

## 5-12-19 The Word was Made Flesh

© J. Takahashi

Christ is Risen!

Indeed He is Risen!

In the night of Paschal, the Gospel according to John chapter one, the beginning of chapter one was read, and our Bible reading started from there. And because during great lent, we read the Old Testament mainly. And during the services we read the Gospel but great limp was the time to read the Old Testament. And therefore when we hear, when we heard, "In the beginning was the word, the word was with God and the word was God", and this word came and lived among us and He was not recognized. And this section is about the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God took flesh and became man. Now it suggest that "Pascal" is the new beginning of the world. And so therefore "In the beginning was the Word", suggest us to remember the beginning of this whole world, beginning of the world and beginning of mankind and how man was created.

Now later the church fathers' articulated and summarized the same beginning of the phrases, "God became man so that man may become God". And as we all know, the biblical language and the language of the church fathers were slightly different. And then we kind of mixed the two and then totally forget the differences. The Biblical language is very concrete. It's almost like just to eliminate all the Latin and Greek origin words from english language and especially American language, American english. Can you imagine? And it's nothing ideal, nothing hypothetical but very concrete.

So when you see a lady, a good looking lady and you kind, you get excited, how would you call her? "She is hot". This is very concrete, and you know what it means. However, if you are kind of Greek minded or Latin minded oriented, and I said, "what do you mean by hot? What are you talking about? She's not hot, touch her?" but at some ladies are really hot, so. But, touch her and then she's not hot actually, you know, in terms of temperature or and so, but english language is very concrete as you know, and the very close to biblical language.

And therefore, when the church fathers' interpreted or accepted the first verses of the Gospel according to John, it became "God became man so that man may become God". And this sounds kind of philosophical and I kind of ideal. And it sounds, you know, we understand this, but we don't quite understand, because without the fleshly body, we are not man. So man or woman, as we all know, when we were created, both man and woman in the image and likeness of God. And so however, only with His flesh, we are in the image and likeness of God. So when we hear "God became man so that man may become God", and it makes logically sense, but we don't quite feel it because no humanity or no man, no woman without flesh body, is not a man or woman.

Therefore, namely fleshly body it took, was taken by God. The first statement, "the word became men" or fathers say "God became man so that man may become God" presupposes experiences recorded in the end of the Gospel and then here we have to learn how to read the Bible. We tend to like, reading the Bible, we went to be, we went to be, we went, excuse me, we tend to be very selective. We want to read the parts we want to hear. Just like kids selective hearing. You know, they, they hear just one, you know, what they want to hear and then this is really wrong.

## 5-12-19 The Word was Made Flesh

© J. Takahashi

And who would read a Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens kind of selectively You know like, oh this part I really like it, you know where the scrooge saw the ghost of Marlene or this part or that part. But we try to read the whole story and try to understand what it means. And so the Bible is the same way. We should not read the Bible selectively, only picking up the words we like or we want to hear and this is really wrong. And we have, some people have that habit and challenges me constantly with these words. However, I would say read the Bible as whole and to try to get what it means. And like I said, the biblical words are all concrete. So when we hear "God created the world", we have to look outside and see this is what God created. Not just as a theory or so. Therefore, it is not a philosophy. It is not an idea, but it is an experience. And therefore when we hear, "When God created man", how did He create?

He made the shape of man, and if God did not give up His breath, then He remained as a mud doll. However, God gave His spirit or His breath and to him and became a living person, living man. That is us. And then this is not at all an idea, but us, the heart, united body and soul together and so is the breath of God. Now, when Christ resurrected and the fleshly body, double joy of triumph the apostles experienced. And remember last week it was about "Touch Me", last week and today "Where is the Body?". And both the thyme is the fleshly body of our Lord Jesus Christ. So last week and when we, remember in the end of the Gospel according to John, Mary Magdalene saw Christ and at first she could not recognize but when she realized that it was him, she tried to touch Him and our Lord said, "Don't touch me".

It means that He had the body physical body, yet He is on the way to the Father. That's why "Don't touch me". Yet, When He appeared to the disciples, and He came through the door and then everybody had met Christ and then we converged and had a meal together. And The Sunday after, because Saint Thomas was not there, so the next Sunday, when he went to the gathering of the disciples he said, you know what he said, "Touch Me". And that Thomas was surprised or shocked, and because He had the physical body, and so he said, "Oh Lord my God".

So, therefore the body is the focus of attention in the event of the resurrection. And I said two triumphs. One is a [inaudible 00:09:32] understood that when the, when gospel, that John was writing the Gospel, the church was facing two groups of people. One as a [inaudible 00:09:43] people, and the other kind of people the other kinds of people, what I mean is that people outside of the people of God. So they are Greek minded, classical Greek minded people. Now Hebrew understanding of "The Death" had two meanings. Why God, why death was terrible for the Hebrews. In the Old Testament, we find that death is terrible not because not be able to glorify if we don't have the physical body. Because we have a physical body, we can glorify God. We praise and then we see things God created and then we are rejoiced. And so death is the loss of the body and therefore it is a terrible thing happen to us.

And the other understanding of death for the Hebrews were, death was not a kind of momentous physical extinction but rather, it could happen while we are alive. And then as you already know, when the prodigal son in the parable of "Prodigal son", the father said when prodigal son came back to his house, he had a banquet and then his father, his brother complained you know, "I've been with you helping, and you know, you never had anything like this". And then do you remember what his father said to him? "He was dead but now he is alive". What a joy.

## 5-12-19 The Word was Made Flesh

© J. Takahashi

So this is the image of the resurrection while we are living. Now the same could happen to us even if we, when we are alive. So like for example, in the Old Testament, you find a lot of stories about death, deadly alive or living death. It is the conditions or situations which our body is placed and a deadly state. For example, when we are obsessed about something, we are thinking about something about somebody or something we have to do constantly, we are thinking about it. So our body is constricted by our obsession. Or, when we are addicted, constantly we're thinking about "I have to do this, I have to do this", smoking, drinking, whatever, and then we are addicted. So we are in a way not free at all and dead.

Therefore, when we are dealing with this and then something happens to our wife or husband or boyfriend or girlfriend, some kind of addiction or obsession about something and you tried to talk and they tried to solve the problem. You know, we, we talk and talk and talk and yet he still goes on, she still goes on. Then the other party, do, you know, in a very concrete manner in English, "he is dead to me" or "she is dead to me" doesn't mean a thing. It is a very concrete and this sense is alive or living I would say, living sense of death is alive in the Bible and also in our life as we all know.

And therefore death is in the Bible as not just a physical extinction from this world, but rather, are we a person? Are we still the image and likeness of God created by God, both soul and body together in harmony. Now classical for classical Greek mind, that death for them was a, is a happy thing. The reason why is our body is a tomb. And so when we die, our soul lives and so we are happy and that is the idea.

Now why body is a tomb, is because it is a very simple thing. Our body, we, they thought our body gives a lot of problems. You know, as we grow and we start feeling kind of in adolescent state, we start feeling kind of there are different groups to people and up until then we are all together. Whether a boy or girl or boys or girls, we all together yet like, once the period of adolescence begins, then we start become kind of very conscious and then you know, especially when you were falling in love, you don't know what to do and also body is growing and then you don't know what, how to face with this growth of my body. And then see other people how they behave. And the body is a big thing. They get sick, it give us a lot of troubles.

That is why classical Greek mind thought body was a tomb, we are entrapped in and so we have to be free. And finally when we die, the body goes back to the earth and so we are happy. And unfortunately some Christians think that way and the Orthodox church, we do not believe this understanding of being liberated from the body when we die. And the next understanding is that, we are charioteers riding the body and so kind of controlling the body directing this way and that way. And then that's the understanding of body and soul.

However, when Christ was crucified and buried and resurrected on the third day, the apostles saw the original beauty of human being. When God created man out of the dust and each one of us was created. Yet this is, this does not end, but rather at the end, total renewal will be broad and Christ is the first fruits of that resurrected glorified body. And this is the joy we rejoice is not the only resurrection when we die and resurrect but rather in everyday life, if we can overcome through the [inaudible 00:17:19] effort of prayer and fasting and repentance and forgiveness and loving, having a loving heart will make us already taste the resurrection of our body. And that is why we greet each other. "Christ is risen. Indeed, He is Risen".

## 5-12-19 The Word was Made Flesh

© J. Takahashi

Now remember I mentioned about that hamburger?. If you just passed it for Pascal, so that we can eat meat? You are just rejoicing that eating meat is the result of great men and that is not why we fasted, why we prayed, why we learned what repentance and forgiveness are exactly. We raise ourselves from our not just addiction or obsession or all the things which corrupts us livingly while we are alive. When we are addicted to certain things or obsession of certain kind or the things we go through every day and that we corrupt ourselves, desecrate ourselves and then totally think that we are free when we die. And that is not what we celebrate.

We celebrate that through prayers and fasting and repentance and forgiveness and having a loving heart, brings us living resurrection and there as I mentioned, we rejoice with Lenten buns today. And so let us not forget that our joy is based on prayer, fasting, repentance, forgiveness, and having a loving heart. Everything we learn in great length as living bonds, now we rejoice our own resurrection, practicing these things in our life and we taste the full chewing of buns and meat together and wholeheartedly we can greet each other.

Christ is Risen!

Indeed, He is Risen!