

1- The Resurrection and Knowledge

Some people labor under the misapprehension that there is a fundamental contradiction between religion and knowledge. Real religion reinforces genuine knowledge, and real knowledge corroborates religion. The whole point is that each should realize what its sphere and domain are, for it is unrealistic to apply material criteria and tools such as test-tubes and experimental laboratories to issues of theology, faith, and metaphysics because they lie in entirely different fields. It is also unrealistic to have religion oppose valid and indisputable scientific truths, such as the earth revolving around the sun and rotating on its axis, or the fact that it is round. In fact, Isaiah preceded all astronomers in stating that the earth is round when he stated that the Lord, “*sits above the circle of the earth.*” (Is. 40:22) He said this when we still did not understand the laws of gravity or the way the vast universe was organized.

Reason and Faith:

Reason is not opposed to faith and neither is faith opposed to reason. Faith does not eliminate reason or do away with it, but it confirms the limitations of the mind and completes the journey started by reason. This is exactly like the telescope and the naked eye; the vision of the naked eye is limited and can only see within a certain distance. It cannot see the details of distant objects such as the moon; all the eye sees is a beautiful orb that poets have sung. The telescope, however, can bring distant objects near and allow us to see many of the details and features of the moon,

which the eye is incapable of. The mind is analogous to the naked eye, limited, while faith is similar to the telescope, revealing distant and infinite truths such as God and eternity. St. Paul says, “*By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God*” (Heb. 11:3), that is, **faith explains what reason cannot grasp**, because the mind is finite and God is infinite, and it **is impossible for the finite to embrace the infinite**. This stands to reason.

The believer possesses a **mind that is enlightened by the Holy Spirit**, who helps him to comprehend the Infinite God through the dawning of the Spirit and not only through limited human mental conceptualization. “*Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit (not reason) searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*” (1Cor. 2:9-13)

Thus, we know God through the Spirit. After the mind contemplates many matters, it discovers that it is limited and that God is far above it, so it submits to the leadership of the spirit, which in turn, submits to the guidance of the Spirit of God. At this point, the mind realizes its finiteness and bows before the Eternal and Infinite, that is, before God.

Infinity... a logical truth:

There is no doubt that the mind is limited while numbers are infinite. If we look ahead to the future and try to count the years

following 2003, we will count as follows: 2004, 2005, and 2006, until we get to **an infinite and unlimited future**, that is, **eternity**, for it impossible to reach a final figure. If we look back to the past, we will count 2002, 2001, 2000, until we get to an infinite and everlasting past, **a time without end**.

There is therefore an **Everlasting Being (who has no beginning)**, **Eternal (who has no end)**. **This Eternal Everlasting Being is God, the Great Architect of this universe, whose existence is necessary, the Life that gives life, the Creator who makes all.**

The finite mind cannot embrace this infinite and unlimited God, and at this point, the mind submits to the spirit, to conscience and to faith, which soar with us to infinite horizons so that we can experience the infinite and everlasting God, the Cause of all knowledge and the Creator of all things.

Faith and the Resurrection:

Our faith in Infinite God explains our faith in the resurrection and immortality. If God is everlasting, eternal, and immortal, He created us in time and after we depart this age and this material world, we will go and be with Him in an eternal, infinite, blissful life which we will lead with Him and which He grants us. Thus, we get to understand the incarnation of Christ, His death, and His resurrection.

1- His Incarnation:

The infinite unlimited Logos was united to His humanity and become one nature resulting from the union of two natures without intermingling or change. His divinity remained divine and His humanity remained human. The Lord revealed His infinite divinity in his marvelous miracles, such as His authority over nature, man, animals, fish,

thoughts, evil spirits, and the future. At other times, He revealed His humanity when He was tired or hungry, when He slept or when He wept. **This confirms two truths :**

I- That the Lord took a real body like ours and a human nature exactly like ours except that it was devoid of sin. **“He resembles us in all things except for sin alone.” (Gregorian liturgy) “He grew little by little as humans do, except without sin.” (Prayer of division for the Lord’s feasts)**

The humanity of the Lord comprised a human body + a human spirit + a human soul. That is why we reject Sebelius’ heresy which claimed that His divinity replaced the human soul; we also reject Eutychus’ heresy which claims that the body of Christ was ethereal and unreal.

II- **Satan was bewildered by the Lord of glory**, for when he saw the Lord’s awesome miracles, he was sure of His perfect divinity. However, when he saw the Lord’s human characteristics, he was sure of His perfect humanity. This bewilderment was deliberately planned by the Lord so that Satan would be bold enough as to incite the Jews and the Romans to crucify Him and thus bring about Redemption. When we speak about the hunger, thirst, exhaustion, and death that the Lord’s human nature suffered, we describe it as **“Providential”**; that is, the Lord in His wisdom planned it this way in order to redeem us; **“for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” (1Cor. 2:8)** That is why the Lord often hid His divinity from Satan, so that he could continue in his attempts and scheming to crucify the Lord and thus bring about the Redemption.

2- His Death:

His human spirit was separated from His human body, but His divinity did not separate either from His spirit or His body (**the Syrian prayer of division**). His divinity, which was

omnipresent, was united to the body in the grave and was the cause of the Resurrection. His human spirit, united to His divinity, descended to hell where the righteous and the evil were before the Redemption. When Satan tried to take the human spirit of the Lord captive, the current of his Divinity that was inseparable with it struck Satan and he fell at the feet of the Savior who then freed the righteous from their captivity and took them to be with Him in paradise.

3- His Resurrection:

The Lord rose from the dead with a body of light that was different in nature from the physical body He had slept in. He arose in His own power and not through the intervention or hope of anyone. He arose and did not subsequently die, and He will never die. The infinite unlimited divinity of the Lord raised Him from the dead, for it is impossible for His divine nature to die or for the unlimited and infinite to be restricted by the grave. **The Lord rose with His divine nature that was united to His human nature, and He is alive forevermore.**

Thus, it is through faith that we can comprehend the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ, His life-giving death, and His glorious resurrection. Nevertheless, there are **many proofs of His resurrection** :

- I- The empty tomb.
- II- The soldiers saw the earthquake and the stone being moved.
- III- He appeared to many on numerous occasions in different places. The Holy Bible mentions 11 appearances to the disciples, and one to more than 500 brothers who lived more than a third of a century after the Resurrection and who witnessed to it.
- IV- The Lord ate with His disciples; they saw Him and touched His body and His feet.

In spite of all this evidence, we rely on our living faith in the Living Christ. It is inconceivable that He, who gave life

to many, even when He was nailed to the cross, should remain imprisoned in a tomb and held captive by death, which has a hold only on the sinful. Far be it from the Lord to be among them. The Bible says, **“for it was not possible that He should be held by it” (Acts 2: 24)** because He is righteous and holy, the Lord of life and eternity.

Knowledge and the Resurrection:

Thus, we say to those who want to mix **Natural Sciences** (that have to do with the senses), such as Chemistry, Biology, with the **Intellectual Sciences** (that have to do with thought), such as Philosophy and Logic, with the **Psychological Sciences** (that have to do with the psyche) such as Education and Psychology, and with the **Theological Sciences** (that deal with the spirit) such as Theoretical, Doctrinal, and Comparative Theology, **“Do not confuse the issues.”** Do not deal with the intellectual and psychological sciences, such as Philosophy, using material tools and methods. Do not approach Theology using the meter and kilogram, for it is both **infinite** and **unlimited**. The finite brain cannot comprehend these concepts, nor can the naked senses; it is our spirits enlightened with the light of God and with the dawn of a living faith that can embrace infinity.

We must use the appropriate criteria for each branch of knowledge, those criteria that can describe it. **Material sciences** need the senses, **intellectual sciences** require thought, **psychological sciences** involve emotions, and **the theological sciences** need faith. **“By faith we understand” (Heb. 11:3)** that the Lord rose with His divinity for He bestows life and is present in all creation. **Therefore, He is above the laws of science and matter and of visible and tangible Nature.**

True, man is a whole and integrated creature: **spirit, mind, soul and body**. But each of these components has its own nature and means. Therefore, we should not confuse matters by applying the criteria of natural sciences to faith, for just as faith is above the mind, so are miracles above science.