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Lessons From David's Child

I have often wondered how much the patriarchs and those who lived under the Law knew about the resurrection of the dead. During the time that Christ was on the Earth, the religious leadership was divided into two opposing viewpoints. The Sadducees denied that there would be a resurrection and went so far as to say there was **“neither angel, nor spirit”** (Acts 23.8). Christ was tempted by the Sadducees who constructed a scenario concerning a woman who had married seven brothers and asked, **“Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.”** (Matt 22.28). Christ’s answer was quick and to the point as he called upon the scriptures for the answer. **“For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”** (Matt 22.30-32). Christ points to the importance of paying attention to the way in which something is stated in the scriptures. We understand that all scripture has been delivered to us through inspiration (2 Tim 3.16) and thus conveys truths that we must sometimes meditate on, that is devote our deliberate attention to understanding them. It is apparent that throughout the Old Testament, as God addressed Moses at Mount Sinai, He gave his identity as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Ex 3.6). When God stated this to Moses he referred to the patriarchs in the present tense. Christ tells us in his response to the Sadducees that this is because God is the Lord of the living, not of the dead. Most of us are familiar with the story of David and his sin with Bathsheba which resulted in a complex conspiracy and murder to hide what he had done (2 Sam 11). One of the consequences that God imposed on David for this was that the child that had been conceived was to die. We find later that while the child was sick, David prayed and fasted for him (2 Sam 12.15-17). When David was told that the child was dead he did not react as those around him had feared. When David learned that the child was dead, he arose, washed and then ate. Later he explained his actions and stated, **“While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”** (2 Sam 12.22-23). David understood that the child had gone to a place where he could be also and had the assurance that this could be achieved through repentance, living with the consequences that God had stated (2 Sam 12.10-12), and continued faithfulness to God. David shows us that he had the knowledge of salvation and a home with God. The point to this is that many times we have questions about things, some of which may be difficult to answer. When this occurs, where do we look for answers. Some turn to those who know the scriptures and are able to help them understand through the knowledge that they have gained through study. Others may see that Bible as a mysterious riddle that cannot be understood and turn to the writing of the best selling false teachers of the day. Millions of dollars are spent each year purchasing the writings of religious authors who serve up explanations based more on their own life experiences and interpretations of passages. These explanations may contain some degree of scriptural accuracy but sow the seeds of confusion and do more to cloud issues than offer sound answers. There is an old adage that the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself. Christ often rebuked those of the first century for not knowing the scriptures and therefore not recognizing who he was. The same holds true for us. We cannot understand God’s word if we do not spend time with it. We are assured that studying and reading is that which will enlighten, inform and provide knowledge. Knowledge, when applied to our lives, leads to sound spiritual wisdom and a life that is grounded in truth. It is not wrong to seek the opinions of others concerning difficult passages, but we must always spend time with the word of God ourselves to see that these things are so. The Bible yields it’s depth and richness only to those who are willing to spend the time to explore, apply, pray and understand. In our microwave culture the time to do this may seem cumbersome and some give up before achieving the understanding that is needed. Personal study is the only thing that will increase our spiritual understanding and ultimately make us pleasing to God, not the latest religious best seller.

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