

# Resurrection and Judgement

## Principles of Interpretation

1. A basic principle of scriptural interpretation is to take what is clear and interpret what is more perplexing in that light. Start with the easier passages and work towards those which are more difficult. Straightforward teaching must be approached before symbolic and apocalyptic type passages.
2. Another related principle is to interpret scripture in context. This means a passage must be interpreted in the light of the section of the book it is in, the book of the Bible itself, other books by the same Biblical author, the place it occupies in the history of redemption, and finally its linguistic, literary, and cultural setting.
3. Finally, this process calls for prayer. We must submit to the Holy Spirit as we approach scripture, and this means asking God for wisdom and an open and submissive mind, willing to change in conformity to the Word and to not impose prior assumptions on the text.

## Biblical Teaching on the Resurrection and Judgement

When we talk of eschatology, we must center on the great future events of the resurrection and judgement. These two themes are beyond question two of the primary eschatological doctrines and clearly more basic than issues of the millennium, last days, tribulation, etc. What can we know about these things, based on clear scriptural teaching? Can one establish that the Bible teaches that there is a unity in the resurrection of the dead and the final judgement? This is a key issue in discussing eschatology. Perhaps these passages will help further clarify things.

**Item:** Believers are raised AND unbelievers are judged at the LAST DAY.

### Last Day "Eschata Hemera"

John 6:39-40 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the **last day**. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the **last day**."

John 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the **last day**."

John 6:54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the **last day**."

John 11:24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the **last day**."

John 12:48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will **condemn him at the last day**."

**Item: Both the saved and unsaved will be raised together at the same general time.**

**MATTHEW 25:31-46** When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world...Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels....Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

**Note:** Both believers and unbelievers are judged there at the same time! One group is on the right and the other on the left. They are there together, not separated by 1,000 years time! Finally, the wicked are sent to punishment and the righteous to reward.

**JOHN 5:28-29** "Do not be amazed at this, for an hour ("hora" in Greek) is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out -- those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned."

**Note:** hora: "*a time or hour*", not "*several times*" and "all who are in their graves will hear his voice", not just "some who hear his voice". There is a unity of resurrection here.

**DANIEL 12:2-3** Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

**Note:** The multitudes awake together, then some go one way and some go another.

**Item: The resurrection of believers comes before what some call the "rapture" (living believers transformed).**

**1 THESSALONIANS 4:15-16** For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. for the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord.

**Note:** So this passage tells us Jesus will come down from heaven with a loud command, not in secret! The dead in Christ will rise first, and then those alive will be caught up with them in the clouds.

**Item: The resurrected saints will be present at the final judgement.**

**2 THESSALONIANS 1:9-10** They shall suffer the punishment of eternal destruction and exclusion from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints...

**Item: At the resurrection the last enemy, death will be finally defeated. After the Resurrection-Rapture event there can be no more enemies of God to defeat and no death at all!**

**1 CORINTHIANS 15:25-26** For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

**1 CORINTHIANS 15:51** Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed-- 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. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "**Death has been swallowed up in victory.**" "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

**Note:** Since death is the last enemy, there can be no more enemies after "death is swallowed up in victory" (defeated). That means after the "rapture", if we want to use that word, there can be no death or enemies of Christ left to defeat. Notice also this is the last trumpet. No "trumpets" can come after it, if we want to remain literal!

#### A Flow Chart of 1 Corinthians 15

1. Jesus raised from the dead (verse 20).
2. Jesus reigns until all enemies put under his feet (verse 25).
3. Then when Jesus returns at the Last Trumpet, he brings the resurrection and "rapture" (v. 23 & 52).
4. Death, the **last enemy** is defeated **at** the resurrection-rapture event (verse 54 tells us **when** verse 26 occurs).

**Conclusions:** Messiah will return to raise the dead and transform the living saints. At that point all people will be judged and separated to either reward or punishment. There can be no enemies of God after this and no death, since death, the last enemy is defeated at the last trumpet.