

WHY THE NAPKIN, THAT WAS ABOUT HIS HEAD “WAS” WRAPPED TOGETHER IN A PLACE BY ITSELF” (JOHN 20:6, 7)

Then Simon Peter came up, following him, (John) and went into the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there; but the burial napkin which had been around Jesus’ head, was not lying with the other linen cloths, but was [still] rolled up in a place by itself.

The relative positions of “the linen clothes” and “the napkin, that was about His head” are intended to convey a most precious and important fact to the people of God in this Dispensation or Church Age. We have learnt that the position of “the linen clothes” which was left lying just as they were when His body was enwrapped by them, affords a perfect proof that Jesus had been miraculously raised from the dead. That is one reason why our risen Lord did not disturb them or deal with them as He did with “the napkin that was about His head”.

There is another reason of even greater significance. Our Lord’s physical body with its sacred members forms a positive type of “the church, which is His (mystical) body”. Now if there is one certain fact about the members of Christ’s mystical body, it is that they have not yet finished with death and the grave. To this very hour, and until our Lord’s Second Appearing, every member of Christ’s body who dies is buried in a grave as He was; and the bodies of myriads of such are now lying in the earth awaiting the moment when “the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God” for then, as Scripture declares, “the dead in Christ shall rise first”. Nothing, therefore, is more manifest than that Christ’s mystical members have not finished with death as regards their bodies. For this reason our Lord left “the linen clothes’ that had enwrapped His physical members lying as if they were still in use – it was a symbolical act with a most profound significance.

This becomes more apparent when we take account of the Lord’s action in regard to “the napkin”. John states what Peter had seen, namely, that “the napkin which was about His head”, (was) not lying with the linen clothes, but (was) wrapped together in a place by itself”. This act of the risen Saviour signified that He, as Head of the Body, the Church, had finished with death for ever and with all its trappings. When one has finished with a garment the natural thing is to wrap it up and put it away; and this is the exact meaning of our Lord’s action in regard to “the napkin, that was about His head”.

From the book *The Restored Vision* by A.E. Ware.