



A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 42: The Seal Judgements, Part 10

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Review:

- A. We are presently studying the Seven Seal Judgements of **Revelation Chapters 6-8**, and last week we concluded Seal Judgement #5.
 - B. This is the juncture where John, in heaven, sees the martyred souls below and around the altar in The Throne Room of God, and these souls are crying out to God for justice.
 - C. The text makes it clear that they forfeited their lives *“because of the Word of God and the testimony they had maintained”* while they were on earth.
 - D. The greater counsel of God’s Word reveals that circumstances on earth will become particularly hostile to anyone who will disagree or take issue with the false one-world religious system which will dominate the globe in these future times. This will be especially true to those who express a sincere Christian faith.
 - E. Truth then, as now, will be unwelcome. Trends we see taking shape now will fully flourish in those future times, and anyone who lives and shows their faith in Jesus Christ will risk being killed for their faith.
 - F. As part of our study of Seal Judgement #5, we studied the three-part constitution of our created being: body, soul, and spirit.
 - G. We understood from those insights that it is our soul that is the “real us.” It is our souls that express feeling, awareness, emotion, and intention. Our souls also have form, communication abilities, and the ability to interact with other souls and with God.
 - H. Our souls never enter a state where they do not exist or are not aware. Because our present bodies are nothing more than a temporary house for the “real us,” our souls continue to exist and continue to respond to their environments.
 - I. Therefore the souls of unsaved people experience agony and torment after death, just as the souls of saved people experience glory and bliss and happiness beyond definition after death.
 - J. But these souls of the martyred saints also express a desire for justice. They know why they were killed, and they know a specific time is coming for God’s wrath and God’s judgment on earth.
 - K. Because the souls of these martyred saints know all this, they therefore want to know when that judgement will begin. That’s why they cry out for God to do as He has promised.
- I. I want to begin today’s class by reviewing the resurrection events which are laid out in the Bible. There are a series of them:
- A. First of all, there are two TYPES of resurrections: there is one for the righteous, and one for the unrighteous. **Daniel 12:2** makes these two different fates very clear:

“Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

- B. It’s worth noting several things from this verse: **First**, this is a statement made by the angel who is revealing the Biblical End Times scenario to Daniel, and the angel has some of Daniel’s personal interests in view as he does this.
1. Daniel has been told a lot of information about what will happen at the very end of human history, and it is within that content is the description of the *“time of distress,”* (AKA, The Tribulation). Also, we are THEN given some information about the resurrection process.
 2. So, there is a sequence here: FIRST the *“times of distress,”* or The Tribulation, THEN the resurrection.
 3. Again, the angel is speaking to Daniel here, an Old Testament saint. He is not part of the church population that began on the Day of Pentecost in **Acts Ch. 2**.
 4. So the clues given to Daniel would also apply to other OT saints like David, Joseph, Abraham, and so on.....
 5. So again, the first thing we need to understand is everyone will be raised from the dead (if at some point they have already died) but not everyone will share the same destiny once they have been resurrected.
- C. **Second**, this verse in **Daniel 12:2** used the word *“many”* as opposed to *“all.”*
1. To put it simply, that’s because not all mankind will *“sleep in the dust”* (or die).
 2. Paul says the same thing in **1 Corinthians 15:51**:

“Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—”

3. The point of this passage in **1 Corinthians** is the generation that experiences the Rapture will never experience death. So once more, going back to **Daniel’s** language, *“many will sleep in the dust of the earth,”* but not ALL.
- D. **Third**, going back to **Daniel 12:2**, it says *“many will awake.”* This is Old Testament language for experiencing a literal bodily resurrection. It means *“to rise again.”*
1. One of the criticisms leveled against the doctrine of the resurrection is that the Old Testament does not teach this, only the NT. This is not true.
 2. This verse in **Daniel 12:2** stands as an indisputable reference to a literal resurrection, and it’s found in the Hebrew Old Testament Scriptures.
 3. The Book of Job makes the very same point about the fate of OT saints. In **Job 19:25-27** it says,

*“For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day **upon the earth**. And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.”*

4. Job's hope and confidence was the same as other Old Testament saints, like Daniel. These saints didn't have the hope, NOT to die and instead go directly to heaven. That's our hope as being part of the church. These saints had a faith and hope that they would be raised and go directly into God's **earthly** kingdom.
 5. Notice that this passage in **Job** once again reinforces the same timeframe as **Daniel**. It is AFTER what Daniel calls "*the times of distress.*" Job calls this time "*the latter day.*" Both Daniel and Job affirm that this follows the certainty of their own death.
- E. **Fourthly**, we see that there will be separate resurrections: one for "the just" and one for "the unjust." This is what **Daniel** means when it states "*....some (will rise) to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*"
1. This is a good reminder to us that not everyone who lived in Old Testament (pre-church) times was a saint in a right relationship with God.
 2. That is why some from that era will be raised into "*everlasting life,*" while others from that timeframe will be raised into "*everlasting contempt.*"
 3. Both conditions are "*everlasting.*" As I've stated before, we will all exist eternally, but only those in a right relationship with God will experience glory, perfection, and bliss. The rest will experience condemnation, agony and torment.
 4. **NOTE:** The last passage I would point out to you that deals with this resurrection of Old Testament (pre-church) saints is one from the New Testament.
 5. This one is found in **John 11:23-24**, and it concerns the death of Mary and Martha's brother, Lazarus. There is a conversation between Martha and Jesus:

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

6. So here, Jesus Himself affirms the truth of the resurrection of pre-church (AKA, Old Testament) saints. Martha affirms that she knows this too and it will happen "*....on the last day.*" Once again, the terminal point of human history is identified as the timeframe.
7. Furthermore, Jesus also taught the principle that we see in **Daniel 12:2**, that some will be raised to eternal life, and some to eternal damnation.
8. In **John 5:28-29**, He said the following:

"Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment. (John 5:28-29)

- F. Jesus is **NOT** emphasizing a works-based salvation. Rather, He is reinforcing a principle we would all be much wiser to fully understand.

1. Good deeds do not save us, but they ARE “evidence of our genuine saving faith” in Christ. One cannot claim to be saved and not show evidence of good deeds.
2. Remember, faith is the "root" of our salvation, and "good deeds" are the "fruit" of our salvation.
3. **(Cf. Ephesians 2:8-10)** *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*
4. Three key points are clear in this very important passage:
 - a. We are saved by God’s grace ONLY through the expression of our faith in Jesus Christ,
 - b. There is nothing we can do to ADD TO the salvation transaction.
 - c. The fact of our of being “*in Christ Jesus*” should show up in the evidence of our service of “*good works.*”

NOTE: So, let’s tie all this together now that we’ve established some foundational truths. How many resurrections are there, how are they inter-related, and when do they take place?

- II. Most Biblical scholars identify FIVE individual resurrection events which are all part of what we should properly call **“The Resurrection Doctrine.”** Some see more resurrection events than this, but for ease of explanation, I’ll stick with five.

NOTE: The first four of these are different stages of what the Bible lumps into one category known as “the first resurrection.” The fifth one is in its own category, and it is referred to as “the second resurrection.” This is the reason you will find some commentators teaching TWO resurrections. Here they are:

A. The First Resurrection (Again, in four individual stages)

- 1. The first stage: This one is all about Jesus Christ.**
 - a. He is the first fruits of all subsequent stages of the resurrection of believers
 - b. **Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:20** – *“But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”*
 - c. Here, we see that Jesus Christ is called the *“firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”* That means, His example precedes our own.
 - d. Because He died and was resurrected, so those who also die “in Christ” will also be resurrected as He was.
 - e. NOTE: We don’t have time to go down this rabbit trail, but this “firstfruits” doctrine is a leading reason why some scholars point to the Pentecost celebration as being a likely time for the Rapture.
- 2. The second stage (This one is about believers who have died during The Church Age)**

- a. This is the resurrection of believers in Jesus Christ who have died since the church began on the original Day of Pentecost
 - b. Multiple passages speak to this second stage, including, but not limited to **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50-53;**
 - c. This is a well-known stage of the resurrection doctrine. This is all about those believers who have died and are 'first to go up' at the time of The Rapture.
 - d. Again, they are assured of their bodily resurrection because Jesus Christ, the "firstfruits" of the resurrection, has gone before them and has established the template, or example.
 - e. This is the next great stage awaiting us in terms of the resurrection timeline.
- 3. The third stage (This one is about the two witnesses that are killed in Revelation Ch. 11).**
- a. In **vss. 11-12** of that chapter, the two witnesses (probably a physical return of Moses and Elijah, more on this later) are killed by the antichrist at the midpoint of The Tribulation.
 - b. They are bodily raised after 3 ½ days, and they are ordered by a loud voice from heaven to, "Come up here." NOTE: This is the same command given to John in **Revelation 4:1** in a type or picture of The Rapture.
 - c. They ascend in full view of all their enemies and the "earth dwellers." This is one of the key reasons why I feel we will ascend the same way in The Rapture. As opposed to a "flash, we're gone!"
 - d. NOTE: Elijah ascended to heaven in a type of the Rapture the same way. He was watched going up.
- 4. The fourth stage of resurrection is subdivided into two parts. So, within this fourth stage, we see two separate resurrection events being outlined:**
- a. **The first one:** After the Great Tribulation, believers who have been martyred during the time between The Rapture and the end of The Tribulation will be bodily resurrected to immortality.
 - b. NOTE: Again - this period of time is AFTER the Rapture, and THROUGH THE END of the Tribulation. So that would include the martyred saints under the alter in the 5th Seal Judgment.
 - c. **(Cf. Revelation 20:4-6).** Several points to note here:
 - This is after the conclusion of The Tribulation, but BEFORE the start of the Millennial Kingdom.
 - These saints are martyred, "...for their testimony for Jesus and because of the Word of God."
 - They were beheaded. Again, this is why some people feel Islam will be a key element in the global false one world religion, but this argument is weak considering:
 - Islamic nations will be decimated well before this point in the conflicts outlined in **Psalm 83, Jeremiah 49, Is. 17, and Ezekiel 38 and 39.**

- No false, one-world religious system will dominate after the midpoint of the Tribulation. This is when the antichrist will demand self-worship instead.
 - The beheading element may be more related to some of the early trends we see already emerging now in our depraved times (organ harvesting on a commercial scale, cannibalism, etc.)
 - Public executions may be a key component as well - - in order to instill fear and force compliance. This is a pattern already established in human history.
 - Another point: *“They came to life,” (vs. 4b)* or they were bodily resurrected is another way to put it. When does this happen? They reign with Christ 1,000 years after this point, so it’s before the start of the Millennial Kingdom, but AFTER The Tribulation.
 - *“The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.”* (This is a fact about the fate of the unsaved people who have died. More on that in a moment).
 - *“This is the first resurrection” (vs. 5b)* – Here is a clear statement saying that all resurrection dynamics up to this point are STILL part of the first resurrection. That’s why we have various stages within the first resurrection.
 - Lastly, *“Blessed and HOLY are those who have part in the first resurrection (vs. 6a).* Two points to make here:
 - One, only those who are HOLY (righteous, saved in Jesus Christ) participate in the first resurrection stages
 - Two, they are “blessed” because being part of this first resurrection means they have escaped the “second death” (This will happen at The Great White Throne Judgment, which condemns the unsaved to eternal hell).
- d. **The second part of the fourth resurrection stage concerns the Old Testament saints.** This group, as we saw earlier, are resurrected at the end of The Tribulation.
- As **Job 19:25-27** stated, that the Old Testament saints’ resurrection will result in two criteria: (1.) they will also see Jesus Christ with their own eyes, and (2.) it will be *“upon the earth.”*
 - So again, that uniquely conforms to the terms and conditions of the Millennial Kingdom.
 - In **Isaiah 26:19** This is a chapter that provides commentary on the wonderful conditions of the Millennial Kingdom, it states:

“Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, for your dew is as the dew of the dawn. And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.”

- What’s clear in this passage is the Millennial Kingdom is marked by the raising of the Old Testament dead who had shown a real faith in God.

B. The Second Resurrection (This is the fifth and final stage about those who died WITHOUT a saving faith in Jesus Christ).

1. There is only one stage to this Second Resurrection, and it takes place at the Great White Throne Judgement.

- a. After the 1000 year Millennial Kingdom all of the unbelieving dead will be resurrected to stand before the Great White Throne Judgment (**Cf. Revelation 20:11+**)
 - They were bodily raised and are standing before the Throne of God (**vs. 12**)
 - No one is missed. ALL faithless humanity from ALL ages is present, regardless of how they died or who they were (**vss. 12a, 13**)
 - They are judged "*according to what they had done.*" In other words, it will be obvious by their choices that they had refused Jesus Christ and His gift of salvation.
 - It is AFTER this judgement that they are then thrown into "*the lake of fire.*" Up to now, has only had Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet in it (**Cf. Revelation 20:10**).
 - The Second Resurrection leads directly to The Second Death (**Cf. vs. 14**). This is torment and anguish beyond description, and it never ends. It is also eternal separation away from the glory of God.

NOTE: A closing thought:

1. The five stages of resurrection, doctrinally speaking, are not one and the same with every time there is a bodily resurrection noted in Scripture:
 - a. Jesus raised people from the dead, as did other Old Testament / New Testament saints, as earlier-mentioned: Lazarus being one example).
 - b. There were other corporate resurrections which were unique stand-alone events that marked the deity of Christ. (For example, the collection of Old Testament saints that were raised to life after the earthquake at the crucifixion).