

“The God of the Living”

Companion Paper to the Sermon Delivered at Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket, RI, on Easter Sunday, April 9th, 2023, By James Moriello

“But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” (Matthew 22:31-32, NKJV)

Many people today, even religious people and professing believers in God, deny the supernatural to some degree or other. It is human pride to deny divine power just because it cannot be fully understood or duplicated by human means. By definition God is supernatural, and cannot be fully understood or comprehended. The Sadducees were the religious party in Jesus’ day that denied the resurrection, and they thought they could outsmart the Son of God! Good luck to anyone trying to do that. These religious men had invented an extremely unlikely situation that they thought proved their point. But the Lord confounded them. The Sadducees only accepted the first five books of the Bible as canonical, and Jesus responded with a quote from Exodus 3:6, which they could not dispute. So we learn that the resurrection is not only taught and proven in the New Testament, but also in the Old Testament. It is taught regarding men, and also regarding Jesus Christ. The legal standard in our country is proof beyond a reasonable doubt. The proofs concerning the doctrine of the resurrection of both God and men exceed this standard. Listen carefully please, friends, as we look at the proofs. Let the faithful rejoice and the skeptic consider.

Old Testament Bible verses that teach us that there will be a resurrection of men are as follows:

1. We call Job to the stand. “For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:25-27)
2. We call the Sons of Korah, who wrote Psalm 49, to the stand. “But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, For He shall receive me. Selah” (Psalm 49:15).
3. We call the prophet Daniel to the stand. “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2).

4. Our fourth Old Testament witness is Hosea. “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction! Pity is hidden from My eyes” (Hosea 13:14).
5. Finally, concerning the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, David testifies, “For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption” (Psalm 16:10).

New Testament Bible verses that teach us that there will be a resurrection of men are as follows:

1. Jesus said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). There must be a resurrection. Otherwise, how could Jesus say that the believer should not perish when all men do in fact die a physical death?
2. Jesus also said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (John 5:24-29).
3. We call the Apostle Paul to the stand. “Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:5-8). And again God inspired Paul to write in our Bibles, “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 4:14).
4. We recall what Jesus taught about His own resurrection before it happened! “So the Jews answered and said to Him, “What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?” Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple,

and in three days I will raise it up.” Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” But He was speaking of the temple of His body. Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said” (John 2:18-22).

5. And again and again, while on earth, Jesus spoke to His disciples after this manner, “From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day” (Matthew 16:21).
6. And all the while, our Lord chose the time of His death, but He loves us so much to save us, He was compelled to do it. “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father” (John 10:17-18).
7. Then, the most pivotal event in human history occurred, nearly 2,000 years ago. “Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay” (Matthew 28:1-6).
8. Let us call more witnesses to the fact that Jesus was dead and yet lives! More than 500 of them! The Apostle Paul further testifies, “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, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. 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” (1 Corinthians 15:3-8). The story could be checked out, and it was, and nobody could reasonably deny the

resurrection of Jesus Christ. Men swept it under the rug. They have been doing that for two millennia.

So, what say you? Do you believe in the resurrection, that Jesus rose from the grave on the third day, and that someday everyone will rise again to give an account of what they did with Jesus and what they did with their lives on earth? Do you believe in the resurrection? If so, why do you act as if there is no hope in your life, living in fear and anxiety? If so, what makes you think that you will escape accountability? God is the Living God and “**the God of the living.**” Are there parts of the Bible that say exactly what they say, and can mean only one thing, but yet you have cleverly devised arguments and logic to excuse away their obvious truth and conviction in your life?

Having set before us a heavy barrage of challenges and exhortations, let us now close with some words of consolation. Jesus Christ, the Living God, is “**God the living,**” because He died and rose again. If you believe this, then you are among the “**living**”, and you have eternal life in and with God, and nobody can ever take that away from you (Cf. John 10:28-29). Since God can raise the dead, even Himself, then He can surely providentially, naturally, and supernaturally work in your life. Christian friend, your hope is certain, and stands in stark contrast to this uncertain world. Rejoice in your certain hope this day and this season, and faint not because of fear of earthly pestilence or trouble. Resurrection hope and victory are given to us by “**the God of the living.**”