

01-08-12

Series: [The Resurrections](#)

The Resurrections (53)

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[Matthew 28:1-10](#)

(Continuation from [04-17-10](#))

The Doctrine of the Resurrections

Much confusion has been introduced in prophetic interpretation by the unsupported theory that all men will be raised at the same time. This simplistic prophetic program ignores the details given in the prophetic Scripture concerning the various resurrections. Instead of one general resurrection, Scripture presents as many as seven major resurrections, some of which are past, others separated by long periods of time such as resurrections which preceded or follow the thousand-year reign of Christ. The Scripture clearly teaches that all will be raised in their time and place and that human existence goes on forever. The study of the doctrine of resurrection provides an important outline in the prophetic program related to this central truth of Christian faith and hope.

1. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

First in order of the resurrections is the resurrection of Jesus Christ, presented in prophecy in the Old Testament (as in [Psalms 16:9-10](#)), presented historically in the four gospels, and dealt with theologically in the New Testament beginning with the Book of Acts.

2. The Resurrection of the Saints in Jerusalem

[Matthew 27:51-53 \(NASB\)](#); [Leviticus 23:9-14 \(NASB\)](#)

3. The Resurrection of the Church

[1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 \(NASB\)](#); [1 Corinthians 15:51-58 \(NASB\)](#); [1 John 3:2 \(NASB\)](#); [1 Corinthians 3:10-17 \(NASB\)](#); [Revelation 2:1-7 \(NASB\)](#)

The resurrection of the church is the first massive resurrection and is forerunner of others to follow.

4. The Resurrection of the Old Testament Saints

Although the Old Testament constantly assumes the doctrine of resurrection, as stated in [Job 19:25-26](#), it is not the subject of extensive prophecy.

[Daniel 12](#) describes the Great Tribulation in [verse 1](#) and the resurrection in [verse 2](#) as a subsequent and climatic event in relation to it; see [Daniel 12:1-2 \(NASB\)](#)

In a similar way, the doctrine of resurrection in [Isaiah 26:19-21](#), the awaking of dead bodies from the earth, is related to the time when Christ comes to judge the world.

It is also significant that the particular phrase, “the dead in Christ,” is used to describe those raised at the Rapture ([1 Thessalonians 4:16](#)).

5. The Resurrection of Tribulation Saints

Special mention is made of the resurrection of those who died as martyrs in the Tribulation as being raised in connection with the second coming of Christ to establish His kingdom. In [Revelation 20:4](#) John writes that he saw:

This statement is explicit that the martyred dead of the tribulation will be raised when Christ comes to establish His kingdom. (See [Revelation 20:5](#)).

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6. The Resurrection of the Millennial Saints

[Isaiah 65:20 \(NASB\)](#)

7. The Resurrection of the Wicked

The final resurrection is a resurrection apparently related only to those who are wicked. According to [Revelation 20:11-15](#), in connection with the judgment at the great white throne, all the dead not previously raised are resurrected and stand before God to be judged.

This is the final resurrection before the creation of the new heavens and the new earth. Taken as a whole, Scripture is plain that all men are destined to be raised. As [Daniel 12:2](#) summarizes it.

The resurrection of damnation, however, is an awful spectacle. Men will be given bodies that will last forever, but bodies that are sinful and subject to pain and suffering. Like the devil and his angels, they will exist forever in the lake of fire. This compelling fact has driven men to carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth so as many as possible may be snatched as brands from the burning ([Jude 23](#)) and delivered from the wrath of God which is sure to come upon the ungodly.

4. The Resurrection of the Old Testament Saints (01-08-12)

Although the Old Testament constantly assumes the doctrine of resurrection, as sated in [Job 19:25-26](#), it is not the subject of extensive prophecy.

Such references as are found, however, seem to place the resurrection of the Old Testament saints at the time of the second coming of Christ to the earth, rather than His coming for His saints at the time of the Rapture.

[Daniel 12](#) describes the Great Tribulation in [verse 1](#) and the resurrection in [verse 2](#) as a subsequent and climatic event in relation to it;

In this case it would be clear that the Old Testament saints are not raised at the rapture but rather at the time of the establishment of the kingdom. The same implication is found in the Job passage, where resurrection is connected with the time when the Redeemer will stand on the earth.

In a similar way, the doctrine of resurrection in [Isaiah 26:19-21](#), the awaking of dead bodies from the earth, is related to the time when Christ comes to judge the world.

It is also significant that the particular phrase, “**the dead in Christ**,” is used to describe those raised at the Rapture ([1 Thessalonians 4:16](#)).

The expression “**in Christ**” describes the present believer’s position in Christ due to baptism of the Spirit, which occurred for the first time in [Acts 2](#) and is not used of Old Testament saints. While interpreters of Scripture will continue to differ, and some will include the Old Testament saints with the rapture, the burden of evidence seems to relate it to the second coming of Christ to the earth. In any event, all the saints of the Old Testament as well as the church are raised before the Millennium.