

Parson to Person
1 Corinthians 15
(The Resurrection) – Part 12

The Scriptures indicate that there will be a physical resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous. The righteous are raised in what is referred to as the “first resurrection” (Revelation 20:6).

The first resurrection will occur in five phases. They are as follows: Jesus Himself (Matthew 28:1–8), a select number of pre-cross saints—just around Jerusalem (Matthew 27:51–54), the Church Age Saints (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18), the two Tribulation witnesses (Revelation 11:1–12), and the remainder of the pre-cross saints—coupled together with the Tribulation saints (Daniel 12:1–3 and Revelation 20:4–6).

The unrighteous will be raised up for judgment—to appear at the Great White Throne—just after the Millennial Reign of Jesus. The “resurrection” of the unrighteous is referred to as “the second death”—not the “second resurrection” (see Revelation 20:5–6).

The Rapture and the Second Coming

Many have combined the resurrection of the Church Age saints with the resurrection of all other believers. Others have identified those resurrected at the Rapture with those who will be raised up at the Second Coming—while leaving the others in their proper place in time. However, a careful examination of the Scriptures will show that the five phases of the first resurrection should be identified and distinguished—and in particular, for our present study, the Rapture and the Second Coming.

For our purposes, I will simply set the passages in view.

Rapture—Before the Tribulation

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality” (1 Corinthians 15:51–53).

“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep 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 by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18).

Second Coming—After the Tribulation

“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen” (Revelation 1:7).

“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood,

and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Revelation 19:11–16).

“At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, *even* to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame *and* everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever” (Daniel 12:1–3).

“And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years” (Revelation 20:4).

These and other Scriptural passages can help us identify a few distinctions.

Related to the Rapture:

- 1) At the Rapture, Jesus comes for His bride. (The living and the dead in Christ.)

- 2) At the Rapture, the translated saints go to heaven.
- 3) The Rapture is imminent—could occur any moment and has no prerequisite signs.
- 4) At the Rapture, evil is unleashed by the removal of the “restrainer.”
- 5) The Rapture is a blessing for the believer. It is “the blessed hope.”
- 6) The Rapture is not directly stated in the Old Testament.
- 7) The Rapture occurs before the Tribulation (“Daniel’s 70th week”).
- 8) At the Rapture, we meet the Lord in the air.
- 9) At the Rapture, only His own see Him.
- 10) The Tribulation begins with a 7-year peace treaty.

Related to the Second Coming:

- 1) At the Second Coming, Jesus returns with His bride.
- 2) At the Second Coming, no one is translated to heaven.
- 3) The Second Coming follows predictive signs—including the Tribulation.
- 4) Just after the Second Coming, Satan is bound for 1000 Years—“evil is restrained.”
- 5) The Second Coming is blessing for the Nation and remnant of Israel. Jesus—“the hope of Israel.”
- 6) The Second Coming is specifically predicted in the Old Testament.
- 7) The Second Coming concludes the Tribulation.
- 8) At the Second Coming, Jesus returns to the earth.
- 9) At the Second Coming, every eye shall see Him.
- 10) At the Second Coming, the Battle of Armageddon occurs (Revelation 19/Ezekiel 38–39).

Related to the Millennium:

- 1) At the Second Coming, the Old Testament and Tribulation Saints are resurrected—these are the “friends and guests at the wedding.”
- 2) After the Second Coming, the Sheep and Goat Judgment occurs.
- 3) After the Second Coming, the Millennial Reign begins.

I love you all,
Pastor Paul