

Four Distinct Events At The Resurrection Of The Righteous



Foundations (Day 309)
by Derek Prince

Yesterday we read how John described the resurrection of martyrs. John closes the account of the resurrection of these martyrs with the words:

> "This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:5-6)

By these words John apparently indicates that "the first resurrection" is now complete. All those who take part in this resurrection are called "blessed and holy." That is to say, they are all righteous believers. (Up to this point, none of the unrighteous has been resurrected. The second resurrection, in which the unrighteous have their part, is described by John in the latter part of Revelation 20.)

If we now combine the revelations given by Paul and John, we may offer the following summary of the resurrection of the righteous.

The total resurrection of the righteous, from the moment of Christ's own resurrection down to the resurrection of the tribulation martyrs just prior to the millennium, is called by John "the first resurrection." All those who take part in this resurrection are "blessed and holy"; that is, they are all righteous believers.

However, within this total resurrection of the righteous we may discern at least four distinct events.

1. "Christ the firstfruits" – that is, Christ Himself and those of the Old Testament saints who were resurrected at the time of Christ's resurrection.
2. "Those who are Christ's at His coming" – the true Christians who are ready to meet Christ at His return, together with those who died in the faith – all these together being caught up in clouds to meet Christ in the air.
3. The "two witnesses" of the tribulation period, who

are left dead but unburied for three and a half days and are then resurrected and ascend to heaven in a cloud.

4. The remainder of the tribulation martyrs, who are resurrected at the close of the tribulation period in time to share with Christ and the other saints in the privilege of ruling and judging the nations on earth during the millennium.

Such, in brief outline, is the New Testament picture of the resurrection of the righteous.

Next week we shall go on to consider the third and final phase of the resurrection.

Devotional

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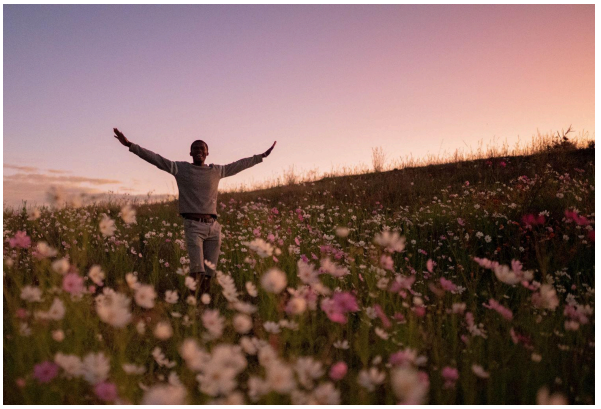

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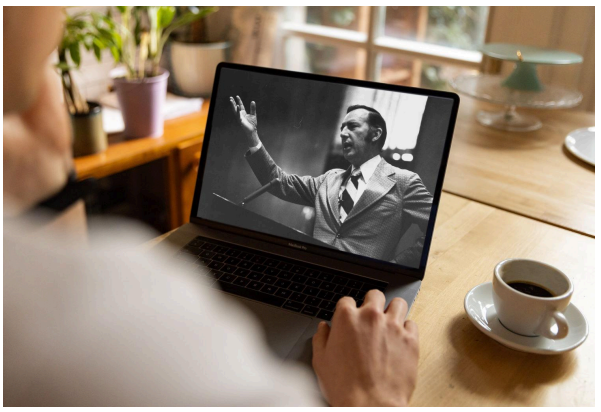

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