Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:

https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology

https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb

PayPal https://paypal.me/robbradshaw

A table of contents for the *Journal of Theological Studies (old series)* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jts-os_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[1st page of article]

NOTES AND STUDIES

THE RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH.

WESTERN baptismal creeds, from the Old Roman creed onwards, almost without exception profess faith in the Resurrection of the Flesh. *Omnium corporum*[1] takes the place of *carnis* in a Gallican form (Hahn, § 64), and an African creed (Hahn, § 52) has *omnium hominum*[2]; but *carnis resurrectionem* (or *r. carnis*) stands in all normal and official recensions of the Apostles' Creed.[3]

English versions of the Creed prior to the fourth decade of the sixteenth century uniformly represent *carnis*; see the forms printed in Maskell *mon. rit.* ii p. 240 ff; Heurtley *harm. symb.* p. 88 ff; Hahn §§ 78–89. In Hilsey's Primer (1539) 'body' is substituted for 'flesh' (Brightman *The English Rite* ii p. 780), and this change is adopted in *The Necessary Doctrine* (1543), where, however, the context shews that no doctrinal significance is to be attributed to it (*Formularies of the Faith*, ed. Lloyd, p. 251). Possibly it was under the influence of these two documents that Cranmer printed 'body' in the creed of the Catechism (1549), and in the creed of Mattins (1552). Bishop Dowden describes this as 'an error for which there is no excuse' (*Workmanship of the PB.* p. 101); but it may have been deliberate.[4] In either case the change was not made consistently throughout the book; 'Resurrection of the Flesh' was retained in the Baptismal office (1549, 1552, 1661), and in the Visitation of the Sick.[5] The English Church, in common with the other Churches of the West, continues to baptize her children into the belief that the Flesh shall rise again.

The phrase 'Resurrection of the Flesh', though now characteristically Western, was at first not without support in the East, where, indeed, it was perhaps the earlier form. The creed of Jerusalem, as given by Cyril (*catech.* xviii 22), had πιστεύομεν . . . εἰς σαρκὸς ἀνάστασιν.[6] Similarly the baptismal creed of the *Apostolical Constitutions* (vii 41): βαπτίζομαι . . . εἰς σαρκὸς ἀνάστασιν. But from the middle of the fourth century the prevalent form of this article in the East is εἰς ἀνάστασιν

[1] Σωμάτων ἀνάστασις occurs already in Tatian (*adv. Graecos* 5).

[2] Cf. the *Quicunque*: 'omnes homines resurgere habent cum corporibus suis.'

[3] The Aquileian creed had *huius carnis* (Hahn, §§ 36, 49); cf. the creed of the Mozarabic Liturgy (*ibid.* § 58).

[4] With the view of bringing the forms of the article nearer to the use of Scripture.

[5] The creed of the Visitation was not printed in full before 1661, but a rubric (1549, 1552) directed that it should be rehearsed 'as it is in Baptisme'.

[6] Cyril's own preference for another form of words is shown by his paraphrase (c. 28), τουτέστι τὴν τῶν νεκρῶν: see Hort *Two Dissertations* p. 91.

νεκρῶν (or τὴν τῶν νεκρῶν, or τ. ἐκ νεκρῶν). If we may judge from the creed of Bishop Alexander (Hahn, § 15), the creed of Alexandria had τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν from the beginning of the century or earlier.[1]

There can be no question which of the two forms (σαρκός, νεκρῶν) is nearest to the phraseology of the New Testament. For ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν (or ἡ ἐκ νεκρῶν) there is abundant authority in Apostolic writings[2]; for σαρκὸς ἀνάστασις there is no N. T. precedent, though σωμάτων ἀνάστασις might claim some support from such passages as Matt. xxvii 52, Rom. viii 11, 23. Indeed, the use of σαρκός in this connexion may seem (as early writers recognized) to fly in the face of 1 Cor. xv 50, and of St Paul's doctrine of the spiritual body. It may be taken, then, as fairly certain that *carnis* in the Old Roman creed is not an echo of the Apostolic tradition. Yet there is some reason to think that it was familiar to the Roman Church before the end of the first century. Clement of Rome (1 Cor. xxvi 3) quotes Job xix 26 in the form ἀναστήσεις τὴν σάρκα μου ταύτην, where cod. B (LXX) has ἀναστήσαι τὸ δέρμα μου, and codd. A ℵ$^{c.a}$ have ἀναστήσει μου τὸ σῶμα. The ancient Latin version of Clement gives *corpus*, but the Greek MSS support τὴν σάρκα. It has been suggested that Clement borrowed τ. σάρκα from what follows in the Hebrew (וּמִבְּשָׂרִי), but it is barely possible that Clement, who, if of Jewish extraction,[3] was a Hellenist, should have had resort to the Hebrew, and corrected his Septuagint from it. More probably he conformed his Greek text to a way of speaking about the Resurrection which was in vogue among Roman Christians in his day. He had learnt to think of the Resurrection as a σαρκὸς or τῆς σαρκὸς ταύτης ἀνάστασις, and if so, the phrase was already current in Rome by 95 or 96; whether it was already an article in a Roman creed, we need not stop to discuss.

What was the origin of this early use of σαρκὸς ἀνάστασις in the Roman Church?

The Ignatian letters may suggest an answer. Ignatius rarely mentions the Resurrection of the Church[4]; but he has much to say about the Resurrection of the Lord. He insists on the reality of the Resurrection, coupling it, as a historical event, with the Passion (*Eph.* 20, *Magn.* 11, *Philad.* praef., 8, *Smyrn.* 7, 12). The Resurrection of Christ, he says, was both in the flesh and in the spirit (καὶ σαρκικὴ καὶ

[1] Hort *ibid.* pp. 80, 91, n. 2; cf. Hahn, § 122. The change was possibly due to the influence of Origen (see below, p. 140).

[2] The phrase is found, with some variety of form, in Matt. xxii 31, Luke xx 35, Acts x 41 &c., Rom. i 4, 1 Cor. xv *passim*, Heb. vi 2.

[3] Lightfoot *Clement of Rome* p. 59 ff.

[4] See e. g. *Eph.* 11 ἐν οἷς γένοιτο μοι ἀναστῆναι. *Trall.* praef. ἐν τῷ εἰς αὐτὸν ἀναστάσει. *Rom.* 4 ἀναστήσομαι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐλεύθερος. *Polyc.* 7 εἰς τὸ εὑρεθῆναί με ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει (!) ὑμῶν μαθητής.

πνευματική, *Smyrn.* 12. 3). He is assured that the Lord after He rose was still in the flesh (*ibid.* 3. 1), not a δαιμόνιον ἀσώματον, but a human being, who could be handled, who could eat and drink. It is clear that this repeated insistence on the fact of the Resurrection of the Lord was directed against the Docetic tendency to reduce it to a purely spiritual event.

The Resurrection of the Church had been called in question at first as inconceivable or impossible: 'there is no resurrection of the dead', some frankly said, or asked how the Resurrection was to be realized; what kind of body the risen would wear (1 Cor. xv 12, 35). A little later, the attack took another form; there were those who held that the Resurrection was 'past already' (2 Tim. ii 18), i. e. they recognized only the spiritual resurrection of Baptism. The first of these positions is pagan, and the second Gnostic, and both were maintained in the early post-Apostolic Church. Thus Polycarp writes with reference to the former (*Philipp.* 7): ὃς . . . λέγει μήτε ἀνάστασιν μήτε κρίσιν, οὗτος πρωτότοκός ἐστι τοῦ Σατανᾶ. Justin (*dial.* 80) speaks of some who bear the Christian name, and yet affirm μὴ εἶναι νεκρῶν ἀνάστασιν, ἀλλὰ ἅμα τῷ ἀποθνήσκειν τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἀναλαμβάνεσθαι εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν. More usually the objectors contented themselves with a denial that the flesh would rise, limiting the resurrection to the spirit. Thus the homily which passes as a second letter of Clement to the Corinthians urges (§ 9): μὴ λεγέτω τις ὑμῶν ὅτι αὕτη ἡ σὰρξ οὐ κρίνεται οὐδὲ ἀνίσταται . . . ὃν τρόπον γὰρ ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ ἐκλήθητε, καὶ ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ ἐλεύσεσθε. And at Rome Hermas writes (*sim.* v 7): βλέπε μήποτε ἀναβῇ ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν σου τὴν σάρκα σου ταύτην φθαρτὴν εἶναι. According to Irenaeus (*haer.* ii 31. 2) the Valentinian schools τοσοῦτον ἀποδέουσι τὸν νεκρὸν ἐγεῖραι . . . 'ut ne quidem credant hoc in totum posse fieri, esse autem resurrectionem a mortuis agnitionem eius quae ab eis dicitur veritatis'. Marcion, he tells us (*haer.* i 27), taught 'salutem solam animarum esse futuram; corpus autem . . . impossibile esse participare salutem'.[1] Of the Gnostic sects generally Tertullian writes (*de resurr. carn.* 19): 'Resurrectionem mortuorum manifeste annuntiatam in imaginariam significationem distorquent, asseverantes ipsam etiam mortem spiritaliter intellegendam.'

The Church, on the other hand, looked for a resurrection which, like that of the Lord, would be one both of flesh and spirit, and it can hardly be doubted that to this contention we owe the phrase *carnis resurrectio.* That it had its origin at Rome is at least probable. To Rome, as we know, all heretics flocked. Valentinus made it his headquarters through the reign of Antoninus Pius; Marcion and Cerdo

[1] Cf. Tertullian *praescr.* 33; *adv. Marc.* v 10; and see Lightfoot *Ignatius* i p. 587.

were in the capital about the same time; Heracleon and Ptolemaeus came a little later. But, as Duchesne says (*Early History*, E. tr. p. 173), 'it is most unlikely that some of those inventors of counterfeit religions, who swarmed in Syria and Asia, had not come from the East to Rome long before this time.' The leaven may have been already working in Clement's days, and opposition to Gnostic teaching on the Resurrection may lie behind his reading of Job xix 26, already mentioned. Certain it is that σαρκὸς ἀνάστασις was a watchword of orthodoxy in Justin's time; *dial.* 80 ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ εἴ τινές εἰσιν ὀρθογνώμονες κατὰ πάντα Χριστιανοὶ . . . σαρκὸς ἀνάστασιν γενήσεσθαι ἐπιστάμεθα. It is possible also that the emphasis laid by the sub-Apostolic Church on the Resurrection of the Flesh may be due in part to the prevalence of chiliastic opinions.[1] From Papias onwards early Catholic Christians expected a reign of Christ on earth to follow the Resurrection: a reign in which the saints in their reconstituted bodies were to have a place. Thus Eusebius (*H. E.* iii 39) says of Papias: χιλιάδα τινά φησιν ἐτῶν ἔσεσθαι μετὰ τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀνάστασιν, σωματικῶς τῆς Χριστοῦ βασιλείας ἐπὶ ταυτησὶ τῆς γῆς ὑποστησομένης. And Justin, immediately after his mention of the Resurrection of the Flesh (cited above), proceeds: καὶ χίλια ἔτη ἐν Ἰερουσαλὴμ οἰκοδομηθείσῃ καὶ κοσμηθείσῃ καὶ πλατυνθείσῃ. How frankly materialistic this millenarian hope could be is plain from the picture of the miraculous productiveness of vine and wheat which Papias attributed to our Lord, and believed to have been handed down by John the disciple of the Lord (Iren. *haer.* v 33. 3 f). Such expectations assumed a resurrection of the flesh, and were not unlikely to have helped to popularize the phrase when it had once been started in the Church's early conflict with the false spirituality of Gnosticism. It is important to ascertain the sense which the flesh was intended to bear in the phrase σαρκὸς ἀνάστασις. Happily the extant Christian literature of the second and third centuries supplies ample material for forming a judgement on this point. The period produced a series of monographs upon the Resurrection, some of which have survived in part or in whole, as well as larger works which deal with the subject more or less fully. The monograph of Clement of Alexandria is no longer extant,[2] and those of Hippolytus[3] and Origen[4] have left but a fragment or two. But we have a large part of the tract on the Resurrection

[1] Lightfoot *Supernatural Religion* p. 151: 'Chiliasm is the rule, not the exception, with the Christian writers of the second century.' He refers to Barnabas, Irenaeus, and Tertullian, besides Papias and Justin.

[2] Harnack *Geschichte der altchr. Literatur* i p. 308.

[3] Lagarde *Hippolytus* p. 90. The title of this book, as given on the Chair, is περὶ θεοῦ καὶ σαρκὸς ἀναστάσεως (Lightfoot *Clement of Rome* ii pp. 329, 398).

[4] Harnack *Geschichte* i p. 383 f.

which is printed among Justin's works, and is probably scarcely later than his time,[1] and complete treatises by Athenagoras and Tertullian. Besides these, the Resurrection is handled by Irenaeus (*haer.* v) and Theophilus (*ad Autolycum* i). From these sources it ought to be possible to make out with some precision what the Church of the first three centuries meant when it professed its faith in the Resurrection of the Flesh.

No essential distinction seems to have been drawn as yet between the resurrection of the flesh, of the body, and of the dead. Thus Tertullian begins his book *De resurrectione carnis* with the words, 'Fiducia Christianorum resurrectio mortuorum.' Our Lord is said ('Justin' *de resurr.* 9) to have been raised σωματικῶς, by a writer who, a sentence or two after, speaks of Him as having risen and ascended ἐν τῇ σαρκί. Irenaeus also appears to use σάρξ and σῶμα almost indifferently; after asking (*haer.* v 2. 3, cf. iv 18. 1) how any can say that the flesh, which is fed by the body and blood of Christ, is incapable of receiving God's gift of eternal life, he proceeds to say that our bodies which have been fed by the Eucharist, though laid in the earth and resolved into it, shall rise again in their season. The flesh seems to be regarded as the material, the body as the organism in which the flesh expresses itself.[2] If so, *resurrectio carnis* asserts the continuity of the substance of the body, while *resurrectio corporum* lays stress on the restoration of the bodily organs. Upon both these points the popular theology of the early Church insisted. Catholic writers were never weary of arguing that the flesh no less than the spirit is the creature of God, and cannot be left to perish in the grave; thus Tertullian *de resurr. carnis* 9 writes 'Absit ut Deus manuum suarum operam . . . in aeternum destituat interitum'. It may be changed, as St Paul has taught us that it will be, but not destroyed; the spiritual body will still be flesh: *ibid.* 55 'aliud enim demutatio, aliud perditio . . . quod mutatum est perditum non est'. Christian teachers of this period were unanimous also in pressing the identity of the risen body in all its parts with the body which was buried. Men are to rise in the same body in which they sinned or conquered sin. 'Resurgit igitur caro' (Tertullian sums up, c. 63) 'et quidem omnis, et quidem ipsa et quidem integra.' Every one of our present members and organs will find its place in the risen body. If it is said of the hairs of our heads that they are all numbered,

[1] Harnack *Geschichte* ii pp. 308 ff, 722.

[2] Jerome (*ep.* 38) draws the distinction thus: 'Omnis caro est corpus, non omne corpus est caro'; giving as an example, 'paries est corpus, sed non caro.' He complains that the Origenist John of Jerusalem used *corpus* many times, and *caro* not once. *Corpus*, he complains, is a 'nomen ambiguum' which 'ad diversas intellegentias trahi potest'. This ambiguity does not seem to have been felt by earlier writers.

what does this mean but that not one of them will perish? (c. 35 'perituros enim quae ratio in numerum redegisset?'). The adversary naturally retorted that even if such a resurrection were possible,[1] it would be futile, since our present limbs and organs would find no functions to fulfil in the life of the world to come. Neither 'Justin' nor Tertullian answers this objection satisfactorily, and in Tertullian we begin to witness the breakdown of the insistence on the resurrection of the body in its present form; in deference to St Paul he admits that there may be such a transformation as to leave only the 'substance' of the flesh (*de resurr. carn.* 55 'mutari, converti, reformari licebit, cum salute substantiae').

This concession did not go far enough to satisfy Origen. The great Alexandrian had no sympathy with the literalism which regarded the Resurrection as a reproduction of the existing body. To Celsus, who had ridiculed the doctrine of the Resurrection as it was commonly preached by the churches, he replies (*c. Cels.* v 18): *οὔτε ἡμεῖς οὔτε τὰ θεῖα γράμματα αὐταῖς φησιν σαρξί, μηδεμίαν μεταβολὴν ἀνειληφότας τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον ζήσεσθαι τοὺς πάλαι τεθνηκότας.* The popular teaching and the Gnostic attempt to refine it were, in Origen's judgement, both at fault; according to Jerome (*ep.* 38, *ad Pammachium*) he held 'duplicem errorem versari in ecclesia, nostrorum et haereticorum'. Christians who clung to the flesh (*φιλόσαρκες*) were in error when they maintained that the risen body would be such as it is now, with hands, feet, and all its parts entire. As St Paul points out, the identity of the body that is raised from the dead with the present body will consist, not in the recovery of the outward form, but in a quasi-seminal relation: 'in ratione humanorum corporum manent quaedam surgendi antiqua principia et quasi *ἐντεριώνη*, id est, seminarium mortuorum, sinu terrae confovetur. quum autem iudicii dies advenerit . . . movebuntur statim semina . . . et mortuos germinabunt, non tamen easdem carnes, nec in his formis restituent quae fuerant.' If we may trust Jerome, Origen went on to give some account of his own conception of the risen body: 'nunc oculis videmus, auribus audimus, manibus agimus, pedibus ambulamus; in illo autem corpore spiritali toti videbimus, toti audiemus, toti operabimur, toti ambulabimus . . . Aliud nobis spiritale et aetherium promittitur, quod nec tactui subiacet, nec oculis cernitur nec pondere praegravatur, et pro locorum in quibus futurum est varietate mutabitur.'[2]

Whether Origen found *νεκρῶν* in his creed, or whether it was substituted for *σαρκός* in the Alexandrian creed under his influence, we do

[1] This was of course denied, but adequately supported by Christian advocates (e.g. 'Justin' *de resurr.* 2 ff; Athenagoras 2, 3).

[2] Compare the interesting fragment of Hippolytus *περὶ ἀναστάσεως* (Lagarde, p. 90).

not know. There seems, however, to have been no necessity laid upon him by his view of the Resurrection body to reject σαρκός. The word σάρξ may be applied to a spiritual body, if it is not assumed that the risen body will not consist of the same flesh, or of flesh of the same character as that which we wear here; as St Paul points out, οὐ πᾶσα σὰρξ ἡ αὐτὴ σάρξ: it is only the Aquileian *huius carnis* which is excluded by Origen's supposition. Nor does the 'Resurrection of the body' involve the restoration of all the parts of the buried body, or, indeed, of any of them; there are σώματα ἐπουράνια as well as σώματα ἐπίγεια, and the analogy of the seed suggests a thorough change: ὃ σπείρεις, οὐ τὸ σῶμα τὸ γενησόμενον σπείρεις.

Thus Western Christians can continue to confess their faith in the 'Resurrection of the flesh', or 'of the body', although in the interpretation of the terms they have learnt to follow Origen rather than Tertullian, and perhaps, if the choice had rested with them, would have preferred to speak only of the 'Resurrection of the dead'.

H. B. SWETE.

THE STORY OF ST JOHN AND THE ROBBER.

IN the July 1916 number of this JOURNAL Dr Swete gathers up the chief points of the evidence relating to John of Ephesus. One of these is drawn from the story of St John and the Robber, found in Clement of Alexandria's *Quis Dives Salvetur*.[1] As this story may throw a little light, not only on the special problem of the relation between John of Ephesus and St John the Apostle, but also on the general question of the Ministry at the end of the first and beginning of the second century, it seems to deserve an examination in some detail.

The story may be briefly told thus. After the death of the 'tyrant', St John the Apostle removed from Patmos and settled at Ephesus. From this city he paid visits by invitation to neighbouring churches, either to appoint bishops, or to regulate church affairs, or to ordain clergy. On one such visit to a city not far away, his attention was attracted by a strong and handsome young man (νεανίσκος), presumably among the church congregation; and before leaving the Apostle commended him to the care of the local bishop. Accepting the trust,

[1] The text is found in Stählin's *Clem. Alex.* vol. iii pp. 187. 27–190. 19. The references in this paper are made to volume, page, and line of Stählin's text, with the pages of Potter's edition in brackets. There is an English translation of the *Quis Dives* by P. M. Barnard (*Who is the Rich Man that is being saved?* S.P.C.K. 1901), who has also published a text in *Cambridge Texts and Studies*, vol. v No. 2.