

Resurrection of All the Dead

This is a greatly misunderstood truth. All will live again, but not as an "immortal soul." Everyone gets his or her *fair chance*, the option to understand the truth of God, and follow it. God wants everyone to be a part of His family. There is a time coming when this plan will be accomplished. There is coming a resurrection of *all*, and *all* have the possibility entering into the family of God, if they want to. God is a fair and just God giving everyone a way to a never-ending life of joy! But we must choose to take it. This is what the Bible¹ teaches.

Ezekiel 18:4 "Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die.

Verse 20 "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

"Soul" means the life, the breath, a living person or animal. It is not immortal.

What happens when someone dies?

When a person dies all thought and thinking ends. The dead knows and does nothing at all. That is what the *Bible* says. (Contrary to the central teaching of virtually ALL major religions!)

Psalms 6:5 For in death there is no remembrance of You; In the grave who will give You thanks?

Ecclesiastes 3:19-20 For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the

¹ The New King James Version used throughout, except as noted: (RSV) Revised Standard Version, (BBE) Bible in Basic English,.

same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts; for all is vanity. All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all turn to dust again. (RSV)

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

In Peter's Pentecost sermon, what did he say about David? If *anyone* would be in the "good place" it would be him, wouldn't it? But...

Acts 2:29-34 "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,

David is dead and buried, and is NOT in heaven! And this was "after the cross," after Jesus had died, was buried, and resurrected. All that needed to be done was done, in some people's view. But Christ is the ONLY one who has been in heaven, so He says plainly!

John 3:13 No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man. (RSV)

There are no "immortal souls," dead but conscious, in heaven *or* hell.

What then, is beyond death?

One of the foundations of doctrine that God's people believe is that of resurrection of the dead.

Hebrews 6:1-2 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

1 Corinthians 15:20-23 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

Notice carefully, this speaks of resurrections at different times, Christ and *then* the firstfruits. Christ led the way, showing it can be done. It is possible for a human being to become a spirit being, a Godly being. Notice it also compares death to having "fallen asleep." Even in our vernacular we say of someone sleeping soundly, 'they are "dead to the world."' That is how it is.

All physical mankind dies because of Adam's choice. Jesus Christ came and died, then was made alive again. So we can too, escaping Adam's choice! This scripture also indicates an order, or sequence of the process, not just one big resurrection.

Hebrews 11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

Some were raised back to physical life, temporarily. The resurrection at a later time to spiritual life is better! At Christ's coming those who have followed Him will be raised to spiritual eternal life. But, in order for that to happen there has to be an evaluation of those people, a "judgment." (Not a *condemnation* or verdict.)

1 Peter 4:17 For the time has come for judgment [a decision] to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Notice it is a *process* not a finality, it *begins* when those whom God chooses are called, and lasts to the end of their natural life. It is an appraisal of what we do with what we know, with the resources we have been given, as we are able. (Matthew 25:15-30)

But why should some get a better resurrection?

Revelation 20:4-6 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. 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.

They are resurrected first because there is a JOB for them to do when Christ returns. Not that they themselves are "better." The rest of all people who have lived and died previously (the rest of the dead) will be resurrected after the thousand years. That's the order shown. The first resurrection is better because they cannot die again. The resurrection for "the rest of the dead" is not so. They will be resurrected to physical life once again, to have their "fair chance" and *can* die again, forever. This is the time of their evaluation, their "judgment." Jesus Christ died for *all*, so all get a fair chance. All can have eternal life, if they want it, and demonstrate (during the time they are evaluated) they really *want* that more than *anything else*.

Is there a way so we won't die anymore?

Revelation 2:11 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."

The "churches" refers to the ones called by God out of this society for His special purpose at this time.

Luke 20:35-36 "But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; "nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

Those who are resurrected at this time will be immune from the second death. They cannot die anymore. Those who turn down God's offer will come to the second death, and die permanently. They will have no further existence *at all*. There is no recovery possible from this death.

1 Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

There will be *no more death* after the time this process is complete. This was the plan from the start!

1 Corinthians 15:42-44 So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

Our fundamental state of existence will be changed, which the Bible calls having a spiritual body for which death is impossible.

What is the time line?

1 Thessalonians 4:14-17 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

This is the procedure of how the *first* resurrection will occur, of those few called in this age, *not* most people. Again, the aspect of sleep is given. Those who are alive when this happens don't get a head start! Then all rise

together and meet the returning Christ in the *atmosphere*, where the clouds are². From that point on they will be where Christ is. This is the *first* resurrection. Everyone else will rise later as we shall see.

1 Timothy 2:3-4 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

No other church, other than the *true* church of God has this understanding. The GOOD NEWS! That *all* can be in His kingdom that want to be, if they align their thinking with His.

Mark 1:14-15 Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent [to think differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider], and believe in the gospel."

God wants every human that has ever existed to be in His kingdom, His family, and will provide *every* opportunity for that to take place, *at the right time*.

What happens to the rest?

This is the great question that no religions or philosophies have an adequate answer for! But God does. What is the fate of the farmer in China, or the Bushman in Africa that has never heard anything about God, Christ, or the Bible? Perhaps thousands of generations, none of who have heard the name of "Jesus?" Are they, through no fault of their own, condemned? No, not at all!

John 5:28-29 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done

² There are three heavens mentioned in the Bible: 1. the atmosphere where birds and clouds are; 2. outer space where the moon, planets, stars and galaxies are; 3. where God's throne is, His center of operations.

evil, to the resurrection of judgment [not "condemnation" as some versions inaccurately render it]. (RSV)

These people will be resurrected to physical life. And have a lifetime to prove what they want, God and eternal life? Or their own way, ending in non-existence. They won't know what is happening at first.

Ezekiel 37:7-14 So I gave the word as I was ordered: and at my words there was a shaking of the earth, and the bones came together, bone to bone. And looking I saw that there were muscles on them and flesh came up, and they were covered with skin: but there was no breath in them. And he said to me, Be a prophet to the wind, be a prophet, son of man, and say to the wind, The Lord has said: Come from the four winds, O wind, breathing on these dead so that they may come to life. And I gave the word at his orders, and breath came into them, and they came to life and got up on their feet, a very great army. Then he said to me, Son of man, these bones are all the children of Israel: and see, they are saying, Our bones have become dry our hope is gone, we are cut off completely. For this cause be a prophet to them, and say, This is what the Lord has said: See, I am opening the resting-places of your dead, and I will make you come up out of your resting-places, O my people; and I will take you into the land of Israel. And you will be certain that I am the Lord by my opening the resting-places of your dead and making you come up out of your resting-places, O my people. And I will put my spirit in you, so that you may come to life, and I will give you a rest in your land: and you will be certain that I the Lord have said it and have done it, says the Lord. (BBE)

This is a *vision* (a sight mentally, a dream-like representation) of what will happen. Their bodies are physically reconstructed with muscles, tendons, skin, etc. Their breath (life) and human spirit is restored so they have physical life again. (See Luke 8:55) This vision is of the entire nation of Israel. They don't know what's happening! They are obviously *not* in heaven, or hell (!), so they see no hope. They are still "born of the flesh," back to life. These are the "rest of the dead" (Revelation 20:5) now resurrected to physical life and given the Holy Spirit. "I will put My Spirit in you." This will be their first opportunity for eternal life, and living a life of overcoming and showing God what they want. His way, or the other way. It will be determined by how they live, just as for us today.

Deuteronomy 5:29 'Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!

This heart will be given them at this time; they don't have it now.

Deuteronomy 29:1-4 These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He made with them in Horeb. Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land- "the great trials which your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great wonders. "Yet the LORD has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this very day.

Do you see WHO has not given them the heart? Yes, it is Almighty God. He has a plan, and that plan has stages and timing. Each is progressing as planned. Ancient Israel, though in direct contact with God, could not keep the commandments without the help of the Holy Spirit, which was not given yet. They demonstrated that even witnessing tremendous miracles, and the absolute power of God, they still couldn't find it in themselves to obey God. That was the point of the exercise! This is why they were not given the heart, the Spirit of God. To prove once and for all WE can't do it of and by ourselves!

What does the Holy Spirit do?

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Now is the Holy Spirit available to help. It was given on the first Pentecost after the death of Christ. Upon receiving it the disciples understood spiritual things. It changed their hearts and minds fundamentally. This was not given except to a very few in the Old Testament times.

2 Corinthians 3:3 clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

The Spirit works with our hearts and minds, the deep feelings and thoughts we have. This will be given to all mankind that wishes to have it. No one is left out.

Romans 11:25-27 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery [through the idea of silence], lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."

All Israel will be saved! That was delayed until all the Gentiles were able to be a part of it too. Nobody is excluded, unless they wish to be. These are truths that are hidden in plain sight! No other church teaches these Biblical precepts. They can't see it because they are blinded. Whether Jews or professing Christians. (Romans 11:7) This is the difference between those who will be in the first resurrection, and those in the second.

Revelation 20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

Verse 11-12 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand 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 those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

How will people be judged?

By the same criteria which we are now measured. They are "judged" by the BOOKS! Their character weighed up so to speak, as they live during this time. Which books? The Greek word for "books" is "biblion," the very

same word used of scripture elsewhere. (Luke 4:20) The word which is the basis of our word "Bible." They will be measured by what the BIBLE says! This is not a time of condemnation. It is a time when all can *learn* from God's word the right ways to live, and be able to freely *practice* it. No one is condemned for not knowing, for no fault of their own, as most churches and religions teach. You are responsible for what you *know* and *can* know not what you can't know. At this time they will be able to understand what the Bible says, and thus be responsible for living that way. And they are given time to do it.

This sounds really *good*!

Look at this wonderful truth! Do you see why it's called "good news?" (Old English "gospel," or "good spiel.") How much *better* news *can* there be? This is TERRIFIC! You don't need to worry about all your "lost" friends and relatives. They will have their fair chance. And most will take it. But now, only a few, the first fruits are called to understand.

What about people who should know better?

Matthew 12:41-42 "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. "The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

Did you ever wonder when this would happen? It is during this time of the judgment, of character consideration. People who should have *known* better will be chagrined by others who, given the chance, would have done rightly. And these are Gentiles! Everybody is part of it.

Matthew 10:14-15 "And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. "Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

Even Sodom and Gomorrah, really BAD people by any account, will put to shame the people who wouldn't listen to Jesus Christ or those disciples sent out to preach His message.

Matthew 11:21-24 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. "But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. "And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. "But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you."

He drives home the point with yet more examples. These Gentiles were not as obstinate as the Jews, but it wasn't their time. The Jews, and Israel as a whole (Jews are only one tribe of Israel,) serve as an example. Generally a bad example. Nobody is forced to follow God. But, if God and His way are rejected with full knowledge, then the end is the second death. The end of existence in any form.

Revelation 20:13-15 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

The plan will be complete. No more death, suffering, pain, and unhappiness. The appraisal of everyone's character, with the Bible as the standard, is complete at this point. Only those who voluntarily chose to follow God will continue existence at that time. There is *no more* opportunity. For those who chose God, their wonderful new life will never end.

But isn't there an unpardonable sin?

An unpardonable sin is one that *can't* be pardoned because the one at fault won't *ask* for forgiveness or change away from doing what is wrong, deliberately.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

All will be judged at some point, for good or for bad. There are two finishing points possible, and no return from either.

Daniel 12:2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Everybody gets a *fair* chance, but nobody gets a *second* chance.

Hebrews 6:4-8 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

Jesus Christ isn't going to die again. Those who know God, and have experienced the Holy Spirit yet reject it, will be eliminated. That's it. No coming back. Total obliteration. That is the consequence of refusing to cooperate with The Way the universe is to be run forever, by all who are in it. You either go along, and are pleased to do so, or you are eradicated and become nonexistent. No further suffering.

Hebrews 10:26-29 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the

blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

We *willfully* go our way, or *willfully* go God's way. These are the *only* two options. If we intentionally spurn God's way, when we *know* what it is, how can there be a sacrifice for that? We're not talking about a moment of weakness, or giving in to temptation for which you are sorry afterward, and resolve not to repeat. This is like murder in the first degree, going with intent, willful and premeditated with malice aforethought. In this case the intent to go against God and His laws, conscious defiance. All that do so will be mercifully and quickly euthanized in the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:7-8 "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

These are people who have *chosen* to be this way. If allowed to live on they would be miserable forever in a universe which *doesn't allow* what they *want* to do! A compassionate God won't have that. That is the second death and its purpose.

Matthew 25:46 "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

"Everlasting punishment" NOT "everlasting punishing!" The lake of fire *burns up* what is thrown into it. It's quick, it's done, and it's permanent (everlasting.)

Malachi 4:1-3 "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch. But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves. You shall trample the wicked, For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet On the day that I do this," Says the LORD of hosts.

Something that is *burned up* leaves only ash remaining. That's *all* that is left of what once was a person. A person who refused God's offer of endless life. Nothing left but mineral dust. (Genesis 3:19)

Matthew 10:28 "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

The totality of what makes a person what they are can be *destroyed*!

2 Peter 3:9-13 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

There are two ways, there always have been. We must choose between them. Everyone gets a *fair chance*, the prerogative to understand fully, and make a decision. God wants everyone who has lived to be a part of His joyful family. But you have to be a *contributor* to the joy, not a *detractor*. There is a time coming when this plan will be finished, all accomplished that can and needs to be. We have the hope of the resurrection of all, and the potential for all to enter into the family of God where only good is. God is a fair and just God giving everyone opportunity, if they only will take it!

Will you?

Psalms 16:11 You will make clear to me the way of life; where you are joy is complete; in your right hand there are pleasures for ever and ever. (BBE)