

First Resurrection

All Born Again Christians Will Take Part in The First Resurrection

The First Resurrection: One of the most treasured subjects in the whole Bible is its indisputable presentation of life after death. Practically all human beings dream of walking from death into an eternal state of bliss, but only the Bible gives authoritative details about it. In fact, it is mentioned so frequently that if there is no resurrection of the dead, the Bible becomes unreliable. Every promise to believers concerning an afterlife is predicated on a bodily resurrection. **For The First Resurrection** (read Rev. 20:5-6).

The expression “the resurrection from among the dead”, is found forty-nine times in Scripture. Revelation 20:4-6 is the only passage that labels the “believer’s resurrection.” It is important to understand that just as there are two phases to Christ’s second coming. The Rapture of the Church and The Glorious Appearing.

There are three phases to the resurrection of believers:

1. The Church.
2. Seven years later the Old Testament Saints; and finally
3. The Tribulation Saints.

John merges them all together when he says, “Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection.”

Church Age Saints – Phase 1: The saints of the church age will be resurrected in the first phase of the first resurrection, as outlined in (**1 Thess. 4:13-18**). This passage described the Rapture of the Church when all Christians will be resurrected. This resurrection, according to Paul, will concern only “the dead in Christ” and those “who have fallen asleep in Jesus”; thus, it will be limited to the Church Age.

Consisting solely of those who are born again believers, the Rapture will include no Old Testament saints. “In Christ” is uniformly used in the New Testament as a theological reference to those who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ and denotes the saints after the day of Pentecost.

Old Testament Saints – Phase 2: Dr. Walvoord notes that the Old Testament seems to place the resurrection of Israel after the Tribulation. In (Daniel Chapter 12), immediately after the description of the Tribulation in the preceding chapter, deliverance is promised Israel at the close of the Tribulation.

Dan 12:1-2 “At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people (everyone whose name is found written in the Lamb’s book of life), will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake; some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt”.

The suggestion that Israel will be resurrected prior to the Tribulation Saints results from a comparison of (Rev. 19:7-9 with Psalm 50:1-6). At the marriage supper of the Lamb, Israel will be in attendance as friends of the Bridegroom. Since the marriage supper will occur just prior to the Glorious Appearing, we may assume that Israel will be resurrected before the Glorious Appearing, while Tribulation saints are raised during or at His Glorious Appearing.

Tribulation Saints – Phase 3: (Rev. chapter 6), presents a picture of the Tribulation saints who have been martyred for the testimony of the Lamb, waiting for the resurrection, “and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers was completed.”

Rev. 6:9 -11 “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:” “And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” “And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled”.

This obviously refers to the end of the Tribulation period, at which time, then Christ comes in His glory to set up His millennial kingdom, the Tribulation saints will be resurrected.

This accords with our text:

Rev. 20:4 “I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

Reigned with Christ a Thousand Years; (see Rev. 20:4 read the notes). In order to live, the tribulation saints must be resurrected. This evidently will take place while the angel is binding Satan, just prior to or at the beginning of the millennial kingdom.