

Resurrection of Believers

One of the first examples we see of the resurrection of believers is that of Moses and Elijah appearing in glorious splendor to Jesus, Peter, James and John. As Moses and Elijah spoke with Jesus about His departure, Jesus is transformed before the disciple's very eyes. Moses and Elijah have obviously received their resurrection bodies and would therefore be counted among the first of the resurrection.

Luke 9:28-31 (NIV)

- (28) About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray.
- (29) As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning.
- (30) Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus.
- (31) They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem.

What Is the Sequence of Resurrections?

1 Corinthians 15:20-24, Revelations 1:5

1 Corinthians 15:20-24 (NIV)

- (20) But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
- (21) For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.
- (22) For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.
- (23) But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.
- (24) Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.

Revelations 1:5 (NIV)

- (5) and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,

What was Jesus the first of?

Luke 9:30-31, Matthew 27:52-53

Luke 9:30-31 (NIV)

- (30) Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus.
- (31) They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem.

Matthew 27:52-53 (NIV)

- (52) and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.
- (53) They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

Who are the others seen in their resurrection bodies?

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 (NIV)

- (13) Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.
- (14) For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.
- (15) According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.
- (16) For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
- (17) After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

When will this happen? Who will be caught up with Jesus?

Revelations 20:11-15 (NIV)

- (11) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.
- (12) And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.
- (13) The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done.
- (14) Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.
- (15) Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

What will happen to those without Jesus at the final judgment?

What will happen to death?

When Will Resurrection Occur?

a)

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 (NIV)

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When?

b)

1 John 3:2, 1 Corinthians 15:51-53

1 John 3:2 (NIV)

(2) Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53 (NIV)

- (51) Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—
(52) in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.
(53) For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

How quick?

What Will Our Resurrected Bodies Be Like?

John 20:14-17 (NIV)

- (14) At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.
(15) He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."
(16) Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").
(17) Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' "

How do we know Jesus' physical appearance had changed?

Luke 24:38-43 (NIV)

- (38) He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?
(39) Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."
(40) When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.
(41) And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?"
(42) They gave him a piece of broiled fish,
(43) and he took it and ate it in their presence.

How do we know Jesus had a real tangible body?

Luke 24:44-49 (NIV)

- (44) He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."
(45) Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.
(46) He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,
(47) and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
(48) You are witnesses of these things.
(49) I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

How do we know that Jesus still had a sense of purpose?

1 Corinthians 15:35-44 (NIV)

- (35) But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?"
(36) How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.
(37) When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else.
(38) But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body.
(39) Not all flesh is the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another.

- (40) There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another.
- (41) The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.
- (42) So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;
- (43) it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;
- (44) it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

How will our resurrection bodies be better than our natural human bodies?

Does Burial Method Matter?

Genesis 3:19 (NIV)

(19) By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”

If our bodies are returning to dust, cremation simply speeds up the process.

How Should These Truths Affect Our Lives?

1 John 3:3 (NIV)

(3) All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Titus 2:11-13 (NIV)

- (11) For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.
- (12) It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,
- (13) while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

Philippians 3:10-14 (NIV)

- (10) I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
- (11) and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.
- (12) Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.
- (13) Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,
- (14) I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:9-11 (NIV)

- (9) For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- (10) He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.
- (11) Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Ask

Do you have any questions about the resurrection of believers?

Application

Based on my understanding of the resurrection, how should these truths affect my life?

Prayer Model

Lord Jesus, thank you that I too will be resurrected. Thank You that Your resurrection power has been given to those who believe.

Key Verse

John 11:25

“Jesus told her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.’”