

The resurrection from out of the dead – according to Jesus, John, and Paul

By Lloyd Dale

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now Christ is risen out of the dead, *and has* become the first-fruits of those fallen asleep. **For since by man (Adam) death** (sleep), **by man (Jesus) resurrection of the dead**. For as in Adam all die, so also in the Christ all (the dead) shall be made alive. But **each man in his own order**: Christ the first-fruit; afterward (second) they that are Christ's in his presence (Parousia). Then the end (third), when he (Jesus) gives the kingdom over to him who *is* God and Father; when he (Jesus) shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For **he (Jesus) must reign**, until he has placed (abolished) all enemies under his feet. The last enemy being abolished *is* death. For he (Jesus) has placed all things under his (Christ's) feet. But when he (Yahweh) says all things are put under *him* (Christ), *it is* manifest that he (Yahweh) is excepted, which did put all things under him (Christ). And when **all things are subdued unto him** (Christ), then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him (Yahweh) that put all things under him (Christ), that God may be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:19-28, emphasis and comments added)

“The resurrection of the dead”

“Each man in his own (appointed) order”

“Christ the first-fruits”

“Afterward they that are Christ's in his presence”

“Then the end”

For he must **reign**, until he has placed all enemies under his authority

Having extracted and isolated certain key portions of the above passage of Scripture, we have now come to the place where we need to ask ourselves some question.

1. In history, how much time passed between the resurrection of the “first-fruits” Jesus Christ until the resurrection of “**afterward** they that are Christ's in His presence”? Ca. 40 years.
2. At the point of “**afterward**” where was Christ **present**? Enroute to the “throne of David” i.e. the throne of His glory. (Cf. Lu 1:32-32; Matt 19:28, 25:31; Lu 22:29-30; Rev 3:21)
3. How much time elapses from the “**afterward**” until the “**then the end**”? The thousands years of Rev 20.

4. The **end** of what? The end of Paul's "order" for the resurrection of every man.
5. What is going to **end** at the point of time designated as "**then the end**" in this passage? Resurrection and the Adamic race

The manner in which a person answers these questions will determine how he understands the rest of the passage. In other words if we get the answers to these questions wrong then we will misunderstand the rest of the passage.

It is generally agreed (by preterists) that the beginning of the Parousia (presence) occurred in ca. 70AD. However, that generates another question: What exactly is the Parousia? The Greek word "parousia" means presence¹. It does not mean coming and it should not be translated as coming in an English language Bible. It should be translated "presence." The erroneous translation of "parousia" as "coming" by the early English translators has caused almost irreparable damage to the English understanding of the Parousia of Jesus Christ.

The Parousia of Jesus Christ is His arrival to and presence on the throne of David in His heavenly kingdom along with His resurrected saints.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ ("first-fruit") occurred in ca. 30 AD and the destruction of Jerusalem (the day of the Lord) signified that the Parousia of Jesus Christ was very "near at hand" (Luke 21:31); thus there was ca. forty years from the resurrection of Jesus until the resurrection of those witnesses² that were His "in His Parousia" (1Cor 15:23c).

We must answer questions 2 & 4 together because if we get the wrong "**presence**" we will get the wrong "**end**" and if we get the wrong "**end**" we will get the wrong "**presence**" thus we will get question three wrong as well.

As we examine the complete context of the passage above it becomes clear that the "**end**" is the **end of the resurrection order that Paul began to discuss in verse 23.**

That order is as follows:

1. Christ first, (ca. 30 AD) He was the first fruit of resurrection out of the dead unto immortality.
2. Those that belong to Christ, second, in His Parousia (presence as reigning King in the heavenly kingdom). (70 AD) and continuing forward:

"Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from **now** (i.e. the Parousia) **on**

¹ Dale, Lloyd, "The Parousia"

² Resurrection presupposes death, therefore only those who had been killed (martyred) or had fallen "asleep," i.e. died of natural causes could be resurrected. Christ died then He was resurrected. In order to be resurrected one must first be dead; i.e. "sleep."

(i.e. throughout the Christian age).” “Blessed indeed,” says the Spirit, “that they may **rest** (i.e. eternal/immortal) from their labors, for their deeds follow them!”” (Re 14:12-13 ESV, emphasis and comment added)

These are the full harvest of believers in Christ, extending from 70 AD until the time of the 3rd section of this “order” of resurrection as described by Paul.

- 3. “The rest of the dead,” (Rev 20:5, the third section in Paul’s order of resurrection) i.e. all those that do not participate in the resurrection of the Parousia which extends from 70 AD until the 3rd section of the “order” of resurrection.**

Continuing careful study of 1Cor 15 shows us that Jesus Christ “must reign” (25a) from the Parousia (23c) until all things are subdued unto Him (28a) by the putting down of all other rule, all other authority, all other power (24) and He has put all of His enemies under His rule, authority and power; with death the last enemy being destroyed (26) in the resurrection of the “rest of the dead” as described in Revelation 20:12-15.

Thus, Christ reigns until all things have been subdued unto Him, then He yields up the kingdom to God the father who initially put all things under Christ’s rule by giving Him the throne of His father David (Luke 1:32-33; Daniel 2:44, 7:14; Luke 19:12; et al.) that God may be “all in all.” (1Cor 15:24-28)

Now, for the astute student, another question arises: When did Christ’s reign begin? The context of the passage demonstrates that **Christ’s reign began in His Parousia**. Thus the Parousia of Christ begins the “thousands years” reign of Christ with His resurrected saints (Rev 20:4e) after the “thousands years” reign has been accomplished the resurrection of the “rest of the dead” occurs and following that event which brings the total defeat of the Adamic death, He yields up the kingdom to Yahweh that He may be “all in all.”

As we shall soon see, the above analysis corresponds perfectly with the details of the resurrection phases presented by John in Revelation 20:4-6.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the **souls of them that were beheaded** (killed) for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and **they** (those dead) **lived** (by resurrection) **and reigned with Christ a thousands years**. But the rest of the dead **lived not again until the thousands years were finished**. This is the first resurrection (the resurrection of verse 4 above). Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first

resurrection: on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and **shall reign with him a thousands years**. (Revelation 20:4-6)

“Each in his own (appointed) order”

- Christ has been resurrected, He has ascended as “the first born in resurrection among many brethren,³” as “High Priest,⁴” as the “source of salvation,⁵” and “prince⁶,” but He is not reigning **until the Parousia**.
- The Parousial resurrection of the dead belonging to Jesus (the beginning of Jesus’ reign) to “kingdom” with Him for a “thousands years.”
- The great white throne resurrection of the “rest of the dead” at the end of Paul’s “order of resurrection” following the “thousand years” kingdoming⁷ with the saints.

Now let’s return to our passage in Revelation 20 and examine a few other points. John wrote:

“And I saw thrones...”

What does the Bible teach us about these thrones? This passage in Revelation is a direct reference back to Daniel 7:9 where Daniel first describes the setting up of these thrones.

Following that last Passover meal together with His disciples before His crucifixion, Jesus told the apostles that He “appoint[ed] unto [them] a kingdom, as my father has appointed unto me...**that you may sit on thrones judging** the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Matt. 19:28; cf. Lu. 22:30; Rev 3:21) Thus we can now see what these thrones in Revelation 20:4 are and who is sitting on them and to whom judgment was given. Matthew had already informed us that in Revelation 20 there are 12 thrones and seated upon them are the 12 apostles (including Paul, not Judas).

“And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded (killed) for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which and not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands...”

³ Firstborn by resurrection: Ps 2:7; Ac 13:33; Heb 1:5, also see Don Preston’s article “Was Jesus born again?”

⁴ Hebrews 3:1 “Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ. Hebrews 4:14 “We have a great High Priest who has passed into the heavens...Called of God (Yahweh) an High Priest...Hebrews 7:26 “...an High Priest...holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens...”

⁵ Source of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him: Hebrews 5:9

⁶ “the Prince” Daniel 9:25-28; Acts 5:31; Revelation 1:5

⁷ “kingdoming” is a word which I have coined to better fit the situation. The Greek word “εβασιλεύσαυ” is often translate “reigning” but it can and is translated “king” kingdom” etc. However, “kingdoming” seem to me to fit the context better.

Who are these witnesses that were killed? They are the Christians that were slain during the transition period from Pentecost to the Parousia. They, along with the dead believers (faithful) throughout the previous ages, were resurrected in the Parousial resurrection of 1Cor 15:23c. As we have now seen the believers of all the previous ages had to wait in the grave for this Parousial resurrection. However, since the Parousial resurrection began until “the end” all persons who die in Jesus Christ do not wait in the grave because they are immediately resurrected and translated into the Heavenly kingdom to join those who are all ready there.

The believers “Blessed hope”!!