

This brings me to the third thought connected with Easter, which I want especially to dwell upon,—namely that of the Resurrection.

We find in the New Testament many passages indicating that the disciples of Jesus believed that in some sense he rose from the dead. What was that sense?

Such an expression as "Christ is risen," or "Christ rose from the dead," seems at first sight very simple, and capable of but one meaning. But a little thought will show us that it may have several meanings.

First, it may mean a literal resurrection,—the thought that Christ's flesh-and-blood body rose from the tomb, and ascended on high. The creed of one of the great churches of Christendom says: "Christ did truly rise from the dead, and took again his body, with flesh and bones, wherewith he ascended into heaven."

The difficulties in the way of this interpretation are, to say the least, very serious.

In the first place, what are we going to do with the physical body of Christ when we get it to heaven? We suppose heaven to be the home of *spiritual* existences. Are we, then, to suppose that in the midst of the spirits inhabiting that world, all clad in what Paul calls their "spiritual bodies," Jesus has his place, clad in gross material flesh? Surely that would be to make him less favored than the rest. It would be to place him in a bondage from which the rest, we must suppose, are free. Why should Jesus be doomed to carry his cumbersome physical body to the spirit world? Is he less worthy of freedom than the other inhabitants of that sphere?

Moreover, have we any right to believe that it is possible for a body of flesh and bones to enter heaven? The Bible expressly tells us it is not. Says Paul, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." So then, according to Paul, it could *not* have been the literal *physical* body of Christ that rose and ascended on high.