

The Resurrections



- Are you curious about the future and about what would happen to you if you died today?
- Do you fear death and the future? Do you struggle with the assurance of salvation & about going to heaven?
- Are you confused about what happens to believers and nonbelievers when they die? Do they cease to exist? Do they sleep in the grave? Do they immediately go to either heaven or hell?

The Bible tells us a great deal about the life after this life. The Bible can answer our curiosity about the end times and about what will happen to us after this life. We can have assurance about going to heaven and about being with Christ for eternity. We can clear up the confusion that many people have about what happens to believers and nonbelievers when they die. All of this can happen through studying what the Bible teaches about the resurrections and life after this life.

The Bible says "...each person is destined to die **once** and after that comes judgment." (Hebrews 9:27). However, that is not the end. Man is not a mere animal who is here today and nonexistent at death. The soul continues even when separated from the body. Every human being is eternal. We will spend eternity either in heaven or in hell. God will raise all the dead one time or another—depending upon their relationship with Jesus Christ. There is life beyond the grave. There is life after this life.

The Central Lesson and Application:
We can have assurance of our salvation & about life after this life. Receive Christ & claim God's promise of Assurance (1 John 5:12-13).

I. The Promise of the Resurrection

The Bible teaches that there will be times when the dead are resurrected from the grave. The promise of the resurrection is first mentioned in Job 19:25-27. *"But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and he will stand upon the earth at last. ²⁶ And after my body has decayed, yet in my body I will see God! ²⁷ I will see him for myself. Yes, I will see him with my own eyes. I am overwhelmed at the thought!"* (NLT). "

The resurrection is also mentioned in Isaiah 26:19. *"But those who die in the Lord will live; their bodies will rise again! Those who sleep in the earth will rise up and sing for joy! For your life-giving light will fall like dew on your people in the place of the dead!"* (NLT).

Two Types of Resurrections; Two Types of Death.

The Bible indicates that there will be two types (or two classifications) of resurrections:

1. The resurrection of the **righteous** to eternal life.
2. The resurrection of the **unrighteous** to eternal shame & judgment.

The Bible also indicates that there are two types (or classifications) of death:

1. **Physical** death—where the soul is separated from the body.
2. **Spiritual** death (also called the second death)—where the soul is separated from God and enters hell/the Lake of Fire.

Two Resurrections:

Daniel 12:2 *"Many of those whose bodies lie dead and buried will rise up, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting disgrace."* (NLT)

Also, Acts 24:15 *"I have the same hope in God that these men have, that he will raise both the righteous and the unrighteous."* (NLT)

Two Types of Death and Resurrections:

Revelation 20:4-6 refers to the two types of resurrections and deaths. *"⁴ Then I saw thrones, and the people sitting on them had been given the authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded [the first death—physical death] for their testimony about Jesus and for proclaiming the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor accepted his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They all **came to life again** [the first resurrection] and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ This is the first resurrection. (The rest of the dead [the second death—those headed for hell] did not come back to life until the thousand years had ended.) [the second resurrection.] **This is the first resurrection** [referring back to those martyred in verse 4]. ⁶ Blessed and holy are those who share in **the first resurrection** [the resurrection of the righteous]. For them **the second death** [separated from God and headed for hell] holds no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years."* (NLT)

Two Types of Death	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first death—the soul is separated from the physical body. 2. The second death—the soul is separated from God and enters hell.
Two Types of Resurrection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first resurrection—resurrection of the righteous to eternal life. Only the first death (physical death) is experienced (except those living at the rapture). 2. The second resurrection—resurrection of the unrighteous to eternal shame & judgment (hell). Both the first and second death is experienced.

Not Numeric Sequence, But Two Types:

The use of "first" and "second" is not referring to a series numerically, but first and second in kinds, types, or classifications.

II. Order of the Resurrections

1 Corinthians 15:20-24 indicates that different individuals will be resurrected at different times. The Bible does not teach one general resurrection where every human is resurrected at the same time. The phrase: *"But there is an order to this resurrection."* (1 Corinthians 15:23 NLT in the Greek text is a military word that means each in his own rank or classification).

A. The FIRST Resurrection—Will Occur in Four Groupings or Phases:

It appears there are at least four phases (or groupings) to the first resurrections.

1. **Phase One: CHRIST** the First Fruits
(1 Corinthians 15:23).

The expression **“first fruits”** (NIV) or **“first of the harvest”** (NLT) means that Christ was the first of many others to be resurrected.

The Bible tells of several people who were resurrected from the dead in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. As far as we know these individuals did not experience the first resurrection as Jesus did. They were raised to life but eventually faced death once again. Jesus did not experience death again. Their bodies were not changed into eternal perfect bodies. Jesus had an eternal glorified body. They remained on earth. Jesus ascended into heaven.

From the Old Testament

1. The son of the widow of Zarephath was raised by Elijah the prophet (1 Kings 17:18-22).
2. The son of the Shunammite woman by Elisha the prophet (2 Kings 4:32-37).
3. A dead man was thrown into the grave of Elisha and came back to life when his body touched the bones of the prophet (2 Kings 13:20-21).

From the New Testament

1. The son of the widow of Nain was raised by Jesus (Luke 7:13-16).
2. Jairus' daughter was raised by Jesus (Luke 8:49-56).
3. Lazarus was raised by Jesus (John 11:38-44).
4. Some saints came back to life when Jesus was crucified (Matt. 27:52-53).
5. Dorcas was raised by Peter (Acts 9:36-42).
6. Eutychus raised by Paul (Acts 20:9-10).

2. **Phase Two: Believers Resurrected at the RAPTURE** (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).
3. **Phase Three: The Two WITNESSES** (Revelation 11:3, 7-12).
4. **Phase Four: The Tribulation SAINTS** (Revelation 20:4).

Theologian, Dr. Henry C. Thiessen, writes in his *Lectures in Systematic Theology*: "...in the first resurrection there are phrases. Our Lord's resurrection (1 Cor. 15:23), the rapture of the church when Christ comes for his own (John 14:3; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:14-17; 2 Thess. 2:1), the resurrection of the two witnesses in the tribulation (Rev. 11:11f), and the resurrection of Old Testament saints and tribulation believers (Dan. 12:2; Rev. 20:4f) are all different phases of the first resurrection."

B. The SECOND Resurrection—the Resurrection of the Wicked.

Every person who has rejected God's love, forgiveness, and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ will be resurrected at the end of the Millennium to face God at His Great White Throne Judgment. Compare Revelation 20:4-5, 13-15.

III. The Results of the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:51-54, describes the change that will take place with the believers changed eternal body. *“For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies”* (NLT). Also, 1 John 3:2 adds: *“...but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is.”* (NLT).

IV. How to Be Part of the Resurrection of Life.

Jesus claimed, *“I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.”* (John 11:25-26). Also, 1 John 5:11-13 adds that we can know for certain that we have eternal life. If we have received and trusted in Jesus for our salvation we have the promise of God that we are saved and will spend eternity with Him in heaven. *“11 And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God's Son does not have life. 13 I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life.”* (1 John 5:11-13 NLT)

We can have assurance of our salvation & about life after this life. Receive Christ & claim God's promise of Assurance (1 John 5:12-13).

■ *Have you received Christ and placed your trust in him alone for your salvation? If not, why not do it now?*

