

Westminster Shorter Catechism Study
Session 21
The Benefits After Death of Being Born Again

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

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

Q. 39. What is the duty which God requires of man?

A. The duty which God requires of man, is obedience to his revealed will.

Q. 40. What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?

A. The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law.

The Resurrection

“The time of the resurrection is not revealed. But the Scriptures teach that the following events are to occur together in immediate succession: (1) The Second Coming of Christ; (2) the Resurrection of the Evil and the Good; (3) the General Judgment; (4) the End of the World; (5) the Final Award of Rewards and Punishment (Matt. 24:30; Dan. 12:2; John 5:28, 29; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 4:16; Matt. 7:21, 23; 13:30-43; 16:24-27; 25:31-46; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 2 Pet. 3:7-13).” – A.A. Hodge

“(a) All men, good and bad, are to rise together, “they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation””

Daniel 12: 2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

3 Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.

John 5: 28 "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice

29 "and come forth -- those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Acts 24:15 "I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.

“(b) The same bodies which are deposited in the graves shall be raised and united to their respective souls again

(c) But they will be changed (not exchanged) in quality, and in all else necessary to adapt them [1] to the uses of our perfectly glorified souls in their high estate, and [2] to the physical conditions of the “new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness””

10 Cor. 15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.

43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

1 Cor. 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed --

52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

The Final Judgement

Matthew 25:33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

46 "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Romans 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Psalms 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

1 Thess. 4:15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

The Duty God Requires of Man

“The consciousness of obligation is universal. Of even the heathen it is said, “They show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness” (Rom. 2:15). Any utterance of the will of God is recognized at once as obligatory, demanding immediate and perfect obedience (Deut. 5:1, 31, 33; Luke 10:26, 27; 1 Thess. 5:23). The character of God’s will, and therefore of our duty, depends upon what has already been considered—God’s nature, his relations to us and purposes concerning us, as manifested in his works of creation, providence and redemption. If he be holy, “the law is holy and the commandment holy, just and good” (Rom. 7:12). If we be his creatures and his elect, formed, preserved and redeemed “to glorify God and enjoy him for ever,” then we must be perfect as he is perfect, conformed unto his likeness (Gen. 1:26; 1 Pet. 1:16; Rom. 8:29). Therefore, this will of God is absolutely unchangeable, obligatory upon all and under all circumstances. It cannot be modified to suit man’s ability. It was in force before and after the fall, and under both dispensations. It is the foundation of every covenant. Salvation is possible only by the perfect satisfaction of this law by Christ in behalf of his people, and we as such must keep his commandments (Romans).” – A.A. Hodge

Deut. 29:29 "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

1 John 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

Romans 2:14 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves,

15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)

“It is the same law, however revealed—by God’s works or word. In creation we perceive only “his eternal power and Godhead” (Rom. 1:20). His providence is often incomprehensible (Ps. 73). Therefore he has revealed his will in human language. The word of God is the only rule to direct us. It is a perfect rule.

(1) It is the fullest and clearest revelation.

(2) Its commands and prohibitions are final.

(3) Nothing is sinful which it does not condemn, nor obligatory which it does not require.

This revealed law is called moral, because it concerns character, questions of right and wrong, holiness and sin. It is distinguished from:

(1) natural laws, as of day and night, bounds of the sea, growth and decay, etc. (Ps. 73:13-17; 104; Jer. 33:25);

(2) the national law, that judicial code enjoined on the Jewish nation as such (Conf. of Faith, chap. 19, sect. 4; Ex. 21; 22:1-29);

(3) the ceremonial law, foretelling and prefiguring the redemption of Christ (Conf. of Faith, chap. 19, sec. 3; Heb. 10:1; Gal. 4:1, 2, 3; Col. 2:14-17). These depending upon the present order of nature, the temporary condition of the Jews and the preparatory form of the mystery of salvation, all of which are transient, are temporary laws. But the moral law, based on the divine nature and on the fact that we were made in the image of God, is abiding and unchangeable.

This moral law was revealed to Adam in the manner and object of his creation, in his nature and in his constant communion with God (Gen. 1:26; 2:7; 3:8).” – A.A. Hodge