



The Church of God International

HOME BIBLE

Study Course

5

Understanding Resurrection

Doctrinal Statement:

The hope of all mankind and the promise to the Christian is the resurrection from the dead. There are references to four resurrections in the Bible: (1) the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Firstborn from the dead and the Pioneer of our salvation; (2) the resurrection of the saints at the Return of Christ when the true believers shall become spirit-composed members of God's family; (3) the resurrection back to physical life of all who have ever died without having understood God's way for their first opportunity for salvation; (4) the resurrection of all those who have refused to repent and have rejected God's way, to be consumed in the lake of fire (called the "second death").

What does God's Word, the Bible, teach us about man? What is going to happen to you when you die? Are you an immortal soul?

The Scriptures teach us, "The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7).

No doubt, man was created a "living soul" (Hebrew, *nephesh*), but it does not say that man was created an immortal soul. To the contrary, it goes on to show that man was mortal, that he would "die" (Genesis 2:17).

The word *nephesh* (translated "soul") is also used throughout the Hebrew Scriptures to refer to the lower creatures God had created.

The Scriptures go on to tell us that the soul does die! "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4,20). There are many instances in the Bible that speak of souls being killed, of them dying and perishing.

When the translators of the New Testament quoted the Old Testament passages where the word *nephesh* ("soul") was used, they used the Greek equivalent, *psuche*, meaning "a living being," identical in meaning to the Hebrew word *nephesh*.

Jesus made this statement about the soul (*psuche*): to "fear him [God] which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell [*Gehenna*, the lake of fire]" (Matthew 10:28).

None of the nations of the world, not even ancient Israel herself, was offered eternal life or future immortality during the Old Testament period. However, God's grace, His free gift of eternal life, "is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought *life* and *immortality* to light through the gospel" (2 Timothy 1:10).

Few professing Christians know the truth about the resurrection of the dead, and yet it is one of the basic doctrines of

the Bible (Hebrews 6:2). But we can know, if we want to, what it will be like in the next life! The prophet Isaiah wrote, "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him" (Isaiah 64:4).

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul explained that a man cannot comprehend what God has prepared for those that love Him. "But God hath revealed them unto us [fervent Christian believers] by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Corinthians 2:10).

Satan has been very effective in deceiving the whole world on this very important subject of the resurrection of the dead (Revelation 12:9).

The clear-cut Bible teaching on the subject of the resurrections has been plunged into darkness for numerous centuries. If you attempt to believe what the so-called authorities tell you, you also will be left in confusion. The fervent Christian believer needs to go directly to the Bible and study it, allowing God to teach him the truth without the mixture of error.

Final Instructions

Before we start this lesson on the resurrection of the dead, don't forget to pray, and ask God's blessing on your personal study. Ask Him to open your heart and mind to the revealed truth He has for you.

God is not pleased with halfhearted prayers. Notice the example of Jesus Christ on the evening before His crucifixion. Jesus needed strength from God for the agony coming. "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44). His example for us is to pray with our whole heart.

In James 5:16, we read, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man

availeth much.”

Your Bible study will be most effective for you if you open your Bible to each chapter and verse referred to in the lesson. You need to read and sometimes reread every referenced passage in your Bible. This is a study of God’s Word, the Bible.

If you have your Bible study tools at hand, you are now ready for this lesson on the resurrection of the dead!

Understanding Resurrection

The Fact of Jesus

There is no record of the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth that has been handed down to us from Pilate himself. However, there are other records that have been preserved for us which mention Jesus Christ. These records contain evidence of Jesus’ life and crucifixion by the Romans, and come to us from disinterested, neutral, historical sources.

Suetonius, writing around the end of the first century, tells us that in A.D. 49 the Emperor Claudius banished all Jews from the city of Rome (also mentioned in Acts 18:2): “He expelled the Jews from Rome, because of the riots they were constantly engaging in, at the instigation of Chrestus”(Claudius 25,4). (Chrestus was a *common* misspelling of the name of Christ.)

From the Roman historian Tacitus, writing between A.D. 115 and 117, we read that in A.D. 64 the emperor Nero tried to blame the disastrous fire in Rome on the Christians. Then a description of the Christians by Tacitus is given: “They got their name from Christ, who was executed by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius. That checked the pernicious superstition for a short time, but it broke out afresh, not only in Judea, where the plague first arose, but Rome itself, where all the horrible and shameful things in the world collect and find a home” (*Annals* XV,44). From the comments of Tacitus we gather he had no sympathy for Christianity, yet there is no doubt he believed that the founder of Christianity lived and was executed by Pontius Pilate, who was procurator over Judea at that time.

From the writings of the famous

Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, of the first century, comes this account: “He [Annas] convened a judicial session of the Sanhedrin and brought before it the brother of Jesus the so-called Christ, James by name, and some others, whom he charged with breaking the law and handed over to be stoned to death” (*Antiquities* XX,200).

Review

1. *Many historical sources exist about Jesus.*
2. *The records are non-Christian and therefore regarded as neutral.*
3. *There is historical evidence of Jesus’ life and crucifixion by the Romans.*
4. *Chrestus was a common misspelling of the name Christ.*
5. *Suetonius was a Roman historian.*
6. *Tacitus was another Roman historian.*
7. *Flavius Josephus was a Jewish historian.*
8. *Christians got their name from Christ.*
9. *Jesus was executed by the authority of Pontius Pilate while he was procurator over Judea.*

Scriptures to Read, Remember, and Recite:

Acts 18:2

Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Certain facts, if known, will eliminate many problems we have with Bible study. Biblical writers had a far different style of writing than modern-day writers. Biblical writers wrote from their own experiences and from their own perspective. Biblical writers do not contradict each other. They give details from their own point of view, and they do not record all of the details. Once we understand this, it makes it easier to arrange all the information of these many eye witnesses to the Resurrection of Christ in a noncontradictory and harmonious and logical sequence.

After the Crucifixion of Christ, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, Salome the mother of Zebedee’s children, and other women agree to meet at the sepulcher. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary travel together and arrive first at the sepulcher (Matthew 28:1; cf. Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10; John 20:1,2

[note the “we”]). The other women arrive soon after.

Late at the end of the previous day, which was a Saturday Sabbath, at the actual time of the Resurrection of Christ, an angel descended from heaven, caused an earthquake to break the seal of the tomb, and caused the guards to pass out because of fright (Matthew 28:2–4)! The women, now on their way to the tomb (traveling in two or more parties), are unaware of the angel’s earthquake activity, so are wondering who would remove the stone (Mark 16:3). Mary Magdalene and the other Mary are the first to arrive. They discover that the stone had been rolled away (Mark 16:4; Luke 24:2; John 20:1). Mary Magdalene assumes that someone had removed Jesus’ body (John 20:1). On this assumption, she immediately runs away in distress to tell Peter and John that someone had stolen the body (John 20:2).

During this time, the other women join the other Mary at the tomb. Immediately two angels appear. At first the women see only one angel (the lead angel), but soon realize that there are two angels in the tomb. The angels, who appear as men, give them the resurrection message and tell them to go and tell the disciples that the Lord has risen from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Mark 16:4–7; Luke 24:3–8).

The women then leave the tomb and go to tell the disciples of what had happened, but, because of great fear, they decide to say nothing to anyone. A short while later, Jesus Himself appears to them. When He greets them, they fall before Him, hold His feet, and worship Him. He tells them to go and tell His brethren to go to Galilee, where they will see Him. They then go and report these things to the disciples, but the disciples do not believe them (Matthew 28:9,10; cf. Mark 16:8; Luke 24:9–11).

By now, Peter and John have made their way to the tomb and discovered that the Lord’s body was not there, and are on their way back to their place of lodging (Luke 24:12; John 20:3–10).

Mary Magdalene, who couldn’t keep up with Peter and John, arrives

at the tomb a second time, and is there alone. She looks in, sees two angels, and briefly converses with them. She then turns about and sees Jesus, but does not recognize Him. When He calls her by name, she realizes that the body she is looking for is standing before her (John 20:11–16).

She apparently reaches out to embrace Him, but He tells her, “Do not touch me, for I am not yet ascended. But go and tell my brethren that I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God” (John 20:17).

Jesus was the perfect sacrificial offering; also the wave sheaf offering. Therefore, He told Mary not to touch Him for He had not yet ascended to His Father. More will be discussed about this important understanding in a future lesson.

At this point, Mary Magdalene returns to the disciples and tells them that she has seen the Lord (John 20:18). Mary arrives to tell her story shortly after the other women arrive to tell theirs.

Later that day, when Simon Peter is alone, Jesus appears to him (Luke 24:34; cf. 1 Corinthians 15:5).

We are not without reliable witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:3–8).

Review

1. *The biblical writers support one another, not contradict one another.*
2. *They write of what they have seen and heard, from their viewpoint.*
3. *Mary Magdalene arrives first at the tomb accompanied by the other Mary.*
4. *An angel caused an earthquake and the stone that covered the tomb was rolled away.*
5. *Mary Magdalene assumes someone had removed Jesus’ body from the tomb.*
6. *The angels tell the women to go and tell the disciples of the Resurrection.*
7. *The disciples do not believe the women.*
8. *Jesus tells Mary not to touch Him because He has not yet risen to present Himself to the Father.*
9. *Jesus was seen by Peter and the disciples.*
10. *Jesus was seen by James, all of the apostles, five hundred brethren, and, last of all, Paul.*

Scriptures to Read, Remember, and Recite:

Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:3-8; Luke 24:2-12,34; John 20:1-10; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8

The First Resurrection

The resurrection from the dead is the only real hope of man, whether he believes it or even knows about it. Coming up out of the grave gives to man the final, ultimate victory over death (1 Corinthians 15:26). Paul referred to the “hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” (Titus 1:2).

When Paul was brought before Felix, he admitted that, “according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that *there will be a resurrection of the dead*, both of the just and the unjust” (Acts 24:14,15, NKJV). Jesus also said “the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life [eternal]; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation [judgment]” (John 5:28,29). Jesus did not say the just and the unjust would be raised up at the same time. Neither did Paul.

What guarantee do you have that you will be resurrected when Christ returns to this earth? What can you do to make sure you will be in the first resurrection to immortality?

Notice this very interesting verse that Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming” (1 Corinthians 15:23). The important question for us to ask is: How do we get to be Christ’s? Paul wrote, “Now if any man have not the *Spirit of Christ*, he is none of his” (Romans 8:9). This answers our question. It is those who are filled and led by the Spirit of God who will be in the first resurrection. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the [begotten] sons of God” (verse 14).

Paul continues on with this theme: “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead

shall also quicken [make alive] your mortal bodies by [the power of] His Holy Spirit that dwelleth in you” (verse 11). Therefore, if we have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us when Christ returns and we are in our grave, we will be resurrected. If we are alive when Christ returns, we shall be changed “in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump” (1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

Remember what Christ Jesus said, that you must be “born again” (John 3:7). Paul clarifies this new birth. “For the earnest expectation of the creature [man] waiteth for the *manifestation of the sons of God*” (Romans 8:19). This is what you and I are waiting for. The true Christian waits for, earnestly longs for, the time when he or she will be born into God’s family as a divine, glorified child of God. And so, even we ourselves are in distress at this time, “waiting for the adoption [sonship], to wit, the redemption of our body” (Romans 8:23). Paul points out to us that he gave up everything to serve Christ and became willing to suffer “the loss of all things” (Philippians 3:7,8). And the reason he was willing? “That I may know him, and the *power of his resurrection...If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead*” (verses 10,11). He continues on to explain that “our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven” (verse 20). Therefore, from heaven we look for the Saviour, “who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (verse 21). This is the only hope of mortal human flesh, the redemption of our body, from fleshly to spiritual.

We can see from this lesson how important the previous lessons are to us. We must follow through on repentance, baptism, and the laying-on-of-hands by the ministry of Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Be sure and look up these verses for yourself and read carefully.

Review

1. *Mankind’s only hope is the resurrection of the dead.*
2. *God never lies, and He promised eternal life.*
3. *Paul said, “according to the Way*

which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers.”

4. *There will be a resurrection of the just and the unjust.*
5. *Jesus did not say the just and the unjust will be raised together.*
6. *They that are Christ's at His coming will experience the resurrection.*
7. *You must have the Holy Spirit to be one of Christ's.*
8. *If we are alive when Christ returns, we can be changed in a twinkling of an eye.*
9. *The dead will be raised first.*
10. *The new birth takes place at the resurrection.*
11. *Our citizenship is in heaven.*
12. *Our physical body will be changed to a spiritual body.*

Scriptures to Read, Remember, and Recite:

1 Corinthians 15:23,26; Titus 1:2; Acts 24:14,15; John 5:28,29; Romans 8:9,11,14,19,23; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52; John 3:7; Philippians 3:7,8,10,11,20,21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

The Second Resurrection

The Bible clearly reveals there is to be more than one resurrection. God has worked out an orderly plan whereby different ones are to be resurrected at different times. “But every man [will be resurrected] in his own order...” (1 Corinthians 15:23).

There will be comparatively few privileged to be raised up in the first resurrection. However, in the second resurrection, there could be countless billions raised up in a resurrection to a physical life of mortality.

Faithful and true Christians will be the first to come up in a resurrection to immortality at the return of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:49-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17).

We now have to ask some important questions: What will happen to all those who do not come up in the first resurrection? Will they be lost forever? Will they never experience life again, or will God resurrect them at a later date? What about all those who have never so much as heard the name of Jesus Christ, let alone having access to a Bible? Are they doomed to death forever?

Many say these multitudes—even little innocent babies—are lost.

Others say they will have a second chance. But did they ever have a first chance to know the gospel, and Jesus Christ as Savior?

The veil begins to fall away and the answers to these perplexing questions are revealed when we read Revelation 20:5: “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.” The sentence, “This is the first resurrection,” is parenthetical and refers back to those in verse 4 who are raised to immortality at Christ’s coming to become rulers with Him as kings and priests on the earth during the Millennium (see Revelation 5:10).

Without thinking, many have assumed there will be only one resurrection, when both wicked and righteous will rise in judgment to be either rewarded or punished. But Revelation 20:5 clearly brands this an error. Actually, the Bible does not say anywhere that God will resurrect all the dead in the same resurrection.

God is not going to judge or destroy anyone until they have had an opportunity to hear and understand the gospel of salvation. They must make a conscious choice to either accept Jesus Christ as their Savior or reject Him. There are billions of people who fall into this category today, living and dead. God will give them a chance, but only one chance. So far these billions of people we are speaking of have not had their first chance.

As we have seen in previous lessons, there is only one way to salvation, and that way is Jesus Christ. There is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

What about the Buddhists, Confucianists, Hindus, Muslims, Taoists, humanists, and others who have not known about Christ and salvation? Can they be held accountable to God when they have never received this vital information?

The Bible tells us specifically that “the Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

The responsibility to grant the

necessary knowledge for salvation is God's. The vast majority of people who have ever lived and died failed to receive this knowledge of the truth, through no fault of their own.

Paul wrote that God our Savior “will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4).

Therefore, all those who never had a chance or opportunity to know Jesus Christ and the gospel will get a chance. For all of these people this will be the time of the second resurrection. We at this time have been personally invited by God to accept His truth and His Son Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, and to take part in the first resurrection. This is a great blessing! There will not be a second chance.

Review

1. *The Bible shows clearly that there is more than one resurrection.*
2. *Every man will be resurrected in his own order.*
3. *There will be comparatively few to be raised up in the first resurrection.*
4. *There could be countless billions to be raised up in the second resurrection.*
5. *The first resurrection takes place at the return of Jesus Christ.*
6. *Faithful Christians will come up in this first resurrection.*
7. *The remainder of the dead will not come up until after a thousand years—the Millennium.*
8. *Those of the first resurrection will rule with Christ during this Millennium.*
9. *God will not judge or destroy anyone until they have had a chance to accept or reject Jesus Christ and the gospel.*
10. *There is only one chance for salvation.*
11. *God is patient and not willing that any should perish.*
12. *God desires all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.*

Scriptures to Read, Remember, and Recite:

1 Corinthians 15:23,49–52; 1 Thessalonians 4:14–17; Revelation 20:5; 5:10; Acts 4:12; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4

What Is Judgment?

Jesus Christ spoke of the “resurrection of *damnation*” in John 5:29. Most of the modern translations correctly

render this last word as “judgment” instead of “damnation.”

The question we must ask is: What is the resurrection to *judgment*?

Most believe that judgment is a time when sentence is passed: a rewarding of the righteous or a condemning of the wicked. This is most definitely not true.

Notice Peter’s statement some two thousand years ago: “For the time is come that judgment must *begin* at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17). Peter did not say condemnation has begun at God’s house, but rather judgment. Christians are now being judged! We are now having our chance for salvation, and there will never be another one for us.

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation...?” (Hebrews 2:3; see 6:4-6; 10:26-29).

Because God has given us knowledge of the truth concerning the gospel of His Son Jesus Christ, He expects a great deal from us. He now holds us accountable for our actions.

Judgment, then, begins when you receive a knowledge of God’s plan of salvation. He opens your mind to understand the gospel of truth. After we receive this vital knowledge we must accept it—and begin living by it—or reject it. If we reject it, we will then come to that time of condemnation. With the knowledge we have now, God expects us to OBEY HIM!

When God resurrects the billions of people who have never been given a knowledge of the truth of Jesus Christ, and He opens their minds to understand, that will be their resurrection to judgment. They will have their first chance to obey God or reject God.

Review

1. Judgment does not always mean condemnation.
2. The house of God, made up of Christians, is being judged now.
3. God is now holding us accountable for our actions.
4. With the knowledge of the truth, God expects us to obey Him.
5. All the living and the dead who have never had a chance to learn the truth will come up in a resurrection of judgment.

Scriptures to Read, Remember, and Recite:

John 5:29; 1 Peter 4:17; Hebrews 2:3; 6:4-6; 10:26-29

Judgment of Various Cities

Here are some astounding statements from Jesus. He said that peoples of Sodom, Gomorrah, Tyre, Sidon, Nineveh, and those living in Christ’s day will all rise up in the judgment together. There will be mercy shown to all, but it will be more tolerable for these Gentile cities during this judgment period than for those who lived during Christ’s time and heard Him preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God and rejected Him. Jesus said, “It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the *day of judgment*, than for that city [which rejected His teachings]” (Matthew 10:15).

To the cities which saw His miracles, Christ said, “But I say unto you [people of Bethsaida and Chroazin], It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the *day of judgment*, than for you” (Matthew 11:21,22). Jesus went on to warn Capernaum that if the mighty works done by Him in that city had been done in Sodom, Sodom would have existed to that very day. “But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the *day of judgment*, than for thee” (verse 24). Jesus goes on to say about Nineveh, “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here” (Matthew 12:41). He also continued on to say, “The queen of the south [Queen of Sheba] shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here” (verse 42).

Jesus is telling us that it will be far easier for these Gentile nations to find repentance in the day of judgment than for the generation that first heard the gospel, saw the miracles, and then rejected Christ and His message.

Much of the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel relates to the people of

Jerusalem (Ezekiel 16:2). It enumerates their abominations, calling Samaria the “elder sister” of Jerusalem, and Sodom her “younger sister” (verse 46). God then informs them that the sins the people of Jerusalem committed were worse than those of her sisters, Sodom and Samaria.

Ezekiel’s prophecy then speaks of the time when the Sodomites, Samaritans, and those of Jerusalem will all be brought up out of their captivity in death and will finally receive salvation.

“When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them” (verse 53).

For four thousand years the people of Sodom and Gomorrah have been held captive in the grave. However, through the death of Christ and His resurrection, everyone held captive in the grave will be released.

“When He [Christ] ascended up on high [at His resurrection], he led captivity [death] captive...” (Ephesians 4:8). For three days and three nights Christ was held captive in the grave, but at His Resurrection He “led captivity captive.” In due time, He will resurrect all of humanity from their graves.

Review

1. It will be more tolerable, or bearable, for those of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for those that saw and heard Christ.
2. It will be more tolerable for many of these Gentile cities than it will be for those who saw the miracles of Christ, heard His message, and yet rejected it.
3. In time, all humanity will come up in a resurrection of judgment.

Scriptures to Read, Remember, and Recite:

Matthew 10:15; 11:21,22,24; 12:41,42; Ezekiel 16:2,46,53; Ephesians 4:8

Valley of Dry Bones

We read in Ezekiel 37:1-10 about the valley of dry bones. “Then He [God] said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the *whole house of*

Israel....Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves" (verses 11-13). Then, in verse 14, God promises them His Spirit and placement in their own land.

The apostle Paul also prophesied of a coming resurrection for carnal Israel. Paul stated: "God hath not cast away His people [Israel] which he foreknew" (Romans 11:2).

Paul's explanation is that the majority of Israel are spiritually blinded (verse 7). He then points out who is responsible. "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear..." (verse 8). Why did God do this? "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world"—that is, the salvation of the Gentiles—"what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (verse 15). So, they will be raised from the dead and given life by the God who loves them and all humanity.

This, Paul calls a mystery. "That blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel [vast majority] shall be saved..." (verses 25,26).

Paul is saying that God is only calling a few of the Israelites in this age; the rest will remain blinded to allow Him to call a number of Gentiles to fulfill His purpose (Romans 11:30-32). Paul praised God for His great plan (verse 33).

It is apparent that God's intentions are not to save the whole world now. Instead, He has allowed Satan to deceive the world with his false teaching (Revelation 12:9). By this method He will prove to Satan and to man that Satan's way does not bring forth good results.

Review

1. God is going to raise up all the dead Israelites of past centuries.
2. The prophet sees them as long dead in a valley of dry bones.
3. These bones are the whole house of Israel.
4. God will return them to their own land.
5. Israel has been blinded by God for a

great purpose.

6. They are blinded until the fullness of the Gentiles come in.
7. God's intention is not to save the whole world now.
8. God is allowing Satan to deceive the whole world at this time.

Scriptures to Read, Remember, and Recite:

Ezekiel 37:1-14; Romans 11:2,7,8,15,25,26,30-33; Revelation 12:9

The Chief Judge in the Last Great Judgment

By comparing Revelation 20:11; Daniel 7:9; and Psalm 9:7, the Scriptures show that Jesus Christ Himself is the Chief Judge (John 5:21,22). Notice also that the saints are to judge with Him (1 Corinthians 6:2).

The resurrection of the righteous will take place at the coming of Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:53); the resurrection of the unsaved at the Great White Throne Judgment after the Kingdom Age (Revelation 20:11-15).

God is very merciful toward all people, and He is not willing that any should perish; He wants all to come to repentance and be saved (2 Peter 3:9). But He also knows it will be better for these people of the the second resurrection to come up in a better world than ours. These people will come up in the second resurrection to a mortal, fleshly, earthly existence. Notice how all this is explained in Revelation 20:11,12.

Verse 12 says the "books were opened." The Greek word translated "books" is *biblos*, which means books or Bible. From this we understand that the books of the Bible will be opened to their understanding, and also the "book of life" will be open so their names can be written in it when they come to repentance and accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. Then they will receive the Holy Spirit. They will also be judged according to their works (verse 12). They stand before God to be judged, not to be condemned.

There is a final resurrection mentioned in various passages (e.g., Daniel 12:2,3; John 5:21-29), but is explained most precisely in

Revelation 20:14,15. Here John explains that the unrepentant—those who have had a chance for salvation but have adamantly rejected it—shall be resurrected to physical life and cast into the lake of fire where they shall be consumed. The death they suffer is called in Revelation 20 "the second death" (verse 14), which occurs only for those whose names are not found written in the book of life—that is, those who have not obtained salvation (verse 15). This final resurrection is, in a sense, a mercy killing for those to whom eternal life in their state of rebellion would eventually mean extreme agony and misery.

The first resurrection of saints to eternal life, and the subsequent resurrection of the innumerable multitudes to physical life, will be filled with unimaginable emotion when loved ones, who thought they were separated forever, shall suddenly be reunited. To all of them it will be as though no time had passed, like awakening in the morning after a solid night's sleep without dreams. It will be the next instant of their consciousness no matter how they might have died or how long ago it might have been.

Review

1. Jesus is the Chief Judge in the last great judgment.
2. The saints will judge with Jesus Christ.
3. The resurrection of the righteous takes place at the coming of Christ.
4. Those of the second resurrection will be restored to a mortal physical life and be judged by their works.
5. Those who are saved have their names written in the book of life.
6. Those who have had their chance for salvation and rejected it shall be resurrected and cast into the lake of fire to be consumed.
7. The rebellious who refuse salvation suffer the "second death" and their names are not written in the book of life.

Scriptures to Read, Remember, and Recite:

Revelation 20:11-15; 2 Peter 3:9; Daniel 7:9; Psalm 9:7; John 5:21-29; 1 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:53; Daniel 12:23; Revelation 20:14,15. □

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5

Understanding
Resurrection

Test Yourself

Write your answers to the questions on a separate sheet of paper. Check *your* answers with the answers found at the end of the test.

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True or False Questions

1. There are no historical sources in existence about Jesus Christ.
2. There is historical evidence of Jesus' life and crucifixion by the Romans.
3. Pontius Pilate was innocent of the execution of Jesus.
4. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were the first to arrive at the tomb.
5. All the disciples believed the report of the women immediately.
6. There were hardly any witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
7. Jesus embraced Mary as soon as He saw her after His resurrection.
8. Jesus was never seen by anyone but Mary and Peter.
9. The Scriptures say 500 people saw Jesus after He was resurrected.
10. The apostle Paul never got to see Jesus.
11. The only hope of mankind is the resurrection from the dead.
12. Paul said that the Way was called a sect.
13. Jesus never said that those in their graves would hear His voice.
14. God does not discriminate, so all will be resurrected at the same time.
15. You are Christ's only if you have God's Holy Spirit.
16. It is not necessary to be born

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again—we are OK now.

17. The just and the unjust will be raised at the same time.
18. Our citizenship can't be in heaven because we have to vote now.
19. Our bodies will be changed to be like Christ's glorious body.
20. Our new birth will take place at the resurrection.
21. All who do not come up in the first resurrection are lost forever.
22. No one is going to live and reign for a thousand years with Christ.
23. The Bible clearly shows that the unjust will not come up in the first resurrection.
24. God will give everyone a chance to understand the gospel of salvation.
25. Everyone will get two chances for salvation.
26. The Bible says there are many ways to gain salvation.
27. Judgment begins at the house of God.
28. Judgment is always a time of condemnation.
29. Sodom and Gomorrah do not have any chance for salvation.
30. With a knowledge of the truth, God begins to hold us accountable.
31. It will be easy for everyone who saw Christ's miracles to be saved.
32. Christ was held captive in His grave for a day and a half.
33. Every man will be resurrected in his own order.
34. God is not going to resurrect the whole house of ancient Israel.
35. The best rewards are handed out at the Great White Throne Judgment.
36. Those in the second resurrection will be resurrected as mortal human beings.
37. Those in the second resurrection will be judged by their works.
38. Those who adamantly refuse to obey God will be set free because God loves them.
39. If your name is not entered into the book of life, you will be cast into the lake of fire.
40. The final, ultimate death is called the second death.

Answers to True or False Questions: Score Yourself: Miss 0–3 = Excellent; Miss 4–6 = Good; Miss 7–9 = Fair

1. False; 2. True; 3. False; 4. True; 5. False; 6. False; 7. False; 8. False; 9. True; 10. False; 11. True; 12. True; 13. False; 14. False; 15. True; 16. False; 17. False; 18. False; 19. True; 20. True; 21. False; 22. False; 23. True; 24. True; 25. False; 26. False; 27. True; 28. False; 29. False; 30. True; 31. False; 32. False; 33. True; 34. False; 35. False; 36. True; 37. True; 38. False; 39. True; 40. True.

