

The Resurrection of the Dead

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The Bible teaches that when believers are resurrected they will receive a new glorified body which will never perish. The resurrection is our eternal hope; because Jesus arose in a glorified body we are saved into the hope of the same resurrection and will receive a glorified body when He returns.

“If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty... For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.” 1 Corinthians 15:12-22

II. TWO RESURRECTIONS- WHEN DO THEY OCCUR?

- A. The Bible describes two resurrections: a resurrection “of life” of those who believe in Jesus and a resurrection “of condemnation” of those who do not.

“For the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.” John 5:25-29

“I have hope in God... that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.” Acts 24:15

“And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt....” Daniel 12:1-2

- B. **1 Corinthians 15:20-26** reveals that there is an order: Christ is the firstfruits of the resurrection, and then all believers will be resurrected at His coming.
- C. Further clarity comes in **Revelation 20:1-6**- the title ‘first resurrection’ is the first time this title is given to the resurrection of the righteous and reveals that there is a time gap in between the two resurrections. The “**first resurrection**” is the first widespread corporate physical resurrection of the righteous. This implies a “**second resurrection**” of unbelievers. The passage says “***the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.***” The time gap in between the first and second resurrection is 1,000 years.
- D. Only believers will experience the “first resurrection”-which is after the Great Tribulation at Jesus’ Second Coming at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom. Unbelievers do not experience the first resurrection at the time of the rapture but will experience the “second resurrection” at the end of the thousand year reign of Christ.
- E. In Revelation 20:6 and 20:14, there is a “second death” which implies a first death. The **first death** is the physical death common to all men, while the **second death** is being thrown body and soul in the Lake of Fire (Mt. 10:28).

“¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” Revelation 20:14-15

III. WHAT WILL THE RESURRECTION BE LIKE?

- A. In 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul gives instruction concerning those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. “Those who have fallen asleep” is a biblical way of saying, “Those who have died physically.” When we die physically, our spirit goes away to be with the Lord (Phil. 1:21—23).

“For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thess 4:13-18

- B. Paul gave the order of Christ’s return: 1) Jesus will descend from heaven with a shout, the voice of an angel and at the sound of a trumpet. 2) The dead in Christ, the believers who have died, will be resurrected and arise out of their graves. 3) Then those who are alive and remain on the earth will be caught up and also receive their glorified bodies in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.
- C. 1 Corinthians 15 brings further clarity to what our resurrection/glorification will be like. Paul says ALL will be changed, no matter if you are dead or alive when that Day comes. In one moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet, the “asleep” believers will be raised in resurrected bodies. Then living believers will be changed in a moment and will receive glorified bodies. The mortals will “put on” immortality and incorruption. This is when the prophetic promise: “*Death is swallowed up in victory, O Death where is your sting?*” will find complete fulfillment!

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “*Death is swallowed up in victory.*”⁵⁵ “*O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?*”” 1 Corinthians 15:51-55

- D. Resurrected believers will be like priests before God forever, just as Jesus Himself is a Priest forever. They will reign and enjoy holiness without any fear of the second death (Lake of Fire) as seen in Revelation 2:11; 20:14; 21:8. A priest and a king is the eternal function of a believer that is most emphasized in the Word (1 Cor 6:2, Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:4-6). As priests and kings, resurrected saints will worship, intercede, communicate the knowledge of God to others, evaluate the past and determine future plans, and be in authority over the earth.

“35 But someone will say, “How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?”

- E. In **1 Corinthians 15:35-49**, Paul answers the question of “*how are the dead raised up?*” He explains that the Lord will take our actual flesh that is in the ground, which is called a seed, and raises it from the dead. He takes our very substance, our DNA, as the seed or foundation that becomes our resurrected body. God is not going to replace our body but transform it.
- F. Our resurrected bodies will be spiritual but not just spiritual- there is a real physical dimension to them. Our bodies will become incorruptible, glorious, and full of power. Paul
- G. We will receive a resurrected body that is conformed to Jesus’ body. His body is full of light that is brighter than the sun (Isa 24:23; Hab 3:4; Acts 26:13-14; Heb 1:3; Rev 1:16; 21:24; 22:3-5).

“...who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body...” Philippians 3:21

- H. God’s glory will be manifest, or reflected, in our resurrected bodies in different measures. Paul points out that each believer’s resurrected body will have differing glories. It is part of our reward in eternity to have a glorious body related to how we walked out our time on earth. There is continuity between this earth and eternity.

“Those who sleep in the dust [physical death] of the earth shall awake [resurrection]... Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament...like the stars forever and ever.” Daniel 12:2-3

“The righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” Matthew 13:43