

RESURRECTION, REST OF THE DEAD

Chapter 20, verses 4 and 5, of the Book of Revelation speaks two major resurrection that are to occur, one at Christ return and the other a thousand years later:

Beginning in verse 4 we read:

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection" (Rev.20:4-5 KJV).

Those who are in this first resurrection are easily identified; but who are the rest of the dead mentioned at the end of verse 5, and why are they resurrected after a thousand years after Christ reigns on earth?

Contrary to what most of the Christian community teaches about the resurrection of the dead, the Bible actually teaches that there are at least four major resurrections. And the resurrection of the rest of the dead mentioned in Revelation 20, verse 5 is just one of these four resurrections.

If you want to know the purpose of the resurrection of the rest of the dead, pay careful attention to the information contained in this broadcast. Because, you will not find very many people who know or understand what I am about to tell you about the resurrection of the rest of the dead.

After the first resurrection, Jesus will return to the earth as a conquering king with the elect of all ages who have been changed into immortal beings (1.Cor.15:51-54). During the first thousand years of Christ's rule, the earth will be at peace and become a paradise: a world free of war, famine, disease, and Satan and his demons (Rev.20:1-3). It will be a world of peace and abundance:

This is the time spoken of by the prophets Isaiah and Micah; a time in which the world will be at peace and all nations will come to Jerusalem to learn the way of God:

Isaiah said:

"And he (speaking of Christ) shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa.2:2-4 KJV). See also Mic.4:1-4.

It is during this time of peace and prosperity that the earth will be prepared for the billions of humans who will participate in the next phase of God's plan for the salvation of humanity.

The Rest of the Dead

The rest of the dead who are to be resurrected at the end of a thousand years of Christ's reign on earth are not the Sovereign Father's elect children. Because the Father's elect will be immortal beings at this time. These individuals will not be Israelites either, because national Israel is to be resurrected a special resurrection of its own. The "Rest of the Dead" are the billions of non-Israelites who have lived and died without having an opportunity for salvation.

SALVATION

The Bible plainly shows that the only way to obtain salvation is through the Messiah and his sacrifice. Under the terms and conditions of the New Covenant, one must be called by God, repent of sin, be baptized, and receive the holy spirit in order to be saved. The simple truth is that the majority of people—past and present—have not had sufficient knowledge and understanding of the Creator God of Israel, his heavenly Father, or the way to salvation.

The apostle Peter told a group of people this concerning Christ:

"Let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ the

Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised up from the dead—in this name this one stands near before you whole! This One is the Stone counted worthless by you the builders, which has become placed into the head of the corner, and there is salvation in no other One, for neither is there any other name under heaven having been given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:10-12 Para.).

Despite, the tremendous missionary and evangelistic efforts of people throughout history, billions of humans have never heard of Jesus Christ or God's plan for humanity. Even in this age, there are billions who will never hear the name of Jesus Christ or understand his message before he returns. Therefore, God has included a special resurrection for these people in order to give them the opportunity to know him and to chose to be a part of his family if they want.

Not the Only Day of Salvation

Believe it or not the Bible shows that the time between Adam and the return of Christ is not the only time when salvation is offered to humanity. The problem with the belief that today is the only day of salvation, is that, this belief is not comparable with what the Bible says that the prophets, Jesus Christ, and the apostles taught about the Sovereign God's plan to offer the opportunity of salvation to all of mankind. A small amount of study into the scriptures will show that today is only a day of salvation for a specific group of individuals who are being called to an extraordinary opportunity before Christ returns to conquer and govern the earth.

Most of professing Christianity believe that there are only two categories of people on earth: the saved who are assured heavenly bliss and the lost who are to be tormented forever in an everlasting hell-fire. Is today the only day of salvation? Have God the Father and Jesus Christ been trying to save all of humanity from the time of Adam to this present day? The biblical answer to both questions, is absolutely not.

Many worry that if their loved ones do not accept Christ in this life, they will loose out on salvation. Many grieve over their dead relatives, because they think these loved ones are going to burn in a hell-fire for all of eternity, because they never acknowledged Christ as their Savior.

If it were true that this is the only day of salvation, the vast majority of humanity is lost without hope, because most of humanity has never heard of Christ or the way to salvation and most never will until after the return of Christ to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

If you want to know the biblical truth concerning the popular belief of today being the only day of salvation, get a copy of my study, A Day of Salvation. The Biblical answer may surprise you, because it is not what is taught preached in most churches today.

There Is Only One Process for Salvation

At the Festival of Pentecost in 30 A.D., the apostle Peter said to a large crowd of people concerning the process that one must follow in order to obtain an eternal agreement with The Sovereign Father.

The apostle Peter said this: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible states that the only way to receive salvation is through the Messiah and his sacrifice. But, how will people—past, present, and future—who have never even heard of Christ or his sacrifice obtain salvation?

Does God have another method of salvation that does not involve a person accepting Christ as their savior, repenting of sin, being baptized, and receiving the holy spirit? Is there another method to obtain salvation besides the one clearly specified in the Bible? See Mk.16:16; Lk.13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; Rom.8:7-18.

The answer is no! There is no alternate method of obtaining salvation to the one clearly stated in the Bible. There is only one method by which one can obtain salvation, and that method is through Jesus Christ. The simple truth is that billions of people have not yet had their opportunity for salvation.

Jesus spoke the truth when he said, "For the Son of man [Christ] is come to save that which was lost" (Matt.8:11 KJV; Lk.19:10).

The problem is not with what Jesus said, it is with what most think he said. Most believe that Jesus meant that he came to save all humanity at that time; however, he did not say this. He only stated that it was his reason for coming.

The Parables and Conversion

Many believe the reason that Jesus spoke in parables was to make his meaning clear; however, this was not what he said. He said that he spoke in parables to conceal the information that could lead people to Salvation.

One day after Jesus had been speaking to a group of people, his twelve disciples asked him why he spoke to the people in parables? Jesus told them:

"To you has been given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God. But to these outside, all things are being given in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand, lest they should be converted, and sins be forgiven to them" (Mk.4:10-12 Para.). See also Isa.6:8-10; Matt.13:10-15; Lk.8:10; Jn.12:37-40; Acts 28:25-27.

The word 'mystery' in this passage is translated from the Greek word 'mysterion', which means 'mystery' or 'secret'. Jesus clearly said that those outside of his group were not permitted to understand the secret plan of God that would lead them to salvation.

WHY THE SECRECY?

But why would this information that leads a person to salvation be kept secret and why is it only

revealed to the Sovereign God's earthly children?

Although the mystery of salvation has been preached since the time of Adam, only a very few have been allowed to understand its secrets, and for very good reasons. God the Father and Jesus Christ love their human creation much more than most people can begin to comprehend. It is this love and concern for each individual that prevents God the Father from offering salvation to all of humanity before the establishment of his kingdom on earth.

God the Father and Jesus Christ want everyone to become a part of the God family; they want everyone to obtain salvation:

Paul told Timothy that it was God's purpose for all people to be saved from eternal death, and come to the knowledge of his truth" (1.Tim.2:4 KJV).

The apostle Peter said much the same thing in his second letter, he said:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2.Pet.3:9 KJV). See also Psa.136:1-16.

God the Father and Jesus Christ have not forgotten the billions who have never had an opportunity to know them and their goodness. Moreover, they have not forgotten the awesome purpose for which human beings were created. The Sovereign Father and his Son are still intent on expanding their family by creating sons out of their human creation:

The apostle John said concerning this expansion of the Family of God.

"But as many as received him, (speaking of Christ) to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12 KJV). See also Jn.3:1-3; 2.Cor.6:18; Heb.2:10; Phil.3:21; 1.Jn.3:2.

The very reason for mankind's existence is so that God the Father can expand his family. The only

human beings who will be destroyed in the Lake of Fire are those who refuse to repent of their evil ways. God will not give anyone eternal life until they prove that they will live according to his way of life. This is why God has made provision for a resurrection that will afford each individual the optimum opportunity for success.

This love and concern for people, is the reason that God the Father and Jesus Christ have formulated a plan that will afford each individual the optimum opportunity for success. The Father knows the potential and character of each individual and in which phase of his plan to offer them the opportunity for salvation. They must be allowed to live in a time and environment in which they can succeed if they so desire.

The Gospel Preached for a Witness

Jesus said the Gospel was to be preached only as a witness; he said absolutely nothing about trying to convert all of humanity during this present age. He said:

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations: and then shall the end come" (Matt.24:14 KJV).

The end that is spoken of here is the end of human rule on this earth. With the end of human rule, begins a New Age in which the Kingdom of God will reign supreme on earth with Jesus Christ as its ruler.

Today, many people are called and exposed to the opportunity for salvation, yet those who are called are very few in comparison to the earth's population. Moreover, among those who are called, few are chosen to participate in the first resurrection:

Jesus said: "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many are called, but few chosen" (Matt.20:16; 22:14 KJV).

The overall plan of God for the salvation of mankind has not changed from the foundation of the world. Part of this plan is that humans must come into conformity with his law. A fundamental

teaching of both the Old and the New Testaments is that, one must obey his law before being granted salvation.

Few Have Known God's Truth

From the time of Adam to the time of the return of Christ, relatively few individuals will have had the opportunity to understand God's truth. Most who hear the Gospel preached hear it only as a witness or as a warning, because spiritual truth and knowledge cannot be conveyed by natural means to a mortal human mind. See Jn.16:13; 1.Cor.2:10-15.

Spiritual truth is conveyed through the Father's holy spirit to those called to a spiritual work. This is why the vast majority of people do not even begin to grasp the awesome truth of God.

Regardless of their quality of life, education, or intelligence, most of humanity has been kept in total ignorance of the true gospel and the way to salvation. God has either purposely not allowed them to understand his truth (Mk.4:10-12; 2.Cor.4:3-4) or they have been deceived by satanic religions (2.Cor.11:10-15; Rev.12:9).

Is God Fair?

Jesus said that we must keep God's commandments in order to live forever (Matt.19:16-17). But, how can people keep his law if they have never had it taught to them? The obvious answer is that they cannot! Logic tells us that a person must know what to do before they can do it. Therefore, because God is fair and just, each person must be given the opportunity to understand his law and way of life and they must be given enough time to act upon this knowledge. The God of love (1.Jn.4:16) will not condemn billions of people to eternal death (Rom.6:23) without first giving them the opportunity to know what they must do in order to gain eternal life.

The Books of Judgment

In the Books of Daniel and Revelation we read of books that have to do with people being judged.

Daniel chapter 7, beginning in verse 9:

"I beheld until the thrones were cast down (that is, set in place), and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set and the books were opened" (Dan.7:9-10 KJV).

Revelation chapter 20, verses 11 and 12 say this:

"And I saw a great white throne, and the One sitting on it, From whose face the earth and the heaven fled; and a place was not found for them. And I saw the dead, the small and the great, standing before God; And the books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of life. And the dead were judged out of the things written in the books according to their works" (Rev.20:11-12 Para.).

Because other scriptures tell us that people are judged according to how they conform to God's laws, precepts, and principles; it seems likely that these books also contain this information plus the Father's gospel message about Christ and the Kingdom of God.

One of the books clearly defined, is the Book of Life. This book contains all the names of those who have obtained eternal life; moreover, if a person's name is not written in this book, they will not have eternal life:

Revelation chapter 20, verse 13 tells us this:

"The sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works" (20:13 KJV).

Each individual's final destiny, whether to eternal life or death, depends on whether or not they follow what is written in the books which contain God's code of law and standard of righteous behavior.

Those who will be brought back to physical life in the resurrection of "The Rest of the Dead" will have the opportunity to live according to what is written in these books and have their names written in the Book of Life.

Judgment and Sentencing

The major difficulty in understanding what the Bible really says about judgment comes from the traditional belief and concept that judgment always means some type of condemnation or sentencing for the commission of a crime. However, in many scriptures, this is not what is referred to at all. Many times judgment refers to a decision process that involves a period of time after which a decision is made as to the final destiny of an individual. And this decision is based on the performance of each individual.

An example of judgment as a life process is given to us by the apostle Peter when he said, "Because the time has come to begin the judgment from the house of God; and if firstly from us, what will be the end of the ones disobeying the gospel of God. And if the righteous scarcely be saved, were will the ungodly and sinner appear?" (1.Pet.4:17-18 Para).

Peter speaks of those who are called to salvation during the gospel age as being under a process of judgment. See also 2.Cor.5:9-10.

Jesus says to the seven churches, "To him that has an ear, let him hear, what the Spirit says to the churches; To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev.2:7 KJV). See also Matt.24:13; Heb.5:8-9; Rev.2:26;3:21.

Jesus shows that salvation is a process which includes listening, learning, effort, and making correct decisions. Overcoming is a lifelong process that requires effort that is based on the knowledge and understanding of what is required by God, taking positive action on this knowledge and understanding, and living a righteous life to the best of one's ability.

Revelation chapter 20, verses 12 and 13 speak of a time of decision for those who are given an opportunity for salvation:

"And I saw the dead, the small and the great, standing before God; And the books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of life. And the dead were judged out of the things written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead in it. And death and Hades gave up the dead in them. And they were each judged according to their works" (Rev.20:12-13 Para).

The English word 'judged' in Revelation 20:12-13 is translated from the Greek word 'krino' (to judge). Krino also means 'to sunder' 'to select,' 'to decide,' 'to assess,' 'to go to law,' 'to seek justice,' 'to expound,' 'to believe,' and 'to resolve'.

The assumption that the word 'krino' always indicates the delivering of a sentence or punishment for a crime falsely narrows their meaning when used in scriptures concerning the salvation of humanity. The Greek word 'krino' is also used to convey the sense of something yet to be decided or resolved and this is the meaning that is meant in the scriptures that refer to "The Rest of the Dead".

All Must Give Account

Paul said to the Corinthians:

"For we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive the things done through the body, according to what he did, whether good or bad" (2.Cor.5:10 Para.).

At the Proper Time

In order for each individual to have the best possible conditions to enhance their possibility for success, they must be allowed to live in an environment in which they may succeed if they so desire:

The apostle Paul also said:

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all

be made alive, every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1.Cor.15:22-23 KJV).

In God's plan for the salvation of humanity, he has set aside a time of peace and prosperity, so that the vast majority of humanity can be given his truth and an opportunity to obey him under optimum conditions.

A First Opportunity

There were many who had personally seen Jesus' great miracles that Jesus did and still would not repent of their wickedness. Jesus spoke of a time in which pagans and sexual deviants would be better off than those who saw him and did not believe. Logically, the only way these pagans and sexual deviants can better in a judgment is if they had repented of their wickedness. We know the people of Sodom were destroyed in their wickedness; therefore, it is obvious that Jesus referred to a time in the future in which these wicked people will be given an opportunity to repent:

Jesus said in Matthew chapter 11:

"Then he began to reproach the cities in which had occurred most of his powerful acts, for they had not repented. Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the powerful acts which have taken place in you had happened in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, It shall be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon in Judgment Day than for you. And you, Capernaum, who have been exalted to the heaven, you will be thrown down to Hades. For if the powerful acts happening in you had taken place in Sodom, it still would be until today. But I say to you, It will be more bearable for the land of Sodom in the day of Judgment than for you" (Matt.11:20-24 Para.).

No Second Chance

Most who believe that this is the only day of salvation feel that to raise a person to physical life again would mean that they are to be given a second chance of salvation. However, this is not the

case at all. God only gives one opportunity for salvation. The fact is that the people of Sodom have not yet had theirs. They were never called to salvation nor given the understanding of God's truth. The people who Jesus was speaking to in Matthew chapter 11 have had their first and only opportunity. They did not repent; their fate is sealed. There is no second chance for salvation—only a first".

Those Who Hear Will Live

Concerning those who hear Jesus' words and those who believe what they hear; Jesus said the following as recorded by the apostle John in chapter 5 beginning in verse 22.

"For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, so that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. The one not honoring the Son does not honor the Father who has sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, the one who hears my word, and believes the One who has sent me, has everlasting life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life" (vs.22-24).

But, what about those who have never heard his words? It is obvious that those who have never heard cannot believe, because it is impossible to believe what one has never heard and understood:

Continuing in verse 25:

"Truly, truly, I say to you that an hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and the ones hearing will live" (v25).

Those who never heard God's truth will hear it after they have been resurrected to a physical life, and those who heed what they hear will live. The inference is that those who do not heed what they hear will not live:

Again, we are told that Christ is immortal and has the authority to judge humanity:

Continuing in verse 28:

"Do not marvel at this for an hour is coming in which all those in the tombs will hear his voice. And they will come out, the ones having done good into a resurrection of life; and the ones having practiced evil into a resurrection of judgment" (vs.28-29).

The following are important things to learn from verses 28 and 29:

All those who are dead will be resurrected and hear the words of Jesus.

Those who have done good will receive life.

Those who have practiced evil will be executed.

Jesus said that all the dead will be resurrected and hear his voice. Included in all the dead are those who have never been given the opportunity to come to the knowledge of God's truth.

Jesus did not say that all of humanity will come up in one great resurrection to be judged at that time. He merely revealed that all will be resurrected and hear his voice. He also said that those who have had their opportunity for salvation will either hear him when he gives them their rewards or they will hear him pronounce the death sentence upon them because of their unbelief and disobedience.

Revelation chapter 1, verse 7, says that all will see Christ:

"Behold he comes with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Rev.1:7 KJV).

This prophecy covers the entire time period between the return of Christ at the first resurrection and the final judgment of humanity. Christ coming 'within the clouds' refers to one of the ways he will manifest himself to physical humans after his return.

Christ comes within clouds at the first resurrection and the elect of all ages will see him at that time. See Matt.23:63-65; 24:29-31; Isa.43:5-7; Mk.13:24-27.

Israelites of the past will see him after their resurrection to physical life as noted in Ezekiel, chapter 37.

The Roman soldier who pierced his side with his spear will see him again because he will be in the resurrection of the rest of the dead at the end of the thousand years of Christ's reign. See Rom. 14:10-12; Rev. 20:5.

Eventually all will see Christ and come before his judgment seat. See Jn. 5:22, 2. Cor. 5:10, 1. Pet. 4:2-5; Rev. 20:12-13.

A Resurrection to Physical Life

The vast majority of humanity are neither saved nor lost; they simply have never heard nor understood God's plan for their salvation. Therefore, they have not yet been given an opportunity for salvation. In his infinite wisdom, the Eternal God has designed his plan for mankind very carefully in order to give every person an equal opportunity to have eternal life.

The resurrection of the rest of the dead is the time in which the billions who died never having had an opportunity for salvation will be resurrected to another physical life. During their second life, they will be given the knowledge and understanding of God's truth. Those who demonstrate by their attitude, commitment, and performance that their sincere desire is to love and obey God will qualify for eternal life.

The Bible reveals that the Father is very fair, loving, merciful, compassionate, and forgiving. The very reason for the resurrection of "The Rest of the Dead" is to give everyone who has neither known God nor understood his way of life the opportunity to do so under his peaceful government.

I see that my time is up, but if you want to know more about the four major resurrections mentioned in the Bible or more about the other subjects that I have briefly touched on in this in this broadcast, Write to me at the at the address given in the following announcement. Until next time this is