

# AFTER THE RESURRECTION WHAT?

by

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## CHAPTER ONE

### MOUNTAIN PEAKS IN CHRIST'S CAREER

TO STUDY CHRIST you must take the long look backward, in the endless eternity before time began to register, an intensive study of the period we call time, and then a long forward look to the endless ages of eternity ahead. The Bible begins with **“In the beginning God . . .”**

John, the love letter writer of the Gospels, gives his wonderful record of the inner life of Jesus by saying, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”**

Evidently these two descriptions are about the same great God. Jesus said of Himself, **“Before Abraham was, I am”** (John 8:58), and John said of Him, **“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”** (Revelation 13:8).

His eternal existence is established beyond question in the truths of the Bible. He was the Father's agent in creation, in preservation, in revelation, in the eternal home-building, and in the consummation of all things.

### HIS PRENATAL APPEARANCES

The identity of the personality of these appearances is not sure. Some of them were in the form of angels, some of men; in some it was the Lord Himself that appeared according to the Scriptures.

Hebrews 1:1-3 says, **“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds: Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”**

Evidently, then, some of the following divine appearances were either Christ Himself or His angelic representatives.

- He appeared to Adam as Lord (Genesis 3:8-19);
- To Cain as Lord (Genesis 4:4-7);
- To Abraham as Lord (Genesis 12:7-17; 18:1-33);
- To Hagar as the Angel of the Lord (Genesis 16:7-12);
- To Lot as two Angels (Genesis 19:1-25);
- To Jacob as “**I am the Lord**” (Genesis 28:10-19);
- To Moses as God (Exodus 3:4) and as Lord (Exodus 5:1-17);
- To Balaam as an angel of the Lord (Numbers 22:22-35);
- To Joshua as the captain of the host of the Lord (Joshua 5:13-15);
- To Israel as an angel of the Lord (Judges 2:1-5);
- To Manoah (Judges 13:1-23);
- To Elijah as the angel of the Lord (I Kings 19:4-7);
- To Isaiah as the Lord sitting upon His throne (Isaiah 6:1-5);
- To Ezekiel as the glory of the Lord (Ezekiel 1:26-28);
- To Daniel as one like unto the Son of man (Daniel 7:13-23; 10:5-21).

These and many other instances of divine appearances are recorded in the Old Testament in which the Lord appeared, giving instruction, courage, comfort, or setting out His program for men.

### **HIS SUPERNATURAL BIRTH**

The first great earthly incident in the career of Jesus Christ is the incident connected with His supernatural birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:25-36).

### **HIS SUFFERINGS IN THE GARDEN**

Probably the most tragic pre-crucifixion hour of Christ is what happened in the Garden of Gethsemane, that lonely, dark night while His tired disciples slept at the gate. He calls it “**a cup**” which He had to drink, a bitter cup in which God had distilled the quintessence of the world’s deepest sorrow.

- He drank the cup without faltering or complaining.
- He drank it to its bitter dregs.
- He called it “a baptism” with which He had to be baptized.

In Gethsemane, on Calvary, and in the tomb God immersed Him in the world’s darkest grave of the baptism of suffering. Surely that was a peak in Christ’s career. He there took the poignant pain out of the darkest suffering for all who believe in Him.

It was the beginning of the price of blood which He paid for the world’s redemption.

## HIS SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH

This was the climax of sin. Sin did its worst, painted its blackest picture, drew forth its deadliest groans and hallelujahed its greatest temporary triumph when it nailed the holy Son of God to the two arms of the cross. Nature protested, the earthquake thundered, the graves opened their doors and the dead came out, the sun and moon and stars turned to blackness as they hid their faces from the death of their Lord; and yet the deadliest of sin's deeds was turned into the brightest light of hope for the sinner's destiny. Here sin did its worst for God's best and God's best did His best for sin's worst.

- Nowhere has sin such a show of guilt.
- Nowhere has love such a depth of flow.
- Nowhere has power such a demonstration of effectiveness as in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## HIS BODILY RESURRECTION

When Jesus came according to prophecy and promise from the grave with a new body, visible, touchable, lovable, and in triumph from death's slimy grip, sin had its heaviest blow and life its climactic glow. Without a resurrection of Christ's body, sin's triumph would have been complete and our doom perfect. No resurrection, no pardon—we are still in our sins. No resurrection, no hope—all the horizons of the soul are midnight darkness. But He arose, He lives, He reigns, with His triumphant, conquering power upon the head of the serpent, and He is ours forevermore.

## HIS VISIBLE ASCENSION

He not only arose bodily from the grave, but He ascended visibly from Olivet in the sight of His up-looking and loving disciples. He broke all the laws of gravitation or brought in the super-intervention of a higher law, a law of heavenly compulsion. These disciples, not mystified but divinely inspired, welcomed His departure from the highest peak around Jerusalem to the highest peak of the heavenly hills. These disciples saw Him, walked with Him, talked with Him, ate with Him, put their doubting fingers in the nail-riven prints of crucifixion, heard and recognized His voice, saw His demonstrated power and longingly watched Him as He went back home for the divinely appointed task of intercession and mansion-building.

## HIS PROMISED RETURN

The two men in white on the peak of Olivet, as He went up by means of some heavenly airplane, said to His watching disciples, **“This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”**

- He will come.
- He is coming.

Two thousand years ago it was said, **“He is near, even at the door.”**

Remembering that a thousand years Is as a day and a day a thousand years, He is coming and will some glad day appear.

These eight appearances of our Savior, beginning in prehistoric eternity and ending in the last triumphant sound of time's departure, show us briefly the eternal sketch of our Redeemer.

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