

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #82

5/14/2008

Following Armageddon Comes the Millennium: Part 18

The Resurrection

19:21-20:10

We have seen that there is more than one kind of resurrection. There is the **“first resurrection”** which includes all those who will be resurrected to be in the presence of the Lord with bodies designed for this wonderful experience and this **“first resurrection”** has several stages as outlined in 1 Corinthians 15:22-24. There will be another kind of resurrection for those who are **“resurrected unto damnation”** (John 5:29). In this second kind of resurrection those who have chosen evil, chosen to serve the devil rather than choosing to submit themselves to Jesus Christ, will be given eternal bodies designed to experience judgment and torment for eternity with the devil in the **“lake that burns with fire and brimstone”** forever.

Each person living this life on this earth has a body that is designed and fitted for this earth. That is, it is a body composed of earthly material and subject to what is often called the **“laws of nature,”** laws observed at work on all things material and temporal. As such, this body is subject to the effect that sin has had on everything in this world, causing all things material to break down, decompose and become less orderly (Second law of thermodynamics) as they move towards their demise and death. This death for all persons living on this earth, excepting those whom God chooses to remove otherwise such as Enoch and Elijah, is then to be followed by one of the two previously mentioned resurrections which will clothe each person with a body properly designed for his eternal life after life in this world.

With such a destiny universally applicable to all living persons, God has endowed each person with the freedom and responsibility of making a decision that will determine his own destiny. This decision is one that each person must and will make while he still lives in this body and has a mind that is capable of receiving, evaluating information, and making decisions. No person can make this decision for another. It is the ultimate and most important expression of personal freedom and personal responsibility and must be made before a person departs this life and this earthly body. Each person determines for himself what kind of resurrection he will have and where he will spend eternity — either in the Lord’s presence enjoying the bliss of heaven or with Satan in the “lake that burns with fire and brimstone,” suffering torment for eternity.

The determination of a person’s choice of his destiny is wholly and entirely based upon one simple choice which is whether he trusts Jesus Christ with the ownership and control of his life as his Lord and King or rejects this absolute trust of his life to Jesus as it says in John 3:18: **“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”** It must be recognized that a person’s statement or act of

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such belief is evaluated by the Lord and either accepted or rejected according to whether He determines it to be genuine and sincere, without pretense or reservation as is demonstrated in John 2:23-25: *“Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.”*

What is quoted from John’s Gospel was spoken by Jesus early in His ministry as He presented His invitation to men to become His followers, submit themselves to Him as their King and become citizens of His Kingdom. He constantly and repeatedly explained what He meant, what was required of men to be converted, and what they needed to do and how to do it so that they could make this ultimate choice. He gave startling and clear statements such as is found in Matthew 7:15-23 where He addressed the matter of false prophets (preachers) and other religious leaders who appeared to be members of His Kingdom: *“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”*

In Matthew thirteen Jesus told several parables addressing and further explaining this matter such as the parable of *“the sower and the seed”* in which only one in four hearers of the Word of God actually received and benefitted from it (Matt. 13:18-23). In another of those parables He described how the enemy, the devil, sowed *“tares”* (weeds which imitated grain) among the grain in such a way that man could not distinguish between the two (Mat. 13:24-30, 36-43). The *“tares”* so successfully imitated the grain that they had to be allowed to remain until the judgment when God sends the angels to separate them and cast them into the *“furnace of fire where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”* In yet another, the parable of *“the net”* (Mat. 47-50) Jesus illustrated how many of those who seem to be His followers will be rejected by Him. In these parables Jesus emphasized how terrifyingly realistic it is that many people, who actually belong to the devil, join in with, integrate into, and successfully identify with true believers, even while they still belong to Satan and will be *“resurrected unto damnation”* (John 5:29).

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Not only did Jesus emphatically and repeatedly describe the insidious nature of those who falsely claim to be His, seemingly mixing themselves in with his genuine followers, but He also taught, explained and emphasized how there will a sudden separation of those who are His from those who are not. Jesus told us about **“the wedding banquet”** in Matthew 22:1-14 where all of the invited guests had plenty of opportunities to prepare themselves, and to make the proper decision, but failed to do so. Then, suddenly came the time for the banquet and:

“... when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen”
(Mat. 22:1-14).

Jesus again emphasized the same truth in His parable of the **“ten virgins”** in Matthew 25:1-13 where He said:

“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not ; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”

In a number of other places, too numerous to list here, Jesus emphasized the same critically important truths. Apparently, He knew that it was and, even now, is not an uncommon situation for people to either be misled into believing that they are His followers when they are not, or to be falsely pretending to be so. As is well known to all, Judas was a pretender to the faith at that time and there have surely been many more since then.

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This is therefore a very serious matter and one that Jesus repeatedly addressed. There are several reasons Jesus gave so much attention and emphasis to this matter and no man should disregard His teachings and warnings because He says what He means and means what He says:

1. The choice to give one's life to Jesus and be converted from being a slave to Satan, and choosing rather to become a subject in the Lord's Kingdom and under His authority **MUST** be made while a person is still alive in his earthly body. Once a person's earthly body dies his choice will be fixed for eternity and cannot be changed.
2. The time of a person's departure from his earthly body can happen so suddenly that he is not given any opportunity to make any last second choices.
3. There are two kinds of resurrections. One, the **"first,"** provides a resurrected body designed to fully enjoy and benefit from being in God's presence in heaven for eternity, forever and ever, without any change. The other kind of resurrection provides a body uniquely designed to experience pain and suffering without end for eternity, forever and ever, and from which there is not escape or relief. The place of this suffering and torment is real. It is an **"everlasting fire and was created for the devil and his angels"** (Matthew 25:41). Man can choose to go there, but, if he chooses to do so, it will be in spite of God's love for him and the many opportunities God gives to him to choose otherwise.

While none of us have the ability to determine who is a true follower of Jesus and who is a pretender, God does make some things very clear. In Revelation 21:8 and 27, God tells us some characteristics of people who will not be allowed into heaven, He says in both places that **"liars"** will not be allowed in. Obviously, a person, who is **"a liar,"** one who tells lies, cannot be trusted, even when he says he has given his life to Jesus. Then, in Revelation 22:19 God says that **"... if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."** There are many today, who claim to be followers of Jesus, and yet reject certain portions of God's Word. It is a very dangerous thing to do and God takes such actions of rejection very seriously.

The next matter to be considered in this lesson is also very important, but has received insufficient attention — it regards the judgment of the believer — his appearance before **"the judgment seat of Christ"** which is sometimes called by its Greek name, **bema seat**. A believer will not have to appear before **"the great white throne"** for judgment regarding his guilt as

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a sinner because having accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord, the death of Jesus on the cross paid the sin-debt he owed to God. He has been forgiven because he has been redeemed, purchased by Jesus and set free from the bondage of his guilt. He has been pardoned. His debt has been paid.

However, having been redeemed and purchased by Jesus, the saved belongs to Jesus. His life belongs to Jesus. Therefore, the redeemed MUST give an account to his Master as to how he has lived and used that life which was purchased by Jesus. Apparently that accounting happens even as that person is being resurrected as a part of that event. As Paul wrote in Romans 14:12, and 2 Corinthians 5:10:

“... every one of us shall give account of himself to God. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

Furthermore, Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 4:5 that, at this judgment, things that have been kept hidden will be brought out into the open: ***“... the Lord come ... will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.”*** In 1 Corinthians 3:13-14 Paul also wrote: ***“Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.”*** Furthermore, Paul added ***“If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire,”*** explaining that some followers of Christ will indeed be resurrected to spend eternity with Him, but will barely have made it. Apparently, they not have lived in a way that pleases the Lord and will not receive any heavenly rewards when they enter His presence.

Some, who claim to be followers of Jesus, seem to try to dismiss any sense of urgency about these matters, pretending that, just to get into heaven will satisfy them. The Scriptures seem to be very clear that such an attitude can only be expressed by a person who, either has no comprehension of what it means to be a follower of Jesus, or is insincere about his profession and simply pretending to belong to Jesus when he knows such is not true. Others, scoff as the idea of how such a thing could possibly take place when they think of how much time it would require. They seem to be unaware that, when they leave this earthly body, there is no more time. Time doesn’t mean anything after departure from the earth.

God has records on everything done by everyone. As the Lord and Master and owner of the lives given to Him, He will call for an accounting.