

The 'REJECTED' RESURRECTION

Despite Significant Mention, Even By Christ Himself, This Resurrection Has Been Disregarded and Pointedly Ignored by the Religious Establishment, As It Finds No Place in Their Cherished Theological Scenarios.

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Most Bible students are familiar with the fact that the Bible, in both the Old Testament and especially the New, makes frequent mention of what Hebrews 6 identifies as being a fundamental Doctrine of 'the Resurrection from the Dead'! Where this becomes problematic with many is the challenge of providing an answer as to HOW this squares with typical Christian Theology. After all is said and done, and all have died and gone on to their 'eternal reward', either of those "H" places, either the six-letter one, or the four-letter one, what possible **need** is there for any resurrection from the dead, where the deceased's souls or spirits are reincarnated back into their bodies? This is not a small problem!

More than Just One!

Not only this, but the fact that there is to be more than just ONE resurrection! Revelation 20:5 makes clear the fact that there is to be more than one, where it says, "*this is the first resurrection* (implying that there has to be at least one other), "*but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years are finished*"... Not only that there is a resurrection, but that there is to be **another** one, occurring a thousand years after the first one!

Who can explain, not only the need for a future resurrection, but why it is that there is a thousand-year gap between the first and any other one.

In fact, we can discern an answer to these questions from **yet another** resurrection besides these. One that is referred to even more often in the New Testament than the others: One that Christ Himself spoke about often: One that established religion has been forced to completely disregard, because, you see, it exposes too many embarrassing questions.

The idea of a resurrection from the dead is not a new idea. It is, in fact, a rather **ancient belief**.

Even in the time of the patriarch Job, who lived back in the days before Moses, who said, "...*all the days of my appointed time will I wait, til my change come*"... and "*And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another.*"¹ Job anticipated being restored to life again, some time in the distant future. Then there is Ezekiel chapter 37, which describes a valley of dry bones, representing the whole house of Israel. God will one day collect and reconstruct these bones, each to its own bone (v.7), placing sinews, muscle and skin upon them, and breathing into these restored bodies the breath of life. (v.8-10). This describes a **physical** resurrection.

There IS Precedent.

The phenomenon of a resurrection from the dead was not just a theoretical or theological conviction. In rare cases, it was also an experienced reality. Elijah raised the widow's son,² Elisha raised the elderly Shunammite couples daughter,³ Christ raised Jairus' daughter,⁴ Lazarus was raised after having been dead four days.⁵ But, all these were raised physical. Not one is still alive today. Each one was restored to life, lived out the remainder of their days, and died a physical death a second time! The point here is that a physical resurrection is not an unprecedented occurrence. Excepting for the prophesied resurrection in Ezekiel 37, these were special resurrections. In fact, there was another notable resurrection, again little mentioned, found in Matthew 27:52-53. This was unique, and only Matthew's account mentions it. When the Father

¹ Job 14:14 and 19:26-27.

² 1 Kings 17:17-24

³ 2 Kings 4:32-37

⁴ Matt. 9:25, Mark 5:23-42, Luke 8:55

⁵ John 12:1, 10 & 17

beamed down the power to resurrect His Son, other saints in the vicinity, who had recently died, also came back to life. These were raised in physical form. They were known to the brethren. And, like the others, they lived out their normal lives and **died** once again. (This curious event ⁶ can be explained when we consider and come to understand the purpose of the 'rejected' resurrection.)

There is to be another resurrection: a physical resurrection. The New Testament makes mention of it more than any other, yet this is the one that established religion is so compelled to reject.

The Unrepentant are Raised?

This rejection wouldn't be so extraordinary, except for the fact that it was Christ Himself who, in His own words, referred to this physical resurrection time and time again. Do we believe Him? He reiterated often the event described in Ezekiel 37, except that He made clear that this physical resurrection would involve more peoples than just the 'whole house of Israel'! This fact was beyond the scope of Ezekiel's interest.

In Matthew 10:15, we read: "*Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in **the day of judgment** than for that city.*" Mark 6:11 repeats the same saying, and Luke 10:12-14 adds to the narrative by including: *Woe to you Chorasin! Woe to you Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, **they would have repented** a great while ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you.*" (NKJ)

Already we have two important clues as to the purpose of this resurrection, but we'll come back to it. First, let's consider the many other places this event is referred to. In Luke 11:29-32, another day and in another context, we read, "*And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, 'This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign,*

⁶ A few saints, known personally to Christ, who died during His earthly ministry, were resurrected so that they could be present on the Day of Pentecost to receive God's Spirit and be added to those destined for the First Resurrection!

and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.'" Continuing the theme, in Matt. 11:20-24, expanding upon what is presented earlier in Matthew 10:15, He continues, "*Then He began to upbraid the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: 'Woe to you Chorazin! Woe to you Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, **they would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the **day of judgment** than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.'*" (**Note: How could it be 'more tolerable', if judgment meant obliteration either way?**)

This passage then inserts an interesting parenthetical in the very next verse, (v.25) by adding, ***At that time** Jesus answered and said, 'I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.'* " What things? The things He had just, 'at that time', been saying! That there would be a day of judgment in which people of different generations would be raised-up together, from their un-repentant state, in the flesh! Further, that it would not be the eminent theologian who would understand it!!

A final couple of places we need to look at, is found in John 5: verses 25 to 29, in which He alludes to two different resurrections, as He does again in Revelation 20. The language is similar in both places. "*Most assuredly, I say unto you, he*

who hears My word, and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. Most assuredly, I say unto you the hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself. and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; 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.” Like in Revelation 20, here we see all three resurrections set out in order! First, we see a segment of people exempted from judgment. (v.24) Next, a group raised **for** Christ’s judging.⁷ (v.25-27), And finally, a resurrection in which ALL who are dead will come forth alive to receive their final sentencing! (v.28-29) Notice that the verse 25 group does not state “all”. This resurrection does not involve all, but only those who died, not having had adequate witness or opportunity, such as Sodom, Tyre, Sidon, Nineveh, the queen of the South, and those various generations. These encompass the time from Abraham clear thru to the first century at least!

But the point here is that He refers to three distinct and separate resurrection situations, as He does again in Revelation 20.

In the above, we see that there is to be a ‘day of judgment’, and that the **unrepentant** will be restored to a physical life. We see that generations who lived even centuries apart WILL BE raised-up together and will have time to learn of the other generations’ experiences and opportunities, with sufficient awareness to soundly condemn them for

⁷ We should remember that ‘judgment’ involves not only final sentencing, but also the presentation of evidence. The biblical word has that latitude. Revelation 20:12 presents this picture also, of ‘an evidentiary period’ involving those who never had opportunity to live by God’s Word, not having heard it. That’s why ‘the books’ are opened unto them, opened to their understanding for the first time. Their living conduct over the remainder of their resurrected lifetimes provides that record, which will be rewarded at the ‘end’, the final resurrection, the one in which ‘the sheep are separated from the goats’ after which even death becomes abolished.

disregarding what they were privileged to have! Did Christ mis-represent the facts when He said that ancient generations WILL rise together with modern generations? Did He mis-lead His disciples? Did He forget to make them aware that He was only speaking allegorically, and that the gospel writers should have understood that these things weren’t really going to happen, when He inspired them to write these accounts 20 to 30 years later?

One might make that case, except that Christ again said effectively the same thing in His revelation to the Apostle John more than sixty years later!

The Revelation of Jesus Christ.

In Revelation chapter 20 we see a narrative of end-time events, in which these resurrections are again laid-out in explicit language.

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,” (Rev.1:1) (NKJ)

Revelation 20 addresses four basic subjects.

- 1.) The 1000 Years Satan is bound,
- 2.) The Saints co-rule with Christ,
- 3.) Satan provokes rebellion after that,
- 4.) The Great White Throne Judgment.

Interspersed into the narrative is the place and part each resurrection will play. It also, (like in John 5), describes three different situations. In verse 5, we see, *“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”* This corresponds with John 5:24, which says, *“...he who hears My word, and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”* It wasn’t the first (physical) death being referred to here, it was the second. Those raised in the first resurrection are exempted from any possibility of the second death or any need to be brought through the judgment period explained in Revelation 20:11-12. In verse 25 of John 5, John presents what we see again in Revelation 20:12.

“And I saw the dead small and great, (punks and v.i.p’s), standing before God, and the **books** were opened. And another book was opened, which is the **Book of Life**. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.” In John 5:25-27 He presents this post-millennial resurrection, beginning with the words: “**Most assuredly**”! This event, in Christ’s own words, is **certain**!! He then goes on to discuss the judgment period for them.

On to Sentencing!

If the above wasn’t incredible enough, Christ went further, prefacing His words with, “*Do not marvel at this...*” anticipating that many would have a problem with it. He then goes on to describe an all-inclusive resurrection in verses 28-29, corresponding to His ‘sheep from the goats’ resurrection mentioned in Matthew 25:31-34 & 41, which clearly shows that this ‘sentencing’ event occurs **AFTER** His second coming! This being consistent with the fact that the First Resurrection involves only the Saints at that time, not any others, until after the 1000 years are over.⁸

When we realize there is a subject break between John 5, verses 27 and 28, and also that the same break exists between Revelation 20, verses 12 and 13, the differences in each really stand-out.

John 5:27 and Revelation 20:12 describe a resurrection that is not all-inclusive, where John 5:28 and Revelation 20:13 are all-inclusive. Notice, in Revelation 20:13-15, the ‘books’ are **not** opened. They are irrelevant at this point. In the final resurrection, even Death itself, and the grave, as institutions, are rendered non-existent in the Lake of Fire. At this point in time, after final sentencing of the last, there is no one left capable of death.

So, we see Christ in numerous places, revealing an other resurrection, one where unrepentant people from widely different eras are brought up together,

⁸ My article “The Resurrections from the Dead” deals more specifically with the First and Last resurrections. This post-1000 year resurrection occurs at the beginning of that evaluation period known as “*The Great White Throne Judgment*”. A physical resurrection to opportunity occurs at the onset of that period, which may be up to a century long, (Isa.65:17-20) and the sentencing resurrection occurs at the end of it.

in the flesh, are given time to learn what the others had opportunity to know and what they did or didn’t do with it, as well as learn what they themselves should do with what they are now presented. They live out the remainder of their lifetimes, in conformance to or in willful disregard of the books, (in the Greek, *biblion*: Strong’s #975), **the Bible**, and they again die,⁹ to await sentencing in the final resurrection at the Last Day (of human existence).

The question is, do we believe Him? Does our theological position allow such a situation? And, if not, why not? What’s the problem?

What Do We Do With This?

Of course, the ‘going to Heaven’ or ‘go to Hell’ persuasion will have real difficulty with not only the basic idea of the resurrection, let alone there being TWO of them. Now, add into this Christ’s ‘most assured’ certainty of a there being physical resurrection, some time after His Millennial Kingdom and you have all the components of a major theological conundrum! Most main-stream religious organizations hold views which do not allow or accommodate such an idea!

Those who hold the belief that all those unfortunate millions, who died in past ages, never having had opportunity for salvation, are burning in everlasting torment in an ever-burning Hell, may rest assured, that God has a better answer than the papacy or the protestant reformers ever did. He provides a time for them! That’s what this physical resurrection is for. Those in the grave, who never heard, will hear His voice, will come forth into the post-millennial age and will come to know His Plan and His Truth. They will have the Bible opened to their understanding, much of which wasn’t even written in their natural lifetimes. Final sentencing afterward will then be eminently just!

It’s time that established religions looked into this Truth, and modified its various rejectionist belief systems to accommodate what Christ plainly said!

Why not? What’s to lose?

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⁹ Isaiah 65:20 and Revelation 14:13 give allusion to this death occurring after the end of a restored lifetime. Compare Rev. 14:13 with Rev. 20:12.