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## A Practical Question about Resurrection

In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul discusses the coming resurrection of the dead. He anticipates that someone might ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” (v. 35).

His answer:

What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. (1 Cor. 15:36–44)

A similar answer to a practical resurrection question can be found in the Talmud, a collection of sacred Jewish writings. This time the

question does not concern what kind of body the risen person will have, but whether that body will be clothed.

Queen Cleopatra questioned R. Mair thus: I am aware that the dead will be restored. As it reads [Ps. lxxii. 16]: “And (men) shall blossom out of the city like herbs of the earth.” My question, however, is: When they shall be restored, will they be naked or dressed? And he answered: This may be drawn by an a fortiori conclusion from wheat. A grain of wheat which is buried naked comes out dressed in so many garments: the upright, who are buried in their dress, so much the more shall they come out dressed in many garments.<sup>1</sup>

1. “Tract Sanhedrin” in *The Babylonian Talmud*, Book 8, Section Jurisprudence (Damages), trans. Michael Rodkinson (Boston, Talmud Society, 1918), chap. 11.