

Resurrection and Rapture

By Rich Jacobs, M.D.

As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth. Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I shall see God; whom I myself shall behold, and whom my eyes will see and not another. Job 19:25

- * Notice that Job, by faith, acknowledged the pre-incarnate Christ, his Redeemer
- * Job knew that Christ would “*at the last*” . . . “*take His stand on earth*”. The Hebrew may provide additional insight. The phrase translated “*take His stand on the earth*” is more literally translated “*stand (imperative tense) over the dust*” (Hebrew: “*al-afar*”- על-עפר) — possibly also referring to Christ’s victory over death. This is an end-times event.
- * Job knew that even after he died and his flesh decayed, from a fully-formed, newly-acquired physical body, he would stand personally in God’s presence and see Him. Job believed in the resurrection of the righteous!
- * This lesson explores what the Bible says about the resurrection and the rapture, using other Bible verses.

1. What is the resurrection?

A dictionary says that “resurrection” means “*rising from the dead*”. The Greek word that is translated “*resurrection*” in the New Testament is more general than this. This word is “*anastasis*” (Greek: ἀνάστασις), which means “*rising up*”. I believe this word could be used to refer to both the resurrection and the rapture. The Bible provides other insights into the meaning of the word “resurrection”.

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, . . .” John 11:25

- * Thus, the resurrection of life is embodied in Jesus Christ, can be found no where else, and is attained by faith in Christ. He is the source of the resurrection, just as He is the source and sustainer of all life. The resurrection (of the righteous) IS eternal life.

2. What is the rapture?

The dictionary says that “rapture” can mean “*the transport of the believer from earth to heaven, without tasting death.*” The principal Bible verse that reveals the rapture was written by the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians.

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 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 not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet

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the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. **1 Thessalonians 4:13-17**

- * The rapture occurs when Christ returns with his army ‘host’ of “holy ones” - referring to both resurrected/raptured saints and angels (also, see **Jude 1:14; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 25:31**)
- * The rapture is when those who are alive join Christ and His army at the time of His return. The context of this verse, and others, suggests an instantaneous event.
- * The rapture occurs immediately after the resurrection of the righteous saints.
- * The rapture is the righteous living what the resurrection is to the righteous dead — eternal life.

3. Is there any evidence for the truth of the resurrection? for the rapture?

Eyewitness account of many saints to Christ’s resurrection.

Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us — beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us — one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection. **Acts 1:21, 22**

And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all. **Acts 4:33**

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. **1 Corinthians 15:3-8**

Prophetic resurrections

* The “foreshadowed” resurrections of Zarephath’s son by Elijah (**1 Kings 17:17-24**), of the Shunammite woman’s son by Elisha (**2 Kings 4:35**), of the widow’s son at Nain, by Jesus (**Luke 7:13-15**), of Jairus’ daughter by Jesus (**Matthew 9:25**), of Lazarus by Jesus (**John 11:43, 44**), of Tabitha by Peter (**Acts 9:36-42**), of Eutychus by Paul (**Acts 20:9-12**). It should be noted that none of these “prophetic resurrections” conferred immortality; these people had to die twice!

* The resurrection of Jerusalem saints at the time of Christ’s resurrection.
And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many. **Matthew 27:51-53**

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Prophetic raptures

- * **Enoch** - *By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. Hebrews 11:5* (Also, see **Genesis 5:24**).
- * **Elijah** - *As they were going along and talking, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven. 2 Kings 2:11*

4. Why is there a resurrection and rapture?

- * **The resurrection declares the Jesus is the Son of God**
. . . who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 1:4

- * **The resurrection and rapture declares that we have been adopted as the sons of God.**

For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. Romans 8:19-23

- * **The resurrection is the realization of our salvation and eternal inheritance in heaven**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. . . .obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:3-5, 9

- * **The resurrection is the time to be repaid for the good deeds done by faith while in the flesh** (It is beyond the scope of this lesson, but this occurs at the Judgment Seat of Christ)

But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous. Luke 14:13, 14

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- * **The resurrection and rapture confers upon the saints eternal life, a spiritual body, power in righteousness, and glory — to be like the holy angels in heaven.**

*Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; for they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. **Luke 20:34-36***

*So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised can imperishable body; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. **1 Corinthians 15:42-44***

- * **The resurrection and rapture prepare the way for God’s judgment and wrath on a reprobate world.**

*For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. **1 Thessalonians 5:9, 10***

*Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. **Romans 5:9***

*. . . and to await for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come. **1 Thessalonians 1:10***

- * **The resurrection and rapture vanquishes all of God’s enemies, including His last enemy, “Death”.**

Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He

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must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. 1 Corinthians 15:12-26

5. How many resurrections are there?

*** There are two (2) types of resurrection; the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the unrighteous.**

For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. Truly, truly, I say to you, an 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 just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will 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 5:21-29

6. When does the resurrection take place?

*** Jesus said we may expect the following sequence of events for the resurrection and rapture. (1) the Antichrist is revealed in the Abomination of Desolation. (2) Great Tribulation arises. (3) immediately AFTER the Great Tribulation, Christ comes for His saints. Christ's appearance cuts this Great Tribulation short for the sake of the elect, although there are tribulation martyrs. NOTE: The Great Tribulation is the Great Testimony of the Church to a sin-hardened world BEFORE God's wrath comes.**

Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short . . . For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then

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*all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. **Matthew 24:15-22, 27-31***

*** The Apostle Paul affirmed that a falling away from the faith and the appearance of Antichrist MUST PRECEDE the resurrection and rapture of the saints. The Antichrist is the source of the Great Tribulation (see Revelation 12).**

*Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4***

*** The resurrection of the wicked follows the Millennial Reign of Christ and His saints on the earth.**

*Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years. **Revelation 20:4-6***