

THE LARGER AND SHORTER CATECHISMS.

WHAT MAN OUGHT TO BELIEVE CONCERNING GOD

QUESTIONS # 90 & 38.

(Larger Catechism)

Q #90. *What shall be done to the righteous at the day of judgment?*

A. At the day of judgment, the righteous, being caught up to Christ in the clouds,¹ shall be set on his right hand, and there openly acknowledged and acquitted,² shall join with him in the judging of reprobate angels and men,³ and shall be received into heaven,⁴ where they shall be fully and for ever freed from all sin and misery;⁵ filled with inconceivable joys,⁶ made perfectly holy and happy both in body and soul, in the company of innumerable saints and holy angels,⁷ but especially in the immediate vision and fruition of God the Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, to all eternity.⁸ And this is the perfect and full communion, which the members of the invisible church shall enjoy with Christ in glory, at the resurrection and day of judgment.

(Shorter Catechism)

Q #38. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?*

A. At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory,⁹ shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment,¹⁰ and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God,¹¹ to all eternity.¹²

Question 1—*What shall the day of judgment hold for the righteous?*

Answer—The day of judgment, which shall take place at Christ's coming again, shall commence with the righteous being caught up to meet Christ in the clouds, 1 Thess. 4:17. At that time, believers who have fallen asleep in Christ, 1 Thess. 4:14; will be raised from death and raised up in glory, 1 Cor. 15:43. For those who remain alive at his coming, they shall be changed in a manner that will conform their bodies to that same state of glory, 1 Cor. 15:51.

This rising again is insured by several considerations: 1.) God's covenant with believers, which is with their whole man, body and soul, Matt. 22:32. 2.) The end of Christ's death was to destroy death and the grave, Hos. 13:14. 3.) The resurrection of Christ, for he was

¹ 1 Thess. 4:17.

² Matt. 25:33; 10:32.

³ 1 Cor. 6:2, 3.

⁴ Matt. 25:34, 46.

⁵ Eph. 5:27; Rev. 14:13.

⁶ Ps. 16:11.

⁷ Heb. 12:22, 23.

⁸ 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 4:17, 18.

⁹ 1 Cor. 15:43.

¹⁰ Matt. 25:23; 10:32.

¹¹ 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 13:12.

¹² 1 Thess. 4:17, 18.

the first fruits and his harvest of his people must follow, 1 Cor. 15:22, 23. 4.) The union of believers with Christ whereby he has redeemed their bodies as well as souls, Rom. 8:23.

The righteous shall arise: 1.) Happily, as rising to life, eternal life, when others arise to ruin, Dan. 12:2. 2.) Joyfully, as the bride of Christ rising out of her bed for marriage, Isa. 26:19. 3.) Gloriously, having been made like unto Christ's glorious body, Phil. 3:21.

As noted, their bodies shall be changed so that they are raised in glory which shall appear: 1.) They shall be raised incorruptible, 1 Cor. 15:42. Now the members of their living bodies are liable to corruption, when they die all putrefying together, *cf.* Job 17:14; but then they will never more be liable to putrefaction, Luke 20:36; never more liable to sickness, death, nor the least pain, to wearing or wearying, 1 Pet. 1:4. 2.) They shall be raised glorious, 1 Cor. 15:43. The seat of beauty will not be the face but the whole body, and the most ill-favored saint will outstrip the now greatest beauty, Matt. 13:43. There shall be no more defects nor deformities in those bodies, Phil. 3:21. 3.) There will be no more feebleness and weakness, they shall be raised powerful and strong, 1 Cor. 15:43. They shall be conformed and made to bear the weight of glory without failing, Phil. 3:10. 4.) They shall be raised spiritual, like spirits, though these remain corporeal bodies, 1 Cor. 15:44. Yet, they shall no longer need the necessary supplies of nature, meat, drink, *etc.*; nor the warmth of clothing, or the restoration of health by medicines, Matt. 22:30. Rather they shall be active and nimble like spirits, Luke 24:31; John 20:19, 26.

The righteous, together with the wicked, shall be arrayed before the throne of Christ's tribunal, and a division shall be made so that the former are made to occupy the position on the right hand of Christ, Matt. 25:33.

The end of this separation of the righteous from the wicked shall be to be acknowledged openly by Jesus Christ, their Lord and Judge, Matt. 10:32. This acknowledgement shall stand in several things: 1.) He will own them for his own, and acknowledge the relations they stand in to him, Mal. 3:17; whereas, of the wicked, he will confess he never knew them, Matt. 7:23. 2.) He acknowledges them not only within himself but before the Father, John 17:9, 10; and by the testimony of his Spirit to their sonship, Rom. 8:16. 3.) He will do this before many witnesses, so as men and devils shall be obliged to understand, that they are those whom the Father delights to honor in the Son, Rev. 3:5; in effect saying to his Father, behold I and the children thou hast given me, Heb. 2:13.

Moreover, in that day, they shall openly acquitted by the Lord by that sentence solemnly passed in their favor, whereby they are adjudged to life, Matt. 25:34. This acquittal shall carry with it degrees of blessing which correspond to the degrees of faithfulness exercised in this present life, Matt. 25:23.

Question 2—*What shall be the fruit of this acknowledgement and acquittal?*

Answer—Immediately, upon entrance into this confirmed state of the righteous they shall be, themselves being acquitted, honored to be Christ's assessors in judging the wicked, 1 Cor. 6:1, 2. They shall judge them by way of communion with Christ their head, Rev. 3:21; and by approbation of the Judge's sentence against them, saying *Amen* to the doom of the wicked, Rev. 19:1, 3.

Then, they shall be made perfect in blessedness in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity being admitted and received into heaven, Matt. 25:34, 46. That wherein this perfect blessedness appears in heaven consists in these things:

First, they shall have a perfect freedom from all evil whatsoever, whether of sin or of misery, Rev. 14:13. Thus blessed shall believers be then, perfectly free from sin, Eph. 5:27; and free from suffering any manner of way, Rev. 21:4.

Second, they shall be filled with inconceivable joys and satisfaction to all the desires of the soul, Ps. 16:11. They shall be made perfectly holy and happy, body and soul, in that communion of saints and angels in the heavenly Jerusalem, Heb. 12:22, 23.

The great thing which shall make them perfectly blessed is the enjoyment of God, whose glorious presence shall be with them, Rev. 21:3. Thus, they shall see him as he is, the man Christ with their bodily eyes, and the invisible God with the eyes of the mind, which is called the beatific vision, 1 John 3:2.

This vision of God shall be enjoyed in three ways: 1.) Immediately, not in the use of means and ordinances, but there they sit down at the fountain-head, Rev. 21:22. 2.) Fully, for God will withhold nothing of himself from them, they shall not be limited by any measure but that of their own capacity, which will be prepared to its fullest reception, 1 Cor. 13:12. 3.) Eternally, for there will be no end of vision or delight, to the great comfort of believers, 1 Thess. 4:17, 18.