

Conclusion The facts are plain. Resurrection is a vital reality. No one will escape it if he dies in this life. The issue is: will you rise to life or death (John 5:28, 29)? This must be decided before you die. There is no second chance, only a second death! Have you trusted Christ as your Savior? Are you "one of Christ's"? Make certain today.

## THE BOOK OF REVELATION

"Resurrection"  
Revelation 20:4-6

### Introduction

1. Christ has returned to the earth (19:11-16). This brought about the great battle of Armageddon and the issues which rose from that event (19:17-21). Total defeat of antagonistic religious and political forces is evident.
2. Then comes the silencing of Satan (20:1-3). An angel is charged to do this and casts him into the abyss. His incarceration lasts 1000 years. The environment is cleaned up by God through His own intervention (Heaven's EPA).
3. While all of this happens in the earth, other great events are taking place in heaven and under the earth. It is the resurrection of the saints. The moral government of our Lord during the 1000 years must have "saved" leadership to rule with Him. This is how it is provided. To get the full picture, here are some important items on resurrection:

#### 1. RESURRECTION DATA

##### a. It is universal

There is no suggestion in the Bible that the resurrection is reserved for a few. Anyone who ever dies will ultimately rise again (John 5:28, 29; Rev. 20:5).

##### b. It is spiritual

The phrases used in passages relating to resurrection concern "life" and "damnation", "good" and "evil". It is the great division between light and darkness. God divides the world in resurrection on spiritual bases.

##### c. It is chronological

This is quite obvious from the use of the term "first resurrection" (vv. 5, 6). Further, our Lord shocked the disciples by speaking of the "out resurrection" (Mark 9:9, 10). Again, the use of the particle "until" (v. 5) shows there is a time element involved in the subject.

## 2. RESURRECTION DEFINITIONS

Two items are included in the text:

### a. "First" resurrection

Although the Scripture does not speak of a "second" resurrection here, the thought is quite obvious. There cannot be a first without a second. Nonetheless, it does become clear that there is a "second" resurrection as posed by the time particle "until" (v. 5).

### b. First "resurrection"

This word is found 42 times in the New Testament and only once does it refer to anything but physical resurrection (Luke 2:34). Hence, bodily or somatic resurrection is in view here. This is confirmed by the use of the verb "lived" (v. 4), the concept of life in the context (vv. 12, 13), and the use of the term "death" from which certain will come alive (vv. 4, 5). There is no doubt, then, that bodily resurrection is in view in this text. The idea of a spiritual or mystical resurrection is entirely foreign.

## 3. RESURRECTION DETAILS

The Bible is specific to teach the actual manner in which resurrection will take place in God's program (1 Cor. 15:20, 23, 24).

### a. First order: Christ

The word "order" is a military term and refers to a body or corps of troops. Christ is the first order of troop resurrection. As the "first fruits" Christ is the beginning of many more to come. He is taken from the mass that is left in the grave. This also relates our Lord to the feast of first fruits in the Old Testament (Lev. 23).

### b. Second order: believers

The specific phrase is "they that are Christ's" (v. 23). This is a very broad phrase and speaks of all those who have participated in the redemption which is in Christ (Rom. 3:24, 25). It does not have the technical significance of the phrase "in Christ" which is only used

of grace dispensation believers (1 Cor. 12:13). The phrase does, however, refer to the same as "first resurrection" of our text (v. 5). Who is included in the "they that are Christ's" is defineable. Here they are:

1) Group 1 "They who sat" (Rev. 20:4). This is a reference to New Testament saints since Pentecost. They have judgment given to them and this is consistent with the church responsibility (1 Cor. 6:2, 3). Being enthroned, they are identical with the 24 elders (Rev. 4, 5). They were raptured (Rev. 4:1; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). They are now "with the Lord" (Phil. 1:23) and will return with Him (Rev. 19:11-16).

2) Group 2 "They who were beheaded" (Rev. 20:4). A check with the breaking of the fifth seal shows they are tribulation saints (Rev. 6:9). The noun "soul" does not mean they are unreal persons (Gen. 45:25-27; Acts 2:41; 27:37; 1 Pet. 3:20). Closely aligned with these people are those "who worshipped not the beast, his image, neither received his mark". The beast, of course, is the coming head of the western political set up and is the antichrist of the last days (Rev. 13:1-10).

3) Group 3 These are the Old Testament saints and are not mentioned in our text. However, a literal interpretation of the Old Testament teaches that they will be raised at the time of the tribulation (Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:1-3). It is at this time so they can go into the millennium with the tribulation saints.

NOTE: Several notations are given concerning these included in the first resurrection: 1) They are blessed (v. 6). 2) They are holy (v. 6). 3) They are not touched by the second death (v. 6). This relates to eternal damnation (v. 14 and Rev. 21:8). 4) They will be priests (v. 6). 5) They will reign with Christ throughout the millennium (v. 6).

### c. Third order: nonbelievers

This is covered by the phrase "then cometh the end" (1 Cor. 15:24). This is the "second resurrection" and is the same as Rev. 20:5. It is the resurrection of the wicked dead (Rev. 20:1-15) and is identical with the second death (20:14).