

The Resurrection of the Dead

SEEING THE GLORIOUS HOPE OF THE GOSPEL IN A STUDY OF LAST THINGS

When Christ returns, the righteous will be raised to glory and the wicked to destruction.

Review: the intermediate state

- At death, the souls of the righteous go to be with Christ in heaven and consciously enjoy his presence as they await the resurrection.
- The wicked go to a place of torment, where they await a resurrection to judgment.

All people will be resurrected

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

John 5:28-29 28 Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice 29 and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

Revelation 20:12-13 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.

There is a vast difference between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked.

Jesus' resurrection teaches us about ours

1 Corinthians 15

12 ¶ Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised.

20 ¶ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

- Guarantees our resurrection
- Models our resurrection

The Lord Jesus Christ...will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body. Phil. 3:20-21

The timing of the resurrection is clear

1 Corinthians 15:22-28 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. 24 Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. 28 When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

Where does “reigning” fit in?

25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

Does this suggest a thousand-year earthly reign between the 2nd coming and the final judgment?

- precedes abolition of death (v. 28)
- abolishing death is equivalent to resurrection
 - (52-54) For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”
- thus, reigning precedes 2nd coming and is made complete then

Resurrection body and the present body

1 Corinthians 15:35-38 35 ¶ But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” 36 You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. 38 But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

The present body is like a seed compared to a full-grown plant!

- a seed is temporary
- the plant form isn't obvious from seed form
- there is continuity between seed and plant

Four contrasts

1 Corinthians 15:42-49 42 So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 45 Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. 47 The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

- perishable/imperishable
- dishonor/glory
- weakness/power
- natural/spiritual

“Selfsame” bodies?

All the dead will be raised up with the very same bodies, not different ones, though they will have different qualities. Second London Baptist Confession (1689) – 31:2

How can the raised body be the same body as our present body?

Encouragement to steadfast labor

1 Corinthians 15:54-58

54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” 55 “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 ¶ Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Hope for the life to come

19 If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

Isa 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his stripes we are healed.

Romans 8:22-25 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. 23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Conclusion and preview

- The resurrection of the dead is a core biblical teaching.
- We can draw much encouragement from thinking on this truth.

- Preview: What happens in the judgment?