

To avoid this, God buried him, and no one could tell where his sepulchre was. But he was buried, and he represents the dead. Now Elias represents the quick; he did not die, but was translated. He was changed, and went into glory without the medium of the grave. Both of these men are here, Moses and Elias; and the point to observe is this: that Moses, who died, whose body was left in the earth, is exactly in the same circumstances and enjoying the very same privileges as Elijah, who did not die at all, but who went to heaven in that chariot of fire.

And so we may learn what is the present condition of departed saints. We may look on all those whose bodies are in the grave as represented by Moses; and inasmuch as Moses shared with Elijah, we have reason to hope that those who have died and whose bodies are in the grave share with those who have never died at all. We may learn from the simple facts of the text:

I. THE CONSCIOUS EXISTENCE OF DEPARTED SAINTS. They have left us, but they have not ceased to be. They do not sleep in cold unconsciousness; there is no long interval of being; there are no ages of slumber till the trumpet of the resurrection shall sound. Moses, the dead one, is consciously existing along with Elijah, who never ceased to live. If we had been with Elisha when Elijah was caught up into glory, we should not have returned to our dwelling and put on mourning and lamented that Elijah was dead. Elisha went back triumphing in the thought that the prophet and the friend and the father whom he loved was in conscious existence still. Though the sunken cheek and the unresponsive eye, and the hand that no longer clasps our own speak to us of death, yet we may be as well assured that our departed friends still live, as if we had seen an angelic convoy taking them to glory, even as Moses no less than Elias appeared with Jesus on the Mount.

And we may learn, secondly, that they are in glory. "There talked with him two men, Moses and Elias, who ap-

peared in glory." Though the resurrection is the climax of the glory of the saints, yet they enter into glory as soon as they depart out of this world. Elijah was translated, and Moses also passed at once into glory. And so it is with the saints who worship the same God as Moses: when they die they go into the glory into which Moses went, which was the same as that of Elijah. Let us think of them, therefore, as translated, rather than as dead; as those for whom the conflict has ceased in the festival of the victor; as those whose toilsome pilgrimage has ended in the peaceful rest of home.

We may learn, thirdly, the possible nearness of departed saints. Moses and Elias appeared upon a certain mountain in Palestine, in immediate neighborhood to the scenes with which they had been familiar on earth. Are those who were once so very near us, so indefinitely, so infinitely distant as some seem to think? May they not sometimes revisit, unseen by us, the places where once they dwelt? May they not sometimes be very near us, though we cannot hear their voice or feel their hand, even as angels are ministering spirits to the saints? The universal heart of humanity seems to suggest that perhaps the departed may sometimes be as near to us as Moses and Elias were near to the disciples upon that mountain in Palestine.

A fourth suggestion is that the departed are together. Moses and Elias were together, though five hundred years divided them when on earth. They had different work to do, at different times. God's servants are placed in different localities: they may be living at the same time, but they may never be able to meet with one another, or, as in this case, they may be living in the same place, but at different epochs. But they are together yonder. As Moses and Elijah, though they did not meet on earth, met in glory, so Enoch and Paul, Noah and John, Abraham and James, David, Daniel, the apostles, the martyrs are all together. We read the lives of the saints, we become famil-

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