

Judgment Day: The Second Coming of Christ

Part 3: The Two (Three?) Resurrections

(preached 4/2/23)

Please turn to *Revelation 20*.

THUS FAR:

- God's Kingdom Plan is to live among His people and have them all gathered together in one place.
- There are 2 types of JD events: 1) when God's people fall away resulting is a) dispossession of their land and b) scattering to Gentile nations. 2) REGATHERING "let My people go" when the Lord delivers His people from the nations where they were scattered, bringing them back to his PL. In this case God punishes the unbelieving nation(s) who have enslaved His people.
- When Jesus returns, it will be the second type of JD event where He makes war on the unbelieving nations for persecuting His people. At this point Jesus will take control of every nation on the planet!
- Then He will sit on a throne—here on earth—and send angels out to gather everyone to appear before Him...both believers and unbelievers.
- Believers are compared to wheat and sheep and will enter into His Kingdom.
- Unbelievers are compared to tares and goats, and will go into the Lake of Fire.

TODAY an amazing Biblical mystery is revealed: ***there are actually 2 resurrections (after Jesus' being raised)!***

BACKDROP OF REV 20. We start reading from Revelation 20 and here is the backdrop: Jesus has returned, the Battle of Armageddon is over, and the Antichrist defeated....

Revelation 20:1-6 (ESV)

1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. 4 Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such

the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

Verses 1-3: IMMEDIATELY after Jesus' victory at Armageddon, an angel descends from Heaven and immediately binds the Dragon, imprisoning him into the BP where he will be incarcerated for 1000 years. At the end of 1000 years, he'll be released to come back to the surface for a short time.

Verse 4: John sees two things. 1) thrones and 2) the souls/spirits of those who resisted taking the Mark of the Beast or worshipping him.

WHAT ARE THE THRONES? The thrones are symbolic but literal and are thrones of judgment, meant for human beings. They were promised by Jesus to all who know Him as their Lord and Savior. Allow me to pause in the exposition of Revelation 20 to quote some supporting verses elsewhere.

Jesus said to the Church of Laodicea:

Revelation 3:21 ESV

The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Listen to what Paul tells the ***Corinthians***, a mind-blowing revelation!

1 Corinthians 6:1-3 ESV

When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints? 2 Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? 3 Do you not know that we are to judge angels?

WE JUDGE. Paul is telling us that God is going let us 1) judge the world and 2) judge fallen angels!

Back to Revelation 20: the throne John sees are ours and we finally sit on them ***after*** the Second Coming.

SPIRITS WHO RESISTED BEAST. The second thing John sees in Revelation 20 are the spirits of those who, during the reign of the Antichrist, refused to worship him or take his mark. They are resurrected from the dead at this point, sit on these thrones, and reign with Jesus for 1000 years. ***This 1000 year period is often called "The Millennial Kingdom of Christ."***

Verses 5-6: John calls this “the first resurrection”—the saints being raised immediately after Christ’s Second Coming. He then reveals that everyone else are raised at the END of the 1000 year Kingdom, which is the second resurrection. Let’s pause here and take stock and please remember **I don’t have all the answers.** Especially on end times stuff!

HUMAN SAINTS IN ARMY. The Bible makes it clear that human saints came with Jesus from the sky and were part of His Second Coming army of Revelation 19. Regardless of one’s timing of the Rapture, these are clearly the saints of God who were resurrected BEFORE the Second Coming.

NOT ALWAYS CHRONO. OR since the Bible isn’t perfectly chronological but often jumps around in one paragraph—sometimes by thousands of years!—*it’s possible that the Revelation 20:4 “first resurrection” is the same event as a post-Trib Rapture that takes place immediately before the Battle of Armageddon.* That would certainly satisfy John’s label that this is the “FIRST” Resurrection. Whereas any raising from the dead which takes place before the Second Coming would be called “first.”

Again: I don’t have all the answers.

Verse 6 says that the FIRST resurrection is a BLESSED event—it’s the one you and I will take part in (unless you believe in a pre or mid-Trib Rapture)!

6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

The second part of the verse shows us there is a first death and a second death.

Everyone dies the first death, but only some die the second death.

1ST DEATH. The first death is the one we’re all part of: the death of the body we were born in. From the dust we came, to the dust we shall return.

2ND DEATH. The second death is bad...very bad...and is the one that unbelievers will be part of and it will be final.

Any who knows Christ as Savior takes part in the First Resurrection, which is eternal life! It’s the culmination of God’s Kingdom plan to live with us, among us, and we with Him. In our resurrected bodies we will be completely holy in every way and therefore in constant relationship with Jesus, with no obstacles or issues.

WE STRAY FROM HIM. In the here and now, Jesus never stops loving or pursuing us and He's always with us. Yet we tend to stray away from Him, ignore Him, pursue the desires of the flesh and world. Sometimes we do these things and then avoid Him out of shame.

We'll never do any of those things in our raised bodies!

As Paul said to the Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 13:12 ESV

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face

FACE TO FACE! It is then that we will see—and live with—Jesus face to face! Faith will no longer be required! When Jesus descends to live among us, He will finish our faith! Just like Christ, there will be no second death and death will no longer have any dominion or power over us!

HEAVENLY MATTER. 1 Corinthians 15 states that our new bodies will be made of “heavenly” matter vs. these ones which are made from the dust of the earth. We'll have the same body as Jesus! We will shine with His glory literally and not figuratively!

Let's continue in Revelation 20:

Revelation 20:7-10 ESV

7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. 9 And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, 10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

SATAN RELEASED. After 1000 years of Jesus ruling and reigning here on earth, Satan is temporarily released from his hellish prison. Unfortunately, he is able to deceive tens of thousands of people, perhaps more, to rebel against Jesus. Astounding isn't it?

WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?! First off, IDK who these people are or where they came from. For real. Clearly there are people in the MK who aren't in resurrected bodies yet, and they have kids and so forth. Who is “left over” after the 2nd coming? IDK. Let's not get into that today, but suffice to say there are people on earth who aren't in resurrected bodies, but in earthly ones that are still subject to sin and death.

DECEIVED BY SATAN. The last generation of these people are deceived by the devil, rebel against Jesus, and are wiped out. What this shows us is that ***we can't save ourselves*** and, left to nothing more than free will, some will still choose the devil even with Jesus physically present on the planet. The same thing applies to angels—many of them abandoned God and sided with Lucifer.

ONLY GOD IS GOOD! It shows that only God is good and holy and **only CHRIST can make someone good and holy**. The goodness and righteousness was something given to us, like clothing, by Christ. It's ours and His at the same time. At this point in the future, the devil and his angels are cast into their final and eternal prison, the Lake of Fire, never to return again!

Revelation 20:11-15 ESV

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

THIS IS THE FINAL JUDGMENT DAY EVENT. Time itself will come to an end after this moment, and we will enter into eternity. More on that in a moment.

Verse 11: Jesus is sitting on a white throne of judgment, here on earth. I believe this is the exact same event Jesus spoke of in Matthew 25 that we talked about last week: where He separates the sheep from the goats.

Verse 12: anyone who didn't take part in the First Resurrection are raised from the dead, into their old bodies made from dust/earth (think Lazarus), to stand before Jesus on the throne.

Verse 12: "books" are opened and one of them was called by the ancient Jews "The Book of Deeds." They believed that every word and action performed in the body is recorded in this heavenly book to be used against us on JD. During the Fall Jewish Feasts, they take 10 days where they fast, pray, meditate on their sins, and repent. On the last day they all gather at the Temple where the High Priest sacrifices a goat in the HOH and asks God to forgive the sins of all the people.

ERASE DEEDS. The ancient Jews believed that, in that moment, God would erase—your Bible says "blot out" and "remember no more (forget)" their sins from the Book of Deeds and then write their names in the Book of Life.

Isaiah 43:25

“I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins.”

CHRIST’S BLOOD ERASES AND WRITES! Under Christ, it’s the Blood of Jesus that erases all our sins from the Book of Deeds, and serves as “ink” to write our names into the Book of Life.

RIGHTEOUSNESS JUDGED THRU BLOOD. The names appearing in the Book of Life are those who have received Jesus as their Lord and Savior. In other words, their righteousness is judged by Christ through His blood...not by their words or actions.

For unbelievers it’s the opposite—they’re righteousness is judged by their words and actions.

We don’t want to be judged this way!!!

PERFECTION. Look at the last half of verse 12. Please remember: God’s version of righteousness is perfection—never having committed a sin even once, in our entire lives! The only human being to achieve this was Jesus, the Son of God.

There is no righteousness apart from Christ.

Verse 13: the angels go everywhere on the planet to gather the spirits of the dead—including Hell itself—and bring them before Christ where they are resurrected back into their old bodies.

Verse 14 is vital and cause for us to rejoice, to the point of jumping up and down in glee:
Death dies. And so does Hell.

I won’t have to perform any more funerals!

The LOF is a final and eternal place for all things evil, just as the NJ is the final and eternal place for all things righteous.

Death is a curse, begat in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve ate what they weren’t supposed to. Death has reigned here on earth over humanity since that fateful day. Yet on this day, at the final judgment, death will die and never come back. Hell will die and be no more! Jesus’ victory will complete!

FINAL/2ND DEATH. On the flip side, the LOF is the second and final death.

Verse 15 shows who must go there: anyone whose name isn't written in the Book of Life. In other words, anyone who doesn't yet know Christ as their Savior.

“Scott, I don't like the idea of a LOF” Me neither!

ETERNITY STARTS. With this event over, now eternity begins! We come now to my favorite verses in all the Bible!

Revelation 21:1-7 ESV

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” 5 And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” 6 And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. 7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”

FULL MATURITY. At last, we see God's Kingdom Plan come to its full maturity! Everything He's wanted since the beginning comes true and this time, nothing can mess it up! No devil, no Adam, no Eve, no me, no you!

No one can mess this up!

Just as God once created Eden for humankind, **HE'S PREPARED A FAR SUPERIOR PLACE FOR YOU AND I CALLED THE NJ!**

Jesus is going to live there, rule and reign from there, and we're going to live there with Him! We will be together forever!