not only are the apostles all false teachers, but they're also—of all men—the most to be pitied for suffering as they were, essentially, for a sham (cf. vv. 29-32)! But it wasn't a sham—there was "hope in Christ," Paul said; and he always connected resurrection-hope with the hope of Israel's resurrection to life (cf. Acts 23:6, 24:15, 26:6-7, & 28:20).

Side-Note: Notice that Paul didn't say anything about "what" was involved in resurrection (such as "bodies" for souls or spirits, etc.)—it's all been about "who" was involved.

A STUDY OF FIRST CORINTHIANS 15

(PART 3: VERSES 20-25)

After addressing the Gentile Christians about the logical consequences of their rejection of the resurrection of pre-Christian saints (and I believe "the dead ones" were limited to those saints because of Paul's usage of Hosea's prophecies about Old Covenant Israel in this chapter), Paul turned to discuss positive things concerning the resurrection and kingship of Jesus.

As we begin this study, let's keep in mind that Adam died two deaths: relationally the day he sinned and biologically centuries later; likewise, Jesus died two deaths: biologically on the cross and relationally when God forsook Him when He bore our sin (Mark 15:34). (I'll again be reading our text verses in a more literal fashion than found in our regular versions.)

Verse 20: Now Christ has been raised out from among [the] dead ones, having become the firstfruit of those who've fallen asleep.

In the last section I mentioned how that I believe Paul was combining into one body (the body of Christ, as it were, spiritual Israel) both the "dead ones" of verse 12 and those "fallen asleep in Christ" of verse 18, indicating their solidarity. Why? Because if Old Covenant Israel (i.e. the "dead ones" of v. 12) didn't get hers (i.e. the fulfillment of her promise for new/spiritual life [via resurrection, of course]), then New Covenant Israel wouldn't even come into existence, much less be given eternal/spiritual life (also via resurrection, of course). So, with that in mind...

The sleeping crowd of verse 20 comprised the saints who had, as we say today, passed away, whether they lived before or after Christ's resurrection (and therefore obviously prior to Paul's writing of First Corinthians); and Jesus, as the head of that group/body, was the firstfruit or the first to rise from among the dead ones who, as His people, would, logically, follow Him in resurrection.

This is reminiscent of Hebrews 2:5-17; but, although we'll try to get back to that passage more at length later, verse 10 is especially relevant here: "It was fitting for [God] ... in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Author of their salvation [Jesus] perfect through sufferings." This verse is significant because the term "author" means "leader," the one out front experiencing the battle ahead of others (which is perhaps why the KJV renders it as "captain")—that's Jesus. In fact...

As he was preparing to launch into his talk with the Roman Christians in chapters 9–11 (essentially about the same topic as 1 Cor. 15), in 8:29 he said of Jesus that He was "the firstborn of many brethren," which should, in turn, remind us of James 1:18 in which James told his readers that he/they (first-generation Christians) were the firstfruits of God's new creation. So...

Let's discuss the Jewish idea and typology of firstfruits a little.

Leviticus 23 describes two stages of harvesting: the firstfruits (from which was taken a firstfruit to be offered by the High Priest to the Lord) followed by the rest of the harvest. Likewise...

Christ, as the firstborn of the dead (Col. 1:18)—that lone sheaf of Leviticus 23—was the first of the firstfruits (cf. Exo. 23:19a), and the firstfruits were, as James spoke of in 1:18, the first generation of Christians or, as Paul spoke of in Romans 8:23, those who experienced the power of the Spirit of God (cf. Eze. 37, etc.), a subject Paul had just spent three chapters (12–14) talking about prior to this one.

In Matthew 13 Jesus said, "The harvest is at the end of the age" (v. 39). What age? He went on to say, "As the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age" (v. 40). What age? Jesus' age, Jesus' generation (Mat. 24:34), for He was born and died under the Law (Gal. 4:4 & Heb. 9:26). So again, what age? The Mosaical age, the age the Jews expected to end when Messiah's age began. So...

What would happen? Well, Jesus went on in Matthew 13 to say that "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend and those who practice lawlessness, and [they] will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (vv. 41-43).

What's really interesting to me about this passage is {1} how that in verse 43 Jesus alluded to Daniel 12:3, and {2} that such is even admitted by the non-preterists who created our reference Bibles! Why is this interesting? Because...

Firstly, Daniel 12:2 speaks of the resurrection as occurring immediately prior to the righteous shining, and secondly verse 7 defines the time when "all these things shall be finished" as being "when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered," perfectly corresponding to what Jesus said in Matthew 13! So...

Since First Corinthians 15 teaches that Christ was the firstfruit of that generation, i.e. the firstfruit of the firstfruits, then the harvest would be consummated soon (not 2000+ years in the future which would defeat the purpose of a firstfruit); the LORD had accepted Jesus, the firstfruit, as well as the firstborn (both mentioned in Lev. 23:10-12), therefore all things were ready! Also consider this:

Jesus, in this case, was both the Offering and the Priest who made the offering; i.e., He offered Himself to God on behalf of the people (cf. Lev. 23:11).

Once God accepted the firstfruit offering, the general harvest was "full-speed ahead," consummating of course in AD 70 when the entirety of the harvest was presented to the Lord of the harvest—God the Father (leading perfectly into verses 24-28, though we will only make it to verse 25 in this study session).

Verse 21: For since death [came] through a man, resurrection of dead ones likewise [comes] through a Man.

This of course is speaking of the same subject-matter as Romans 5:12-21 which we don't have time to get into, but you might want to consider it for yourself later on.

As we know, Adam introduced sin-death on "the day" (Gen. 2:17 & 3:5) he violated God's covenant with him (Hosea 6:7). So...

Jesus, who Paul later called the second and last Adam (vv. 45-47), came in the form of man (Heb. 10:5; and "Adam" means "man") as well as a Jew (Heb. 2:14 & 17) and under the Mosaical Law of God (Gal. 4:4) in order to remedy the death of Adam, i.e. sin-death or relationship death or fellowship death (i.e. separation from God).

The same apostle, writing about the same thing in Romans 5:12, said in paraphrase, "Just as through one man [Adam] sin entered into the world and therefore death entered through that sin, so death [that which Jesus came to render ineffective (1 Cor. 15:26)] spread to all mankind for they've all sinned." And later...

In Romans 6:23 he wrote that "the wages of sin is death," meaning that, since they were still dying physically after Jesus paid their debt of sin, the death of Adam they suffered when they sinned was sin-death or relationship death. So...

By presenting Himself bodily after His death to more than 500 men over a period of 40 days, Jesus proved that He was raised out from among the dead ones (those separated from God). In other words, He paid the debt that was owed, the sin-debt (if you will), thereby mending the relationship with God. How? By living a perfect life and dying the perfect sacrifice, He merited eternal life and by grace shares it with us, His siblings.

Verse 22: For as in Adam all are dying, even so in Christ all will be made alive.

(No, this isn't a mistake: The latter part of this verse is in the future tense, future for them of course; I'll explain my belief as to why it's in the future tense here in a moment.)

The terms "as" and "so" clearly indicate that whatever life was/is lost "in Adam," was/is found "in Christ"; we've already discussed briefly how that it was fellowship with God or spiritual life that cannot be found in Adam (or man in general, Adam meaning man), so that's exactly what can be found in Christ (or deity)—reconciliation to God and thus eternal life. Now...

Why is the latter part of this verse in the future tense, while most of the rest of First Corinthians 15 is in present tense? Because Paul was looking toward the consummation of the then, present tense, raising of the dead. I.e....

Just as any *process* in life has a goal toward which it's reaching, so the resurrection, during Paul's time, was a process that would reach its goal at the end of that generation, that harvest, if you will. Incidentally...

The only other places in this chapter which speaks of the resurrection as being in Paul's future is near the end: "We shall bear the image of the heavenly man" (v. 49) and "We shall all be changed—in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet ... the dead will be raised incorruptible..." (vv. 51-52). So...

Just as Adam's death was an opening of his eyes to the death of his fellowship with God, so it was to be with the consummation of the resurrection of First Corinthians 15. I.e., at that time the faithful of all ages were reconciled to their Creator in the twinkling of an eye; as a body they experienced the restoration to the relationship Adam had with God before his fellowship with Him was severed. Thus the promise of Jesus in John 14:1-3 and First Thessalonians 4:13-16 was fulfilled!

Verse 23: But each one in his own order—Christ the firstfruit, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

Whereas it seems that "some" at Corinth were not going beyond allowing resurrection to the firstfruits (i.e. Christ and those "in Christ"), Paul (based on his argumentation in verses 1-19) concluded that the others, the Old Covenant saints, didn't only belong to Christ, but they would *also* be raised at the consummation of the harvest, for the "firstfruits" were the pledge of their promised resurrection in such prophets as Ezekiel and Hosea.

In Romans 11, toward the end of Paul's discussion with the Gentile Christians in Rome concerning the same issue, he wrote, "So all Israel will be saved." When? It goes on to say when "'The Deliverer will come out of Zion'" (v. 26). When did Jesus come out of Zion? At His *parousia*, His return, when He "appear[ed] a second time, apart from sin, for salvation" (Heb. 9:28). By the way...

After Paul wrote that at the end of Hebrews 9, he went on to write about Jesus' imminent return in chapter 10, and His coming for His Old Covenant saints in chapter 11, whose resurrection, Paul wrote, would/could not be experienced apart from New Covenant saints; listen to verses 35 & 40: "All these [Old Covenant saints] ... didn't receive the promise [of a better resurrection], because God provided something better for us that they should not be made perfect *apart from us*." Wow! How much clearer can one be?

Well, after spending twelve verses discussing who was to be resurrected and in what order they'd be raised, Paul continued his discussion on resurrection by writing about its connection with "the end" and what that would mean concerning their relationship to God and Christ in verses 24-28 (though, sadly, we'll only get to verses 24-25 now).

Again, keep in mind that I'm going to be reading these verses in a more literal fashion than what you may have in your versions.

Verse 24: After that—the end—when He presents the kingdom to God the Father, having stripped all government and all authority and power of its control.

The phrase "after that" refers of course back to verse 23 in which Paul spoke of the fulfillment of the eschatological resurrection promised and prophesied in the Old Testament; i.e., after the spiritual raising of everyone who had the right to be in the body of the resurrected, "the end" could be considered to have arrived.

Now for the key question: To what "end" was he referring? The "end" of what? Well, due to the immediate context here, there are at least two things of which we can be certain:

1. This "end" is directly connected to the coming of Christ (v. 23); and...
2. This "end" is connected with the resurrection of the saved! So...

Since logic dictates that we find other passages in God's Word which may help us define this "end," let's do just that. Firstly...

Let's recall that when Paul was taken captive because of his resurrection teaching (Acts 21:27-28 & 24:14-15), he defended himself before Agrippa, saying that what he taught concerning what was about to be fulfilled was nothing but what Moses and the prophets promised would happen (Acts 26:22). Now with that in mind...

It shouldn't surprise us to discover that Daniel (which immediately precedes Hosea that we've said is Paul's background for 1 Cor. 15) also directly connected resurrection with an "end." What end? Let's see.

In 12:2 an angel prophesied to Daniel concerning a time when "those who sleep ... shall awake"; there's the resurrection. Then in verses 6-11...

When the questions "How long shall the *fulfillment* of these wonders be?" and "What shall be *the end* of these things?" were posited, the angel said, "When the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished"; then, referring back to Daniel 9:27, he went on to be even more precise by speaking of "the time when the daily sacrifice" would be "taken away, and the abomination of desolation" would be "set up" (also found in 12:11). Secondly, just in case this wasn't clear enough...

Jesus Himself referred to Daniel's prophecy when, in His discourse about the demise of Jerusalem and its temple, He said that "the kingdom will be preached ... to all the nations, and *then the end* will come. So when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet..., then let those who are in Judea [not over the entire planet] flee to the mountains" (Mat. 24:14-16). Further...

After providing numerous signs of "the end" *as well as His coming* (and remember, that's when Paul said the resurrection would occur [1 Cor. 15:23]), Jesus then said, "Assuredly I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place" (v. 34). Now...

Do you remember what question was asked of Jesus to which all of this was a reply? Matthew 24:3 tells us that the disciples asked, "What will the sign of *Your coming* and of *the end of the age*?" **CASE CLOSED!** So...

Even though we could spend an inordinate amount of time continuing to *needlessly* establishing this further, the obvious answer to our initial question of what was "the end" to which Paul referred in First Corinthians 15:24 is not "the end of time" (a phrase nowhere found in Scripture, by the way), but Daniel's "time of the end" (12:4)—the end of Judaism and the Old Covenant mode of existence, giving way to what even F. F. Bruce called the "resurrection age" (cf. Luke 20:35-36). Now...

How close was that to when Paul wrote First Corinthians? Pretty close, for when he wrote Timothy just a few years later, he spoke concerning how Jesus was "*about to judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom*" (2 Tim. 4:1, the only verse in the Bible, by the way, that contains all four of the main end-time events: the coming of Christ, the coming of the kingdom, the resurrection, and the judgment). In fact...

Let's not forget that Paul had just told these Corinthian brethren in 10:11 that "the ends of the ages" had come upon them. Well, back to our text...

At this "end," Paul said Jesus would've completed the stripping of control from all government, authority, and power. Hmmm. What does that mean? Well, since I don't have time in this study to get in-depth into the whole business of principalities, powers, rulers, and so on, I must be very concise here.

Firstly, let me define the original term for "stripped": The term *katargeo* may mean to destroy or abolish (e.g. in 1 Cor. 13:8-10 when Paul wrote of the cessation of spiritual gifts), but it usually merely means *to render something ineffective* (e.g. in Gal. 5:4 when Paul said that Christ had become of "no effect" to those who tried to be justified by law). In fact...

Earlier in First Corinthians Paul said nearly the same thing, utilizing the same term: In 2:6 he said that "the rulers of this age ... are coming (or are being bought) to nothing" (note present tense, by the way).

We'll go back over this slightly at verse 26 since Paul used the same word there.

Secondly, about the words government, authority, and powers, I currently believe that such terminology, especially in contexts like this one, isn't concerned with physical governments and rulers, but with spiritual principalities and powers in relation to those things by which man was held in spiritual/eternal separation from his Creator; in this very context Paul spoke of the destruction or end of "the law," "sin," and "death" (vv. 26 & 56)—*spiritual* matters. Related to this...

In First John 3:8 and Hebrews 2:14-15, the inspired writers wrote of Jesus having come to *katargeo* the works of the devil (i.e. the enemy) including his power of death, which I'm sure is somehow related to what Jesus said in John 12:31: "Now [in this generation] is the judgment of this world; now [in this generation] the ruler of this world will be cast out."

Another related passage is Ephesians 6:12 in which Paul wrote, "We don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, [and] spiritual hosts of wickedness," which, by the way, was written only a few paragraphs after he spoke of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience" (2:2).

Lastly (in 1 Cor. 15:24) we read that Jesus would present the kingdom to His Father.

The original term for "presents" (*paradidomai*) is a bit tricky; by that I merely mean that whichever shade of meaning was/is intended must be ascertained by its context. Let's consider the following:

Paradidomai can refer merely to that which is spoken: It can mean to deliver a message of oral/written tradition (1 Cor. 11:2); it can mean to recommend something or someone (Acts 15:40); it can mean to present something to another (Esther 2:13); or it can even mean to betray someone (Mat. 26:2). But Note This: In the case of oral tradition, *the messenger doesn't lose anything* (i.e. he remains in possession of that which he shared with another), but in the case of betrayal, the traitor does lose something—he loses the one he betrayed, demonstrating why this word can also mean to abandon (Acts 7:42).

This term can also refer to physically delivering something (as a piece of mail) to someone (Mat. 25:14), or it can mean to deliver someone into the hands of another (as Judas did Jesus, Mat. 26:15). In this case, the delivery boy always loses that which he has delivered; i.e., he's no longer in possession of it. So...

Relative our text verse, the question is, "By delivering or presenting the kingdom to God, did Paul mean that Jesus would be thereby relinquishing the offices He held in that kingdom of its Prophet, Priest, Lord, and King?" I certainly don't believe so!

¿Remember when Israel rejected God as King and appointed Saul instead (1 Sam. 8:7)? Though grudgingly permitted by God, that clearly wasn't His desire; so, to deal with this situation, God chose someone for Himself—David (a man after God's own heart)—through whom the kingdom would eventually be restored to Him (1 Sam. 16:1, cf. Acts 13:21-23). So..

An offspring—Jesus—from the lineage of David was born (not of the tribe of Benjamin as Saul, but of the kingly tribe of Judah [Rev. 5:5 & 22:16]); and He was the One who brought the kingdom back to God after He put His enemies under His feet.

In fact, Walter Bauer's Greek Lexicon includes in its definition of *paradidomai* the word "restore," as in restoring something to someone. And...

I found seven versions which translate this term as either "give back" or "return" in the Greek version of Deuteronomy 23:15: "You shall not return or give back to his master the slave who has escaped from him to you." (By the way, the word "establishes" [Gr. *diorthosis*] in Isaiah 62:7 [a prophecy of the work of the Messiah in the creation of the New Jerusalem] means "to restore.")

Just as God remained Israel's true, though unacknowledged, everlasting King (all while they were looking to a human as their king), so Jesus, through the right of His earthly lineage, became, like David—at God's behest, Israel's King, God's vice-regent (cf. Psa. 2:6-7).

How do I know Jesus, even after presenting the fulfilled, restored kingdom to God the Father, still reigns as king? Listen to these passages:

In Luke 1:32-33 when Mary was being informed about her son, the angel told her that "God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Acts 2:30, Heb. 1:8, & Rev. 3:7).

Ephesians 5:5 speaks of "the kingdom of Christ *and* God," while Revelation 11:15 says that "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord *and* of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever"; further, in Revelation 22:1 & 3 we read of "the throne of God *and* of the Lamb." Besides...

Isn't it after a king has conquered his enemies that he then sits as king in full reign? That isn't when he gives up his reign, unless he's the one conquered! (Even Mark Bailey in his amillennial commentary on First Corinthians 15 said of this verse, "Earthly kings reign only after they have put all enemies under their feet"; but then he sadly went on to say, "however, Christ will stop His reign at that time." Interesting. Huh?)

The point is, "the end," as we've demonstrated, was the end of Judaism, of physical Israel, of the Mosaical dispensation, if you will—the time when King Jesus finished His conquest, restoring the kingdom to God who had, to an extent, separated Himself from it; He delivered this task to His Son, providing Him with the authority and power to re-establish (or restore per Isa. 62) it in righteousness and holiness so that He, the Father, could make His abode in it without reservations.

Verse 25: For He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet.

I believe the "all enemies" here refers to all physical as well as spiritual enemies, i.e. not just the spiritual powers we touched on earlier, but also the Roman and especially the Jewish harassment and tormentors of God's new people.

We're going to have to close our study at this verse, so let's do so with a few thoughts concerning the word "until," a term that does not necessarily imply a change will occur after some specific point in time. Changes do often occur after an "until" time, but the term itself does *not necessitate* that a change must transpire; besides, if this term did necessitate that Jesus relinquish His crown at this point, then it would contradict the various other passages we noted moments ago. So let's quickly consider the following here as we close our thoughts on this section of 1 Corinthians 15:

Does "till" or "until" *always* imply the result of termination (i.e. up to a point and not thereafter)? No, it doesn't. Note some other places where this exact same Greek term (*achris*) is found:

In Acts 7:17-18 Stephen said, "the people grew and multiplied in Egypt till another king arose." Did the people stop procreating once that next king ascended to his throne? Certainly not.

In Romans 5:13 Paul said, "Until the Law, sin was in the world." Did sin cease to exist when the Law came? Certainly not, for Paul went on to argue against that in most of chapter 7. And...

In Galatians 3:19 Paul wrote that the Law "was added ... till the Seed should come to Whom the promise was made." If the "coming" in this statement is a reference to Jesus' birth, did the Law end at His birth? Of course not.

Here's what the renowned lexicographer Joseph Thayer said about *achris*: It concerns "things that actually occurred and up to the beginning of which something continued," meaning that this term indicates a point of reference, *not* a point of cessation. [Cf. v. 28 & my notes there.] Again...

As we already noted earlier in numerous passages, Jesus' reign was prophesied to be an everlasting reign; one verse, however, that I didn't bring up is found in Matthew 25: In verse 31 we learn that at the end, Jesus sits, not quits: "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then He shall sit on the throne of His glory."

A STUDY OF FIRST CORINTHIANS 15

(PART 4: VERSES 26-34)

Permit me to repeat my introductory note to verses 24-25: After spending twelve verses (viz. vv. 12-23) discussing who was to be resurrected and in what order they'd be raised, Paul continued his discussion on resurrection in verses 24-28 by writing about its connection with "the end" (which we discussed at length in the last study) and what that end would mean concerning the Corinthian Christians' relationship to God.

Once again, remember that I'll be reading these verses to you in a more literal fashion than what you have in the versions before you. As we touched on before concerning First Corinthians 15:26, it should read something like this: Speaking of those the Christ was to overcome, Paul went on to say that...

Verse 26: [The] last enemy—the death—is being rendered powerless.

There are two things in this statement that are immediately apparent: {1} the tense of Paul's original writing was in the present—"is being," and {2} the original term for the NKJV's "destroyed" [*katargeo*] that we discussed at length in verse 24 is translated in accordance with the term "stripping" that we used in verse 24 and which also corresponds to the NKJV's "brought to nothing" in First Corinthians 2:6. Although the implications of these facts are fairly obvious, let's highlight them anyway.

Firstly, what comes to my mind is that translator bias seems *very* obvious. For how can a work like *The Kingdom Interlinear* be so detailed and careful concerning its translation of tenses throughout the New Testament, then (after obtaining one's confidence to the point that he may stop double-checking) turn around and change the present tense to a future tense?! {ANALYZE THE CHART ON THE LAST TWO PAGES AT THE VERY END OF THIS STUDY!}

Secondly, it also seems very obvious to me that Paul wasn't speaking about the literal annihilation of "the death" under consideration here, but of how its hold on mankind would finally be released at the hand of the Savior Jesus Christ, at least for those who wish for the Savior to free them from its grip, for He won't force anyone to be released from their bondage if they don't wish to be; incidentally, this implies that Paul wasn't speaking about physical death. Doesn't it? So...

Paul was saying that this death (the death of verses 21-22, the sin-death associated with Adam) was—at the time he was writing by virtue of the Gospel of resurrection—in the process of being stripped of its power of keeping man separated from God. Now...

Why would Paul have made this statement in the context of this chapter? Well, let's get back to the contextual problem of the "some" who were denying the resurrection (i.e. fellowship restoration) of certain "dead ones." And who were they? That's right, folks who died during the Old Covenant. They weren't denying resurrection to those who had died "in Christ," mind you, but to those who had died before Christ (as we've already studied at length). So...

It seems to me that what Paul was implying in verse 26 is this: Since Christ's very purpose was to render spiritual death powerless for those who desired life with God, then to deny that life to anyone of that class would be to deny it for everyone in that class, including those they considered "in Christ."

By disabling/disempowering sin-death, Jesus was thereby, logically, giving eternal life to the faithful dead, regardless of when they died historically. So, although unobservable to the naked eye, the dead were being raised, principalities and powers were being annulled, and sin-death was being incapacitated.

Verse 27: For "He has subjected all things under His feet." But when He says that "all things have been subjected," it's evident that it's with the exception of the One who subjected all things to Him.

We didn't take the time to get into this under-His-feet-subjection stuff in our last installment of studies since I knew we'd get to it here anyway. So let's consider it now by first referencing Paul's usage of this Old Testament adage in another place.

We already alluded to Hebrews 2 (viz. vv. 14-15) back in our studies of verses 21 and 24, and now we can see another link to Hebrews 2. So let's read 2:5-9 at this point. We don't have time to do a detailed study of this passage, so let's just consider some highlights to get us on the general track.

What we discover from a comprehensive study of Psalm 8:6 and its close cousin Psalm 144:3 is that, essentially, Jesus was/is the epitome of what God wants for mankind to be. So...

Once He lived the flawless life and then became, by God's grace, the substitute for the flawed lives of mankind, He then everlastingly conquered—subjected under Himself—all enemies of that accomplishment, viz. satanas (the devil), sin, law, & death. (Incidentally, in 2 Tim. 1:10 Paul said, in a now-but-not-yet manner, that "our Savior Jesus Christ ... has disabled death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel"; i.e., it was a thing of such certainty that there was no doubt that He would indeed fully accomplish that task, very soon after this letter, in fact—just see 2 Tim. 4:1 and the Greek term *mello*. [Cf. 2 Sam. 22:10 & Psa. 18:9 where darkness, the representation of such things as under consideration here, are under the feet of Deity, i.e. He's in the light; darkness is nothing but a lack of light, just as wickedness is nothing but a lack of righteousness.])

So when the conquering King Jesus finished His task of subjecting both physical and spiritual darkness and wickedness underneath Him to the point that it's no longer possible for sin-death to defeat someone without his consent, the fullness of the knowledge and assurance of life and immortality could/can be enjoyed!

The one exception Paul provided concerning what/who all would be subjected to King Jesus was/is the Father. Why? Because, as we already considered at length in our last study, the Father and Son would reign jointly on the throne of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Verse 28: But whenever all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself will be subjected to the One having subjected all things to Him in order that Deity may be all in all.

¿Remember verse 24 about how that Jesus "must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet"? And remember how we said that the term "until" refers to a point of reference not a point of termination? And remember how such indicates to us that Jesus did *not* cease His reign after the "until" event? Well, although in reverse, think about this statement here in the same way.

Wasn't Jesus subject to the Father *before* this "until" event? I.e., did He become *un*-subjected to the Father when the Father gave Him the power to bring about man's redemption? My point is this: Essentially...

Jesus' relationship to His Father did *not* change after this "until" event: He was clearly subject to His Father while His redemptive work was being accomplished (after all, even though Jesus was given all authority in heaven and earth, it was still the Father who was actually/ultimately making all the moves, Rev. 17:17), and He was still subject to His Father once it was completed, for, as we talked about in the last installment, Jesus became "vice" regent on the throne of heaven. So...

Why would Paul make such a seemingly self-evident point? Well, I think the answer is found in the last part of this verse.

"That Deity may be all in all." Consider...

Paul was covering all bases by clarifying for them that the Son, even though He'd still be reigning as King, would be (perhaps somewhat as before this whole plan was initiated) alongside His Father on the throne. See, "Deity" (i.e. Father and Son) would be "all in all," that is, having completely fulfilled the scheme of reconciliation, they were reglorified together; in fact, I see Paul as drawing from Zechariah 14 (which, by the way, concerns Jerusalem's demise), for verse 9 was prophesied that "in that day the Lord shall be one" (*English Jubilee Bible*; cf. Barnes & Amp Version). However...

Some think that the initial "all" refers to things, while the following "all" refers to people; i.e., once Christ's work was perfected, then the Father, who had cut off fellowship with man due to sin, could then be *everything* to *everyone*, whether ethnically Jew or Gentile and whether physically alive or dead, and that's OK, I suppose, for it fits fine with the general context, just not as well with the specific context as what I now believe about it. Personally...

I just see the phrase "all in all" as an idiom, expressing their reunification, as it were, once Deity's creation of a plan for man's reconciliation had been finished.

Now let's move on to the next paragraph, verses 29-34.

After writing to these Christians about the fact of resurrection for Old Covenant saints as well as living saints of their time (vv. 12-23), and after following that up with resurrection's connection to "the end" and how the events of that time would wonderfully affect the relationship of all these saints with God (vv. 24-28), Paul went on in verses 29-32 to illustrate the foolishness of certain events in the lives of numerous Christians if indeed God, through the resurrection of these saints, does NOT become "all in all." Then in verses 33-34 he chided some of these brethren for believing the lies of those who were teaching falsehoods concerning resurrection. Again...

I'll be reading these verses in a more literal fashion that you have in your versions. So let's begin with one of the most controversial verses in the New Testament; I've read that there are at least forty interpretations of this statement by Paul.

Verse 29: Otherwise, what will they do [who are] being baptized on behalf of the dead ones? I.e., if [the] dead ones aren't being raised at all, why are they being baptized on behalf of the dead ones?

Firstly, it'd be helpful to determine who the "they" are here by reminding ourselves that "the dead ones" are the Old Covenant saints on whose behalf Paul had been arguing. Secondly, remember (as usual throughout Israel's history) the salvation of Israel was dependent upon the faithful remnant, this time upon their acceptance of the promised Messiah. And...

What's another name for the members of the post-Pentecost remnant? "Firstfruits" (James 1:18) or "Firstborn" (Heb. 12:23). And why were they called such? Because they were the ones being born or resurrected from (spiritual) death first, following Christ, that is. And when would the Nextborn (to coin a new term), the Old Covenant saints, be raised? At the "harvest," of course. So...

Since you can't have a harvest without firstfruits of the harvest (especially according to God in the OC as we discussed earlier), then Old Covenant Israel's fulfilled promise of life or restoration to God was based on the acceptance of Jesus as Messiah by post-Pentecost Jewish &/or Israelite saints. In Romans 11:5, Paul wrote in obvious gratitude and in fulfillment of Isaiah 11:11, "Even so then, at this present time [i.e. in the mid AD 50s, 15 yrs B4 the demise of Judaism] there is a [or *the last*] remnant."

At this point please read Romans 8:18-23 before continuing.

What's "the redemption of the body" in verse 23 but the resurrection of the body in First Corinthians 15:44? And what's "the creation" in verses 19-22 but God's Old Covenant people, Israel? (For to whom else would the "they" of verse 23—in contrast to the "we" of that same verse—be referring except OC Israel [which, by the way, corresponds to the contextual chapters surrounding Romans 8]?) So...

What's the point here? Well, that Old Covenant creation (especially the remnant of course) eagerly waited for the revealing of God's children (v. 19 [cf. Heb. 11:9-10 & 13-16]), because by virtue of them (the firstfruits) they (the OC saints) would be delivered from sin-death (v. 21). And who were they but the "firstfruits" of verse 23 who were also awaiting the fulfillment of the redemption of the body by which they became full-fledged New Covenant children of God (Luke 20:35-36)? So...

Just as Gentiles were dependent upon Israelites, Israelites were dependent upon their faithful last-generation remnant who were in turn dependent upon Christ, who had of course already done His part by coming forth as the firstfruit of the firstfruits of the harvest. Now let's reread First Corinthians 15:29 like this: "What will the remnant do who are being baptized on behalf of their brethren, the Old Covenant saints?" I.e., "If their being baptized into Christ isn't bringing life to their brethren who lived before Christ, then what do *you* suggest they do to fulfill the prophecy of God in Ezekiel 37 which in turn brings salvation to you Gentiles?" The thing is...

Whether I comprehend the mechanics of it or not, somehow, for some reason, God has linked the resurrection of Old Covenant saints to the acceptance of the Messiah by members of the last-generation remnant: When Paul was speaking in Hebrews 11 of the better resurrection to which Old Covenant saints looked forward (v. 35), according to the NIV he said in verse 40, "only together with us would they be made perfect." Next...

You may be wondering how baptism fits into all this. Well...

Recall Jesus' conversation with Nick at Nite in John 3: When Jesus said, "You must be born again," He chose the plural form of "you," meaning that He was telling him, a Jew, that if he *and his Israelite brethren* wanted part in the kingdom of God, they'd have to realize that trusting in their fleshly births wouldn't cut it; i.e., they'd have to be "born *again*" of a *spiritual* birth or "from *above*." Later...

Back in Romans again, this time chapter 6, we find Paul connecting baptism with salvation-resurrection: "Since we've been united together in the likeness of Jesus' death, we shall also certainly be in the likeness of His resurrection" (v. 5). See...

Even though each individual was surely being baptized for his own sake, due to the teaching they heard/received from men like Peter and Paul who explained the former mysteries to them, it seems obvious that the last-generation Jews/Israelites understood that they, by being baptized into the Messiah, were, in essence, bringing to fruition the promises concerning the resurrection of Israel, the very prophecies on which Paul based his resurrection dissertation in First Corinthians 15.

After this argument, Paul went on to ask in...

Verses 30-31: And why are we in danger every hour? Brethren, I swear by the boasting which I have over you in Christ Jesus our Lord, I am dying daily.

The boasting which Paul had concerning them was that he was the one who brought the word of salvation to them (4:15), and they knew/agreed to this fact. So...

Based on that truth, he swore that he was dying daily for the sake of his ancestors; i.e., while some were merely being water baptized on account of them, Paul referred to his baptism in sufferings: hunger, thirst, beatings, even being left for dead once ... all for the sake of breaking the remnant away from the Old Covenant mode of existence (which Paul, in Rom. 8:20, said was futile) in order to bring in "their fullness" (Rom. 11:12), i.e. the salvation of "all Israel" (cf. Rom. 11:26). Related to this...

Concerning the "I am dying daily" clause, this should remind us of Second Corinthians 4:8ff in which we find Paul referring to the persecutions he was enduring for the sake of bringing the church through the transition period and to perfection in Christ. Though this passage is far from the only one along these lines, let's read 4:8–5:8 to remind ourselves of what Paul said to these same Christians at another time, somewhat of an expansion on First Corinthians 15:30-31. Incidentally...

I chose the term "swear" in for verse 31 here because it's from a word found only once in all the New Testament—*ne*; of it Thayer said it's "employed in affirmations / oaths."

Verse 32: If according to men I've fought with wild beasts in Ephesus, what benefit [would that be] to me? If [the] dead ones are not being raised up, we should "eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" (Isa. 22:13).

With the thought of Second Corinthians 10:2 in mind (viz. that some thought of Paul as one who "walked according to the flesh," i.e. the old mode of life), the phrase "according to men" likely means that Paul was saying, "If I went through that Ephesus fiasco merely for temporal rewards such as found in the Old Covenant order, what benefit would that be to my ministry? If the dead ones for whom I'm laboring aren't being raised, then we should live it up since we're going to die like Rover—all over—tomorrow."

Paul's point was this: He (as well as others) were in constant danger and fear of their lives on account of the very "dead ones" to whom some of these brethren were essentially denying eternal life. You know...

It's often been said that one of the greatest evidences of the truth of Christ's resurrection is that men have died for their conviction of it; likewise, Paul was saying that there were people like him who were purposely placing themselves in mortal danger based on their conviction that what they were doing was producing the effect of raising the dead saints to life as prophesied. But...

According to the logic of this group of "some" (v. 12), Paul was wasting his time; but he knew better, for he realized that he was accomplishing a work that was helping to fulfill God's promise to Israel for their resurrection. Interestingly...

While in verse 29 Paul spoke of water baptism as being in one way associated with the salvation or resurrection of "the dead ones," in verses 30-32 he spoke of the baptism of suffering and death in part for them as well, and I believe Jesus meant for there to be a connection. Let's read Matthew 20:20-23 and Luke 12:49-50 to see how what Jesus promised the apostles tallies to what Paul's wrote here in First Corinthians 15.

Verses 33-34: Stop being deceived; evil relationships corrupt virtuous habits. [So] sober up righteously, and stop sinning, for some have ignorance of God. I'm speaking to you [like this to move you] to shame. (Cf. ASV.)

Although in most versions the latter part of verse 33 is in quotes as if Paul quoted it from some other biblical passage (as he was very much accustomed to doing), I couldn't locate a reference that without doubt corresponded it. However...

I did discover this: A playwright named Menander either coined or copied a similar motto for his play called *Thais*: F. G. Allenson translated this line from Greek like this: "Communion with the bad corrupts good character." Coincidental? Probably not, for, as we know, not only was Paul a highly educated Roman citizen from Tarsus, someone very well versed in Greek idioms and literature, but he also evidently used them often to support his own teachings, especially when speaking to Greeks:

In Acts 17:28 he said to the Athenians, "as ... your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'" And...

To Titus, who Paul had left on the island of Crete, he wrote this about the Cretans: "One of them, a prophet of their own, said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons'" (1:12). Anyway...

The point is that what Paul quoted (I believe) from that play merely supported a truth he intended to convey to those who knew better even without the Gospel.

Concerning the present tense verb "sin" in verse 34, I'm not sure if, as some versions indicate, it should be translated as merely "don't sin" (as though it were something they were in danger of doing) or if, as other versions indicate, it should be translated as "don't continue sinning" (as though it were something they were to cease doing). Personally I favor the latter, because it seems logical that he was referring to sin that they were committing while in their drunken stupor from which they were commanded to awaken to righteousness. Besides, if he could be righteous AND suffer as he was doing, surely they could at least be righteous! Now the question becomes...

What "sin" was Paul talking about? Well, I think the answer to this question lies in the meaning of Paul's next clause: "for some have ignorance of God." Why? Because...

According to scholars Robertson and Plummer, the term for "ignorance" Paul chose is much stronger than the usual one: They wrote that this term isn't merely the absence of knowledge, but the failure or inability to take knowledge; this reminds me of what Paul said earlier in the letter to them at 3:2: "I fed you with milk and not solid food, for until now you weren't able to receive it, and even now you still aren't able to receive it." And why would they be unable to receive knowledge? Because they refused to grow, or they stopped their ears as those in Acts 7; in fact, Leon Morris said that the phrase "have ignorance of God" could very well be translated as "hold on to ignorance of God," reminiscent of the Sadducees of whom Jesus said concerning resurrection, "You are mistaken (or deceived) because you don't know the Scriptures or the power of God" (Mark 12:24). Oh yeah...

This group of "some" at Corinth, like the Sadducees, "thought" they had knowledge, but Paul said earlier, "If anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know" (8:2). So anyway...

Paul seemed to be getting onto all of them: the "some" because of their apparent and purposeful decision to *not* accept the truth in this matter (but rather to keep pressing their agenda) and the rest of them for allowing it to go on (recall 5:1-2); i.e., those not of the "some" just seemed to be complacent about what was going on, not realizing/caring about the significance of what they were permitting, even though they may have been in the majority. (I myself have personally witnessed numerous times when the majority refused to stand against the pushy minority, even when it was just one or two people!)

The main sin I see that was being caused and which would get worse if not nipped in the bud (and we can see that things in this vein did get worse over the next 10 to 15 years among the first generation churches, cf. Jude e.g.) is the sin of division it was causing between Jews (the root) and Gentiles (those being grafted in) which can easily be seen throughout this letter; in fact, I think chapter 15, which deals with the "main" issue, is Paul's conclusion regarding all the problems of division that we read about in this epistle.

A STUDY OF FIRST CORINTHIANS 15

(PART 5: VERSES 35-50)

So..., Paul's thrust in this chapter was to make a case against the resurrection-deniers group of verse 12, arguing that there would *indeed* be a resurrection of those to whom they were denying resurrection; in fact, according to Paul, they were already, at the time of his writing, in the process of being raised via the remnant. Now...

After arguing against these resurrection-deniers, Paul then anticipated a question by some wise-cracker among them about the *nature* of the resurrection body that he had been discussing and which would include those old dead, pre-Christ saints.

Verse 35: But someone will ask, "How are the dead ones being raised? In what body are they coming?"

In other words, in argumentation, "OK Paul, if those folks are being raised, then *how* are they being raised? That is, in/with what sort of body are they coming forth?" See...

If we've been correct so far in our interpretation, especially about the two different groups of verses 12 & 18, then it seems as though the resurrection-deniers (v. 12) were *not* denying resurrection to those who they considered to have died "in Christ" (v. 18), i.e. in the body of Christ—the church. So the question of "in what body are they coming" makes sense, because they didn't consider those *before* Christ to be "in Christ." I.e., they seemed to be saying...

"Since one must be 'in [the body of] Christ' to have resurrection-life, then, Paul, pray tell, How are they being raised, i.e. in what body are they being raised?" [And don't fail to emphasize "they," for if this group had been denying resurrection in general, as the traditional view says, then they would've asked this question with the pronoun "we"!]

Before answering the wise-acre's question, notice that not only did Paul never speak of resurrection bodies plural, but, due to what I just stated a second ago, even the resurrection-denier's question placed the *plural* "dead ones" in a *singular* "body"!

In our last study we considered Romans 8:18ff, and in that passage we focused a little on verse 23 in which Paul spoke of a plurality of saints (including Old Covenant saints) as being redeemed in a singular body (corresponding, by the way, to Php. 3:20-21). You know, personally...

Just this one fact would tend to at least make me reconsider the traditional interpretation, the one I myself actually even once believed/taught! Anyway...

Verse 36: Foolish! That which you are sowing can't be made alive unless it dies first.

Here's something to consider: The order is sowing, then dying, then rising—the same order Jesus presented in John 12:24 (i.e. unless a seed which has been planted in the earth dies ... it won't bear fruit). However...

This order doesn't correspond to the traditional interpretation. Does it? Do we bury folks *alive* so they can die then be raised? Of course not! That's just another of many reasons this chapter doesn't teach the resurrection of biological physiques from holes in the dirt. Why haven't we seen this before? ... So...

To what sort of resurrection does Paul's teaching here correspond? Spiritual resurrection; i.e., as we talked about a few lessons ago, the backdrop of Paul's teaching here is Hosea in whose writing we find the sowing of Israel, the death of Israel, and the resurrection of Israel. As Yahweh's spouse, she was alive, but for her adultery He sent her away by burying her among the Gentiles where she died to Him; then, as promised, she was spiritually resurrected, becoming that into which Gentile believers became graciously grafted (Rom. 11:17-24). So...

The obvious reason Paul used the seed analogy is that it *isn't* the same as what occurs to us naturally; if he wanted to teach that, he could've just used what happens to us naturally—but he didn't. Did he? Why? Because Paul's teaching is about what God was doing and was going to do in fulfillment of His promise to Israel, something which does correspond to his seed analogy of planting, then death, then resurrection to new life.

Here's yet another dilemma for the traditionalist to consider: According to Paul here, in order for the body to be raised to life, it must first die, but then later in verse 51 he said that not everyone would die before Jesus returned; in fact, he said that those still living would be changed from corruptible to incorruptible. But how could that be if they must die first? Well, if we look at it as passing from spiritual death to spiritual life (cf. 1 John 3:14), then there's no problem. Is there?

One more significant point here is the present tense, taking their minds back to the idea presented earlier concerning the resurrection as being something that was already in the process of occurring at the time of his writing; i.e., just as the quickening of a seed is tied to the dying of that seed and vice versa (meaning that there's a transition which occurs from one stage to the other so that those stages are mixed for a certain amount of time), so there was a dying and a quickening occurring simultaneously during that generation of time. Listen to two related verses in Romans:

In 7:24, after Paul spoke of the agony of living under the Law, he cried, "Who will deliver me from this body of death?!" Then later...

In 8:10 he wrote, "Since Christ is in you, the body [body of what? the body of death] is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

Verse 37: And as for that which you sow, you aren't sowing the body that it will become, but mere grain, whether wheat or some other grain.

An interesting point to notice here is that this is the first time in this chapter for Paul to bring up the Greek term *soma* for "body." Why is that thought-provoking? Because, according to the traditional position, Paul's entire treatise here concerns what is raised; but, as we've seen, it has actually been about who is raised. Furthermore...

As Hosea prophesied, the body of Old Covenant Israel was sown in adultery/apostasy by God, died as His spouse in her sin, and was then transformed and raised by Him in a different form—our glorious New Covenant Israel!

Verses 38-41: But God gives to it [that "mere grain"] a body according as He willed and to each type of seed its own body. Not all flesh is the same flesh, but there's one indeed of mankind, another of beasts, another of birds, and another of fish. There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly and that of the earthly are indeed different. There's the glory of the sun and another glory of the moon and another glory of the stars, with each star even being different in glory. Now...

To me this seems to be a rant by Paul concerning their faith, if someone were to actually ask this question; i.e., if this question were asked, it wouldn't be an argument against the main point of "who" was to be raised, but (as debaters do) it would be a smoke-screen question—something to either throw Paul off his game or to throw his audience off the main point, making them think, "Yeah, Paul, what about that?" So...

It appears to me that Paul was in essence saying, "It doesn't matter so much in/with what body 'the dead ones' are being raised, because, as you well know, God has no problem taking care of that issue! Just as He's always taken care of such, He can *and is* taking care of it in this regard as well." And, especially since this is a matter of the spiritual realm—God's domain, surely they should trust Him with this. Nevertheless, Paul went on to discuss it for a little bit. (Cf. the glory to glory idea in 2 Cor. 3:18.)

Verses 42-43: So also is the resurrection of the dead ones: It's being sown in corruption; it's being raised in incorruption. It's being sown in dishonor; it's being raised in glory. It's being sown in weakness; it's being raised in power.

Firstly, note the present tense: "So *is* the resurrection," "it *is* being sown," "it *is* being raised," etc.; but there are many versions which take it upon themselves to translate these inspired words in the future tense (GWT, CEV, NLT, NIV, etc.)!

Secondly, note Paul's use of the singular "it" with reference to the plural "dead ones." What does that mean? Well, it goes back to verse 35 in which Paul said, "But someone will ask, 'How are the dead ones being raised? In what body are *they* coming?'" So...

By the singular pronoun "it" in verse 42, he was referring to the singular body of the plural dead ones; i.e., the body is the seed of Paul's analogy. And...

Just as there are those who try to circumvent the language by changing the tense, so there are those who try to circumvent the language by audaciously changing the pronoun number from "it" to "they" (Ethridge, Murdock, etc.)!

The terms "corruption," "dishonor," and "weakness" all refer to that which characterized the attempt to live by law, even the perfect Law of Moses. Why? Because it intensified sin (Rom. 5:20); i.e., since trying to merit fellowship with God by works doesn't work due to weakness (causing only frustration, Rom. 7), it results only in corruption. (By the way, the term "dishonor" was often used in reference to someone's citizenship having been revoked, something which of course corresponds to God's rejection of apostate Israel.)

Verse 44: It's being sown a natural body, but it's being raised a spiritual body. Since there's a natural body, there's also a spiritual body.

Firstly, not only does this verse clearly refute the idea of the resurrection of *physical* bodies, but it doesn't even support the idea of future individual *spiritual* bodies. The thing is, not only did Paul not use the plural "bodies," but he also didn't use the future tense; i.e., just as there was, *at the time he wrote*, a natural body, so there was *at that same time* a spiritual body. Why? Because of seed-metamorphosis, the transition which was occurring at the time.

Another thing which is very interesting about this verse is that the term Paul chose for "natural" is never used of a biological physique anywhere in the entire Bible; rather it's used to refer to the unregenerate man—man as he is when living according to the dictates of the flesh, which *the* Law or law in general only exacerbates.

Thayer said of this term that it refers to one who is "governed by the ... the sensuous nature with its subjection to appetite and passion," which perfectly corresponds to its usage in James and Jude (the only other two to use this term): James said of selfishness in 3:15 that "This 'wisdom' does not come from above, but is earthly [and] sensual," while Jude said in verses 18-19 that those who were living "according to their own ungodly lusts" were "sensual people" who didn't have the Spirit (that which is from above). Doesn't this fit well with Paul's "natural" versus "spiritual" in First Corinthians 15? Sure it does. (See 1 Cor. 2 for more along these lines.) And...

As we'll see more about in the next verse, Paul's natural body was the one in which people were dead in their sin, i.e. the body of sin-death or, as Romans 7:24 phrases it, just the "body of death." What death? The death Adam experienced and in whom were included Old Covenant Israel. Consider the next verse:

Verse 45: And so it has been written, "The first man Adam was made a living being," the last Adam a life-giving spirit.

See, "Adam" = "the natural body," while "Christ" = "the spiritual body." Let's think back just a little ways.

To be "in Adam" meant to be in the body of sin-death, and Adam was considered to be the head of that body: In verses 21-22 Paul said, "Since through man [came] death, so through man [comes] resurrection of dead ones. For as in Adam all are dying, even so also in Christ all [including those God considered His saints before He came on our earthly scene] will be made alive." I.e....

Paul was saying, "God has it all under control: Just as there's a natural body that's in the process of dying and fading away, so there's also a spiritual body that's in the process of coming to fullness of life; it may be invisible and thus incomprehensible to you, but you can be assured that you don't have to worry about that part of it all, for God's incorporating all those He considers His into this body, whether they've been baptized into it during the transition period or not." (Cf. Eph. 1:10.)

Jesus, as the life-giving Spirit, provides life for the faithful of all ages, BC and AD; otherwise, all of Hebrews chapter 11 would need to be discarded.

One last thing interesting here is the contrast that while Adam was made into a being who merely *possessed* life, Jesus was made a being who *provides* life. Now...

Back in verse 35, Paul began answering a two-fold question: "How are the dead ones being raised? In what body are they being raised?" I.e., "Since folks must be in the body of Christ, and since those before Christ (e.g. Old Covenant saints) weren't baptized into the body of Christ, then how or in what body are they being raised?"

Although Paul knew, I believe, that this was a smoke-screen tactic of the querist, he went ahead to answer the question, which I'm sure he knew would be helpful to some of them anyway, just as it is to us today; so I'm thankful he humored them.

Paul's reply to this question runs from verse 36 all the way through verse 50, at least that's the way I see it; thus, since we stopped at verse 45 in our last study, we're sort of in the middle of Paul's reply. So let's try to at least get through verse 50 now.

So after writing about the natural body versus the spiritual body and Adam's body of death versus Jesus' body of life, Paul went on to say in...

Verses 46-47: Nevertheless the spiritual isn't first, but the natural, then the spiritual. The first man is of the earth ([made of] dirt); the second man is of heaven. (Notice: *Natural* First, *Spiritual* Second, but futurists have it swapped out: spiritual resurrection-life first now [Rom. 6], physical [as their natural] resurrection-life later. Hmmm!)

In verse 44, the verse from which this section springs, Paul said that there's a natural body and a spiritual body and that the natural body is what was being sown and dying while simultaneously giving rise to the spiritual body; then in verse 45, again—springing from the statement of verse 44, Paul said that Adam (the head of the body of death in Paul's theology here) was created as a being *with* life, while Jesus (the head of the body of life in Paul's theology here) is a being *providing* life.

Although there very well could be more to it than what I'm presently seeing, right now the only reason I can see for Paul making these two statements of chronology is to set up his points in the next two statements concerning that which everyone who's honest with himself really desires, viz. to be one with the heavenly man, not the earthly man.

Verse 48: As is the earthly one, so also are the earthly ones; and as is the heavenly one, so also are the heavenly ones.

At face value this seems to be just another self-evident statement. However...

One gem of truth I see here has to do with tense ... again: At the time of Paul's writing, he saw that there were those who were merely *earthly* in their existence (i.e. they were living merely in an earthly-minded or animalistic fashion, living purely by passion and lust); but he also saw that there were those who had chosen to displace that sort of life with one of a *heavenly* nature.

Verse 49: And just as we bore the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly one.

As I implied in my comments on verse 48, Paul began to deal with the individuals within the body of Adam (the body of death) and the body of Christ (the body of life); see, for there to be a corporate body, there must be individuals to make up that body, and, in this case, they were individuals with the freedom to choose their desired body.

At the time Paul wrote, there were individuals who had chosen to be (found) in (the body of) Christ, the body which was headed for the consummation of eternal life; so just as we talked about in verses 12-23 concerning how Paul spoke of the resurrection as occurring presently in his time (vv. 15-16) as well as reaching an ultimate fulfillment (vv. 22-23), so here in verse 48 he spoke of individuals who were choosing resurrection-life, while in verse 49 he spoke of the ultimate (and soon, vv. 51-52) fulfillment of the resurrection of that body of individuals to eternal life.

Verse 50: Furthermore I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood is not able to inherit the kingdom of God, neither [is] corruption inheriting incorruption.

By the phrase "flesh and blood," I don't think Paul changed gears to talk about something different than that which is natural or earthly; i.e., he was still talking about those who live merely by the flesh &/or law as opposed to the spirit.

In Galatians 6:8 Paul said that "he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life," because "in [the] flesh, nothing good dwells" (Rom. 7:18). Besides, the clause, "neither is corruption inheriting incorruption," seems to me to just be another way of saying "that flesh and blood is not able to inherit the kingdom of God," which reminds me of Revelation 21:27: "There shall by no means enter it anyone who defiles or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those written in the Lamb's Book of Life." So...

What did those not in the book of life inherit? Revelation 21:8 says, "The cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have *their part* in ... the second death." Once again...

Notice well the present tense: "flesh and blood *is* not able to inherit," and "corruption *is* not *inheriting*." Well...

Even though the next few verses go on to a different aspect of resurrection, viz. timing, let's go ahead and consider three of them since we have time.

A STUDY OF FIRST CORINTHIANS 15

(PART 6: VERSES 51-58)

Verses 51-53: Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all be laid to sleep, but we all shall be changed, in a split second, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For it will trumpet, and the dead ones will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For it's necessary that this corruptible put on incorruption and that this mortal put on immortality.

Back in my comments on verse 45 I mentioned how that I thought Paul was in essence just telling them that, even though all this spiritual/invisible activity may be incomprehensible to them, God was in control; He knew what He was doing, and it would all be taken care of. Now, in this verse, Paul went on to even share with them more information concerning that which they may have not yet comprehended concerning when all this would occur. Remember now, this was Paul writing to Corinthians ca. AD 55!

Paul said to them, "we shall not all sleep ... but we all [Old Covenants saints included] shall be changed." What? Some changed while they were still alive? How could that be unless the change Paul wrote about didn't have anything to do with their biological bodies? Well, it couldn't, of course; and this perfectly corresponds to the time statements found in passages such as Matthew 16:28, 24:34, etc. Then...

He went on to say to them that this change, this spiritual metamorphosis, would occur "at the last trumpet." So the timing of "the last trumpet" must be determined. In this regard, a few things are interesting:

Firstly, in verse 54 Paul quoted from Isaiah 25:8, which is in an extended context of prophecy concerning the fall and rising again of Israel; notice Isaiah 27:13 for example: "So it shall be in that day: the great trumpet will be blown; they will come ... and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount..." When? Well, in the next chapter (Isa. 28) he went on to prophesy of the Messiah becoming the chief cornerstone (v. 16) and of tongue-speaking (v. 11), a prophecy which, by the way, Paul quoted in chapter 14 to show that it was being fulfilled in his time.

Secondly, in Revelation 10:7, immediately after verse 6, which essentially says that time was up, it says, "In the days of the sounding of the seventh [the last trumpet-sounding] angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to ... the prophets [e.g. Isaiah]."

Thirdly, whether for battle or feast days, trumpets were blown to rally the people together in an assembly (Jer. 4:5 & Joel 2:15-16; cf. Heb. 10:25 & 2 The., 2:1), which corresponds to what Jesus said in Matthew 24:30-31: "The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven ... and [the tribes of the land] will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; and He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." When? Well...

Not only did Jesus clarify this in verse 34 when He said that "this generation will by no means pass away till all these things are fulfilled," but also in First Thessalonians 4:15-17, Paul, when speaking about the Lord's coming there—also with the sounding of the trumpet of God—wrote, "This we say to *you* ... that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.... Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds," etc. When? During the generation of those then living. That's when.

Doesn't all this sound exactly like what Paul said to the Corinthians: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed"? Sure it does! And...

Fourthly, in the context of a prophecy concerning God saving His true Israel, Zechariah wrote, "The Lord ... will blow the trumpet ... and defend them.... The Lord ... will save them in that day as the flock of His people" (9:14-16). When? Well...

A verse just before this (v. 9) was quoted by Matthew and Luke as being fulfilled in their time: "Your King is coming to you ... lowly and riding on a donkey." This was obviously a reference to His initial coming. Then...

In the next verse Zechariah prophesied of the Messiah's next coming in not so nice a fashion: God, through His Christ, "will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem; the battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; and His dominion shall be from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth." Sounds a lot like Revelation 11:15. Doesn't it? "Then the seventh [last] angel sounded, and there were loud voices in heaven saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!'"

Consider these charts before we move on:

1 Corinthians 15, 1 Thessalonians 4, and Matthew 24 = The Same Event!

1 Corinthians 15	1 Thessalonians 4
15:23 - are Christ's at His coming	4:16 - the Lord Himself shall come
15:51 - sleep	4:14 - sleep
15:52 - the trumpet shall sound	4:16 - trump with a shout
15:52 - dead shall be raised	4:16 - dead in Christ shall rise

Matthew 24	1 Thessalonians 4 & 5
24:27 - coming (<i>parousia</i>)	4:15 - coming (<i>parousia</i>)
24:30 - clouds	4:17 - clouds
24:31 - sound of a trumpet	4:16 - trump with a shout
24:31 - gather together	4:17 - caught up together
24:36 - day or hour	5:1 - times and seasons
24:43 - a thief	5:2 - a thief
24:8 & 39 - took them all away	5:3 - sudden destruction
24:42 - watch	5:6 - watch

1 Corinthians 15	1 Thessalonians 4	Matthew 24
at His coming	Jesus' coming	Jesus' coming
last trump	trumpet	trumpet
dead saints raised	dead saints raised	angels gather saints
living saints changed	living saints caught up	angels gather saints
	coming in the clouds	coming in the clouds

We could go on and on with this, I suppose, but the lingering question which you may be asking is, "Was this trumpet meant to be one that man would actually hear?" And my answer is, I don't believe it was. However, there's a good chance that there was a trumpet blown in Jerusalem for a feast or something else trumpet-related that God chose to signal the beginning of the fulfillment of Jerusalem's final demise; the Jews just wouldn't have realized it, of course. But, personally, I believe it was something that occurred in the sense we find in John's visions in Revelation—something figurative or something that occurred in the heavenly realm as a signal that the day of the Lord had come for all things in heaven and earth to be brought together in Christ, thus ending and fulfilling the Old Covenant system and prophecies just as Jesus said in Luke 21:22. Lastly...

Paul here, as he did in Second Corinthians 5:1-8, wrote of how that the corruptible body (which would include the Old Covenant saints, Heb. 11, esp. v. 40) in its entirety would be clothed upon with incorruptibility &/or immortality. Notice that he didn't say, "these corruptibles (plural) must put on incorruptibility," or "these mortals (plural) must put on immortality," but that "this corruptible (singular) must put on incorruptibility," and "this mortal (singular) must put on immortality."

Another way to say this would be, "this animalistic, natural body that has been put to death in Christ (Rom. 8:10) must be clothed with the spiritual, heavenly body," or (as Paul actually went on to speak of in the next verse) "this body of death, this body of Adam, must be *clothed over* with the body of life, the body of Christ" (symbolic of marriage), otherwise God couldn't inhabit it (John 14:2-3 & 23 & Rev. 21:3-4). So...

When Jesus came for His bride during at the end of that generation, after she was purified and prepared (Eph. 5), she (per 1 The. 4) met her Groom as she saw Him coming for her, then escorted Him here to live in/with Him, time without end, in spiritual realms of glory ("the air" of 1 The. 4:17). *That's* what I call "resurrection"!

Well, after five lessons considering First Corinthians 15, we've finally arrived at the end of the chapter.

Although it has been five lessons and a grueling study, I still don't claim to comprehend every detail of this chapter perfectly; however, I *am* convinced that my present and overall understanding of it is far more accurate and factual than my previous understanding of it. In other words...

While I used to believe that Paul was writing about individual, biological resurrection at an alleged end of/to the Christian age due to traditional teaching in the churches of Christ, I'm now convinced through my own personal studies that he was actually writing about a corporate, spiritual resurrection at the end of the Mosical age which was also the beginning of the Messianic age at AD 70. So...

With those comments in mind, as well as all that we've studied so far, let's finish our studies in First Corinthians 15 by considering verses 54-58.

Verse 54: But whenever this mortal should put on immortality, then will occur the saying which has been written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

Now consider this closely relative to timing: In the previous sentences Paul said, "I tell you a mystery: we shall not all be laid to sleep, but we all shall be changed, in a split second, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For it will trumpet, and the dead ones will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (vv. 51-52).

Since we already spent quite a bit of time pinpointing the appointed occasion for this trumpet-sounding, all I'll do here is just remind us of the conclusion: It sounded at the time for the demise of Jerusalem, the temple, the Old Covenant priesthood, the sacrifices, the law, etc., which corresponds to Paul's declaration that many of them would still be alive.

Now here in verse 54 Paul connected the demise of the last enemy—"the death" of verse 26—to that same point in time; i.e., at the same time that God put an end to Jerusalem, the temple, the priesthood, the sacrifices, and the law, He also fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 25:8 by putting an end to the last remaining enemy—sin-death—the thing which kept man separated from his Creator. This means of course that at that time was also the end of sin (at least for those who desire the end of it by means of the Messiah), which also therefore perfectly fulfilled Daniel 9:24-27 concerning sin being put to an end at the time of the abomination of desolation. So...

Recalling the general context, what Paul was saying in verse 54 was that when that which was mortal—that body of death (cf. Rom. 7:24 & 8:10)—was enveloped by that which is immortal—the body of life in Christ, then, logically, the death which separated man from God, sin-death, would be swallowed up in victory by life.

Verse 55: "Death, where's your victory? Death, where's your sting?"

Just as Paul quoted from Isaiah 25:8 in verse 54 (which was from the heart of Isaiah's prophecies about the end times from chapter 24 through 29), so he quoted from Hosea 13:14 (which is from the end of God's prophecies through Hosea of obvious spiritual death and spiritual resurrection of Israel; otherwise, there would've been no Israelites left to receive the promises of God in the end times).

I've mentioned in previous studies about Hosea being Paul's setting for this chapter from beginning to end: After initially bringing Hosea to mind (cf. v. 4 w/ Hos. 6:1-2), and after talking about the sowing and dying of the body of Israel in order that she may be brought back into fellowship-life with God (cf. 1 Cor. 15:35-44 w/ Hos. 2:23 & 6:1-2), and after making an application about all of that for the Corinthians (vv. 45-50), Paul then wrote about when this change would occur (vv. 51-54), leading him back to Hosea at his conclusion: Hosea 13:14 to which Paul alluded has God saying, "I will ransom them [the Israelites] from the power of Sheol; I will redeem them from death. O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where's your sting?" (a blend of ASV & NASB). (Note: Some manuscripts have "hades" instead of "death" in verse 55 likely because of "sheol" being found in Hosea 13:14.)

As with Isaiah 25:8, and as I've stated before, no real and honest scholar out there anywhere that I've ever heard of believes that Hosea was talking about a literal, biological death or resurrection, meaning that, since Paul said Isaiah and Hosea would be fulfilled at the time of Jerusalem's demise, this chapter does not concern the resurrection of earthly bodies from holes in the ground but the resurrection of reconciliation to God, referring in fact to the same thing about which he wrote in Romans 6. By the way...

In the first two verses of that Hosea chapter from which Paul quoted (chapter 13), we find this bit of helpful, interesting, and relevant information: Speaking of Israel it says that "when he exalted himself through Baal worship, *he died*," past tense; then it goes on to say in present tense, "Now they [the Israelites] sin more and more." So...

If physical death was that about which Hosea and therefore Paul wrote, then how could the Israelites have gone on committing sin after that? Furthermore...

If the promise of Hosea 13 has not been fulfilled, then every jot and tittle of the Law has not been fulfilled, leaving no alternative but for us to believe that we're still under the Law, since it couldn't pass before all things were fulfilled. How difficult is it to see that? Anyway, this point leads well into Paul's next statement:

Verse 56: But the sting of the death [is] the sin, but the power of the sin [is] the Law. And...

That's the literal rendering: *the* sting, *the* death, *the* sin, & the power of *the* Law. So...

What's "the" sin? The sin of the context here (as in Rom. 5) is "the" sin of Adam which was the decision to go his own way, live his own life, by his own carnal desires, regardless of what God desired—it was essentially the sin of arrogance, conceit, and independence, i.e. the belief that he didn't need his Creator.

What's "the" death? It was the specific death associated with *that* sin, the same "the" death talked about in Romans 5 (which, by the way, is obviously fellowship death because Romans 5:18 defines the death as "condemnation" as opposed to the life Jesus provides being "justification," thus nothing to do with physical death). And...

Since we're talking about this death being associated with the sin, i.e. the sin of Adam, then what was the death Adam died "the day" in which he sinned? That's right—fellowship death, he was separated from God, corresponding to his wish for independence. (Sort of reminds us of the saying, "Be careful what ya ask for, 'cuz you just might get it.") So...

Like a scorpion, the sin is the stinger which inserted that venom which led to the death. But what gave the sin its power to achieve this? "The Law." And...

What's "the" Law? This seems too obvious to even spend time on here, but it was "the Law" of God through Moses—the epitome of law—perfect law. For those who wanted to prove they could live righteously by law, or for those who thought they could regain fellowship with God by law, God gave them the perfect law. But could man keep that perfect law which would indeed merit those things? No. So...

Since man couldn't keep perfect law (the only law worth keeping), then all that law ultimately did was intensify or, as Paul put it, become the strength of sin!

"The" Law, which was the epitome of any devised law, was sin's power to inflict eternal fellowship death upon man; we just need to keep in mind that if the Law from God couldn't reconcile us, then no law can reconcile us, meaning that any law, all law, merely condemns—it cannot justify. So...

Here's the MAIN point here, so we MUST get this: Paul was saying that when the Law (the epitome of all law) was removed, sin's power and sting was removed, and therefore the last enemy—the sin-death of verse 26—was removed ... again, for those who accept Christ's sacrifice for them. So...

The end of sin, and therefore the end of sin-death (about which Daniel prophesied 9: 24-27), occurred simultaneously with the removal or the end of the Law. And...

When was the Law removed in its totality? When that which represented it was removed, viz. the city of Jerusalem, the temple, the priesthood, and the Jews which all occurred around the events of AD 70, fulfilling all prophecy (Luke 21:22). Thus...

With sin-death destroyed, resurrection of the saints to spiritual life was the result. When? Thousands of years later? No, concurrent with the removal of the Law—the power behind sin's sting. It's only logical. Isn't it?

Verse 57: But thanks to God who is giving to us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

After all the times we've made sure to take notice of the tenses the Holy Spirit chose to employ throughout this chapter, we can't help but catch this one here as well: At the time Paul wrote this, God was in the process of giving those first generation saints the victory through Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Tim. 4:8 & Titus 2:13). This tells us two things:

It didn't happen at the death, burial, and resurrection or even at the ascension of Jesus Christ as so many claim. Because Jesus said "It's finished" on the cross, folks want to say that all was accomplished at that point; however, not only did He say that *before* He was even resurrected, but God also made this same statement later in Revelation (10:7 & 21:6), meaning that Jesus was referring to all that He could accomplish *on Earth* had been accomplished. Furthermore...

The statement of Paul that God was, at that time, giving them the victory through Jesus Christ tells us that it was an imminent victory, one that corresponded to the time statement he provided earlier in verse 51, viz. that some of those of his audience wouldn't die before the time of the resurrection, the spiritual metamorphosis from the body of sin-death to the body of righteous-life, which corresponds to the time of the abolishment of the Law just a few years after this letter was penned.

Besides in First Corinthians 15, the term for "victory" here is only to be found one other time in the NT: Matthew 12:20.

This verse is part of a quote from Isaiah 42:1-7 about the coming of the promised Messiah; as with many Old Testament prophecies about this event, this passage speaks of it as though it would be one event (and, in a sense, it was), even though we normally see it as two events: His first coming as a human baby (cf. Heb. 10:5), then His second coming a generation after His ascension (cf. Heb. 9:28).

Here in Matthew 12:18-21, we can see God touching on His coming as a nice quiet fella who came to seek and save the lost, then He's pictured as One who'd come in judgment. Listen: "Behold, My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased; I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He will declare justice to the Gentiles. He won't quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He won't break, and smoking flax He won't quench, *till* He sends forth [lit.] the judgment to victory. And in His name Gentiles will trust."

Now on to Paul's Last Statement in this Chapter:

Verse 58: Consequently, my beloved brethren, become settled, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Firstly, notice the term "consequently"; i.e., Paul was saying, "Since these things are presently being fulfilled through you, in your lifetime, you must become settled," etc.

Secondly, this verse verifies that Paul had been dealing only with the resurrection of saints, those who were on the very heels of finally and victoriously overcoming that notorious and dreaded enemy called "death." They, not the wicked of the world, were promised immortality. Let me add one more thing as we close:

Since there's no biological resurrection for us to expect, what remains for the righteous after death? Just listen to the comforting words of the Spirit to John in Revelation 14:13: "Write, 'Happy are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, let them rest from their labors, for their works follow with them.'"

Very Significant in Relation to the Timing of The Resurrection of First Corinthians 15

Every place there's a present active indicative translated as a present participle in the NKJV NT (V-PAI in *Robinson's Morphological Greek Word Analysis Codes* in *The Word* program; the "A" represents the "Active" mood):

Matthew 2:22	Reigning
Matthew 26:45	Sleeping
Romans 2:5	Treasuring
Romans 14:15	Walking
1 Corinthians 3:3	Behaving
1 Corinthians 7:12 & 13	Willing
1 Corinthians 7:31	Passing
2 Corinthians 1:13	Writing
2 Corinthians 10:1	Pleading
2 Corinthians 10:14	Extending
Ephesians 6:21	Doing
1 Thessalonians 5:11	Doing
2 Timothy 2:23	Knowing
Titus 3:11	Sinning
James 5:13	Suffering
2 Peter 3:9	Longsuffering
1 John 2:8	Shining
1 John 2:11	Going
3 John 1:10	Putting
Revelation 1:16	Shining
Revelation 17:11	Going

[And Romans 4:2 is interesting.]

The one place there's a present impersonal active indicative translated as a present participle in the NKJV (V-PQI in Robinson's; the "Q" represents the "Impersonal Active"):

Ephesians 5:3	Fitting
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The two places there are present middle/passive indicatives translated as a present participles in the NKJV (V-PEI in Robinson's; the "E" represents "Either middle/passive"):

Galatians 1:6	Turning
Galatians 3:3	Being

Every place there's a present middle indicative translated as a present participle in the NKJV (V-PMI in Robinson's; the "M" represents the "Middle"):

Matthew 8:25	Perishing
Matthew 26:45	Sleeping
Mark 4:38	Perishing
Luke 7:39	Touching
Luke 8:24	Perishing
Luke 16:3	Taking
Luke 16:16	Pressing
2 Corinthians 4:12	Working
1 John 2:8	Passing

[And Luke 22:29 is interesting.]

Every place there's a present middle/passive deponent indicative translated as a present participle in the NKJV (V-PNI in Robinson's; the "N" represents the "Middle/Passive DepoNent"):

Matthew 3:14, 16:11, 24:42, 44, 25:6 & 13	Coming
Matthew 27:24	Rising
Mark 13:35	Coming
Luke 3:16, 12:40, 54, & 23:29	Coming
Luke 5:22	Reasoning
Luke 14:19	Going
Luke 18:37	Passing
John 3:26, 4:21, 23, 25, 5:7, 25, 28, 6:5, & 9:4	Coming
John 5:17	Working [Twice]
John 11:20, 12:15, 14:28, 30, 16:2, 25, & 32	Coming
John 21:3	Going
Acts 9:11	Praying
Romans 9:1	Lying
Romans 15:25	Going
1 Corinthians 16:5	Passing
2 Corinthians 4:17	Working
2 Corinthians 11:31	Lying
2 Corinthians 13:1	Coming
Colossians 3:6	Coming
1 Timothy 2:7	Lying
Hebrews 8:8	Coming
Hebrews 11:8	Going
1 John 2:18	Coming
Revelation 1:7, 9:12, 11:14, 16:15, 22:7, 12, & 20	Coming

Every place there's a present passive indicative translated as a present participles in the NKJV (V-PPI in Robinson's; the "P" represents the "Passive"):

Matthew 25:8	Going
Mark 9:31	Being
Mark 14:41	Being
Acts 10:6, 18, & 32	Lodging
Acts 23:6 & 24:21	Being
Romans 1:20	Being
2 Corinthians 3:18 & 4:16	Being
2 Corinthians 4:16	Perishing
Ephesians 2:22	Being
Philippians 2:17	Being
2 Timothy 4:6	Being
1 Peter 2:5	Being

[And Matthew 11:5 & Luke 7:22 are interesting.]

So the query is this: Why didn't they do the same with/in First Corinthians 15? Bias perhaps?

1 Corinthians 15:15, 16, 29, 32, & 35	"are being raised up"
1 Corinthians 15:36	"is being made alive"
1 Corinthians 15:42-44	"is being raised"
1 Corinthians 15:45	"is making alive"
1 Corinthians 15:50	"is not inheriting"
Also Important Is 1 Corinthians 15:26	"is being rendered"