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...to know the love of Christ
which passeth knowledge
that ye might be filled with
all the fulness of God Eph 3:19

Resurrection #17

1
Christ

2
Church

3
Faithful

1000 Yrs

4
The rest

The Last Resurrection

In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John recorded visions that were shown to him of things to come. He saw and recorded the great tribulation that will come upon Israel in the future. He saw the Lord's return to deliver Israel and to reward the martyrs who died in that tribulation. He saw Satan bound 1000 years while Christ reigned on earth. And, he saw Satan released and destroyed after that, and the elimination of sin and death. John described a resurrection that is the last resurrection mentioned in Scripture. It is indicated at point 4 on the line above. Concerning that resurrection, John wrote,

“And I saw a great white throne...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.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.” (Rev.20:11-13)

Who are these who were dead but now stand at a great white throne in the presence of God?

Who are these who have works that God will evaluate?

Who are these who were still in the grave until point 4?

In previous papers we have stated

that the resurrections found in Scripture will occur in the sequence shown on the line above. We noted that the first is the past resurrection of Christ, indicated at point 1. Next will be that of the church, which is Christ's body at point 2. After that will be the raising of the overcomers of Israel's calling at point 3. And finally, at point 4, are those whom John saw.

But who are these?

These must be believers with life from God for they STAND. They were dead but now are alive. Unbelievers do not rise or stand; they remain in the grave. John 3:36 tells us that, **“...he that believeth not the Son (God) shall not see life; but the wrath of God (death) abideth (remains) on him.”**

These stand before a GREAT WHITE throne. It is not a black throne, but one that is white, which is the symbol of purity in Scripture.

These stand BEFORE GOD. Sin can not exist in the presence of the Holy God. Darkness can not exist in the presence of the Light, and no unbeliever could stand in the presence of God.

These have WORKS that survive death, works that God will evaluate. Unbelievers have no works that survive after they die. They do not have the spirit of Christ and so they live their entire lives “in the flesh.” The flesh **“cannot please God.”** (Ro.8:8) It **“profiteth nothing.”** (John 6:63) Therefore unbelievers are incapable of doing works that please God and that are profitable in His sight. They can do nothing that warrants His further evaluation. We can do no better than quote Dr. E. W. Bullinger in

the matter of unbelievers and their “works.” In his booklet, “Two Natures in the Child of God,” He has written of the life in flesh,

“Its end is death! The flesh, and all that pertains to it, its religion and its ungodliness, its virtue and its vice, all end in death. All is for time, and not for eternity.”

Therefore we conclude that these in the last resurrection must be children of God, but who are they?

We suggest that there are two classes that have not been resurrected before point 4. They are:

(1) Those throughout the ages who received everlasting life by faith but **were not** chosen and called to God's purposes for the nation of Israel or for the church which is Christ's body.

(2) Those who received life from God and **were** chosen and called for part in his purpose for Israel, but who were slothful servants; they did not continue faithful unto the end of their lives.

In this brief study we will name only a few in the first class who were worshippers of the Lord but were not called to His purpose for the nation of Israel or for part in the body of Christ. They are Adam, and some of his family, Enoch, Noah, and others who lived before Israel became a nation. Also, there were some God worshippers like Nebuchadnezzar and the Queen of Sheba who lived during the time of Israel, yet they were not part of Israel's calling. Jesus said, **“The queen of the south (Sheba) shall rise up in the judgment**

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with this generation, and shall condemn it.” (Mt.12:42) She, and other worshippers of God outside Israel, will rise at point 4.

In addition, since the creation of the church which is Christ’s body, there have been many that trusted Christ as their Savior and received life but who were not called to God’s purpose for the body of Christ. Had they been called, God would have revealed it to them. These have a different and no less noble place in God’s plans and they will rise to it in the last resurrection.

In the second class, of those to be raised at point 4, are those connected to Israel’s calling who did not endure faithful to the end of their lives. They were unrighteous and unjust stewards of God’s Word.

Daniel 12: 2 speaks of two groups in Israel that will rise, some to age abiding life (the faithful) at point 3 and some to shame and contempt (those unfaithful) at point 4.

John saw those martyred during the tribulation that will rise and reign with Christ 1000 years and he wrote, “**But**

Resurrection #17 ...cont'd
the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” (Rev.20:5) Those who compromise their faith during the tribulation will rise after the 1000 year reign of the faithful.

Jesus told the multitude that their walk-life could keep them from having part in His coming kingdom. He said, “**That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.**” (Mt,5:20) They could prove unworthy of reward and the resurrection into His millennial reign. They could remain in the grave until the 1000 years are past.

While the Apostle Paul preached the return of Christ and Israel’s kingdom, he wrote to saints, Jews and Gentiles grafted into Israel’s hope. He said their faith and endurance showed that they were WORTHY of the kingdom at Christ’s return. (2 Thes.1:5-10) Some would be unworthy and rise 1000 years later. Hebrews 11:35 also speaks of martyrs who earned a “better resurrection.”

Some will not receive that better resurrection but instead will rise 1000 years later at point 4.

In conclusion, we find the last resurrection will include:

(1) All saints who have died but were not called to the hope of Israel or to that of the body of Christ, and

(2) Those of Israel’s hope who did not earn the reward of a “better resurrection.”

As we end this paper, we must pause to give thanks for the first resurrection, that of Christ Who made possible all the resurrections to follow. And, though we may err in our sorting out of the future resurrections, the Lord does not. His ways are perfect, His times are on schedule, and His saints will rise to that which He has prepared for them. We can only praise Him for what He has in store for all who rise, for “**Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.**” (1 Cor. 2:9)

J. Heltzinger

A Tribute To Nathan Scharff

On Sept. 10th, a beloved friend and saint, Nathan Scharff fell asleep in Christ Jesus, just 11 days before his 87th birthday. He and his wife Elizabeth, moved to Sun City, Arizona in the latter years of life where we in the Phoenix area were blessed by his teaching and rich fellowship. But we are only a small number of the many people who were touched around the world by his ministry.

He was born in Cincinnati, Ohio into a strict Jewish environment. He occasionally alluded to his childhood days when his family observed the feasts of the law. Quoting from a message he gave on the feasts of Israel in 1993 at a conference in Phoenix: “In the seventh month is *Yom Kippur*, but before *Yom Kippur* comes the first trump, *Rosh Hashanah*, which is the new year... I had ten days from the first trump to the last trump... What would you do if you knew you had ten days left to make every wrong right? ...I sat by my father’s side, preparing for *Yom Kippur*. My

mother would sit upstairs, the women separated from the men (which isn’t a bad idea, but we don’t have ‘male nor female’ today) and the Rabbi would bring out the *shophar*, which is the trumpet and call us to prayer at the first trump. We had confession to make, and what I had done the whole year, it seemed like God would bring to my memory and I would think to myself ‘I can’t confess it all in ten days.’”

It was this ‘rigid’ (as he called it) upbringing that laid the foundation for this dear saint’s future, a “**vessel... meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.**”

In 1947 he found his Messiah and at great cost. We can appreciate the meaning of the words found in Matthew 10:34-37 “**Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law**

against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household.” When his Rabbi was told of his conversion, he “pulled the hairs from his beard”. At his clothing store he put up a sign which read, “Under New Management”.

But perhaps one of the most remarkable things that made him unique was that he came into a knowledge of “the mystery” the great secret revealed to the apostle Paul. He often spoke of this truth from Ephesians 2. There was a pleasantness in his manner of speaking which revealed his reverence for His Lord and Head. We were introduced to insight from the ‘Hebrew’ language and a perspective of the Scriptures in a way that we may not have been otherwise.

We will especially remember him for his “love for the saints”, his prayer ministry and his love for his wife. These three traits were a witness that will long live in our minds as an example of the “worthy walk”

The Least Understood

Who is the least understood writer of the Bible? John the Apostle and writer of the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ might be the first on the list. Or Daniel in his book which contains many things hard to be understood. Perhaps

Solomon in his book entitled "The Song of Solomon". But how many would say the Apostle Paul is the least understood?

The Apostle Paul makes known to us that God revealed to him something that had never been revealed before. HE explained this secret in his epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, which he wrote in a prison in Rome after the leaders of Israel had definitely refused to accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

Paul revealed this secret to faithful saints in Christ Jesus who were chosen in Him before the overthrow of the world. He marked these out to be His adopted sons before Him, without blame and accepted by Him. In His time He will present this Body to Himself, a glorious Body, or Church, or Assembly of believers without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blame.

At the end of the Acts period, God had not yet said all He wanted mankind to know. This revelation given to Paul finished or completed His thoughts to us. We have been living these nearly two thousand years with a completed Bible.

Paul tells us in Col. 1:25-26 **"Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, (members of this Body who are mainly Gentiles; individual Jews included who believe) to fulfil (or complete) the word of God, even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but NOW is made manifest to His saints."**

Paul speaks of the riches of the glory of this mystery which is that Christ is in or among the Gentiles. All through the history of Israel in the Old Testament, God was the God of Israel and the Gentiles had no claim on Him since they had no covenants with Him. An ex-

ample to illustrate this is in Matt. 15:22-28. A Gentile woman appeals to Jesus for help and He ignores her until she recognizes herself as having no claim on Him as a Gentile. In order for a Gentile to have the right to lay claim on the God of Israel, he had to become a convert or a proselyte to their religion. At Pentecost in Acts 2 there were Jews and proselytes in that assembly.

During the Acts period the olive tree typified the position of Gentile believers as grafted into it and as dependent for sustenance on the roots of that tree. Since the tree was cut down by God at the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 69 or 70, that destroyed ALL the branches. An olive tree can only be entirely destroyed when the roots are destroyed. Since the roots were not destroyed, the tree will one day grow again. In fact, it is growing today but not yet ready to bear fruit. Ezekiel 36 tells us when fruit will appear. The olive tree represents the spiritual condition of Israel.

In Acts 28:28 the word 'salvation' is the Lord Himself. This is one of His names. (Luke 2:30; Eph. 6:17; Isa. 62:11) Included in this mystery is the fact that Christ is now among the Gentiles. (Col. 1:27) They can claim Him as their God.

Those who claim that the Church, the Body of Christ, began at Acts 2 do not understand the Apostle Paul. The revelation given to him was around thirty-five years after the events at Acts 2, so it was impossible for it to begin there. Acts 2 was the reoffer to the nation of Israel to repent and recognize Jesus as their Messiah. It was also the beginning of the third sowing as predicted in Matt. 13.

Those who believe the Church, the Body of Christ in Eph. 1:22-23, began at Acts 13 do not understand the Apostle Paul. They believe the body spoken of in I Cor. 12 is the Body spoken of in Eph. 1:22,23, and that Paul revealed this mystery to the Corinthian church first. The Corinthians were the most carnal and least spiritual of all the churches or assemblies to

whom Paul witnessed. He said, **"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."** (I Cor. 2:2) He also said, **"I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able."** (I Cor. 3:2 Paul could not reveal for the first time a new revelation with a new hope, a new calling, and a new purpose, and a new sphere of blessing to them.

Those who claim to be spiritual Israel do not understand the Apostle Paul. The Church, the Body of Christ, is mainly composed of Gentiles, the reason why Paul, in Eph. 3:1, claimed to be a prisoner for the Gentiles. Gentiles can now claim Him as their God. Jews must come to Him in the same way as the Gentiles. They have no special claim on Him while this special dispensation is running its course.

Those who believe they must be baptized in water do not understand the Apostle Paul. He said there is one baptism and that cannot involve water. (Eph. 4:5)

Those who believe they must observe the Passover feast, now called the communion or the Lord's Supper, do not understand the Apostle Paul. This service was connected with the New Covenant which was made with the nation of Israel. (Jer. 31:31) It replaced the Passover feast in that it was now to remember His death until He comes back to earth as He promised, instead of remembering the exodus from Egypt.

Those who believe Paul took the place of Judas and became a member of the twelve apostles of the Lord, do not understand the Apostle Paul. These people recognize Paul as perhaps the greatest of the apostles, but do not know where to place him in the *scheme* of things. The twelve apostles will have their names on the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem. Paul's name will NOT be there. At the revelation of the mystery his hope changed. But those who do not understand Paul are at a

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Least Understood ...cont'd

loss to know what to do with him.

As a member of the Body of Christ, Paul will have a place of authority in the Far Above All Heavens. The Body will be made manifest with Christ when He is made manifest, or brought to light or made visible. He is invisible during this dispensation. (I Tim. 6:16) This manifestation with Him will be there where He is now in the Glory. No person during this dispensation has literally SEEN the Lord. If they say they do, they do not know their Bibles.

The Lord has a place for Paul in His heavenly kingdom. A crown of righteousness will be given him, which indicates reigning. (I Tim. 4:8,18) It would not be surprising to see Paul installed as Prime Minister over all the Church, the Body of Christ, with Christ as Head. Gen. 41:38-40 could serve as a type.

Those whose hope is the Rapture in I Thess. 4:13-17, do not understand the Apostle Paul. The Body of Christ has no connection with Michael the Archangel, or with voices or shouts, or with trumpets. It is not looking for Christ to come, but is rather looking to go where Christ, its Head, is now in the Far Above All Heavens.

Members of this Body are not expecting to have, in the resurrection, bodies terrestrial, to live on the earth, or

bodies celestial, to live in the New Jerusalem, but rather bodies cosmical, like the glorious Body of our resurrected Head. (Phil. 3:21) (See page 271 in "The Foundations of Dispensational Truth" by Dr. Bullinger.)

It may be argued that Paul included himself in the Rapture, I Thess. 4:15,17, where he uses the pronoun 'we'. He did have that hope then, because that was the hope under the kingdom of heaven message during the Acts period. Notice how 'we' changed to 'ye' in Col. 3:4. Paul is speaking to the living, admonishing them to set their affections on things above where Christ sits on the right hand of God, and not on things on the earth. Paul knew the new dispensation of the mystery did not include the so-called Rapture. HE knew he would not outlive the new dispensation and would go to the naked state in the grave. (II Tim. 4:6) The word 'departure' is 'analysis', the turning back to the elements or dust from which he was made.

Those who believe that we are under the law of Moses do not understand the Apostle Paul. The law was not given to the Gentiles. This dispensation of the mystery is also the dispensation of grace. **"...but sin is not imputed when there is no law."** (Rom. 5:13) Yet we know

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the law is God's standard of righteousness and we should strive to live in the new nature and not fulfil the lusts of the old nature. Remember, the epistles of Ephesians and Colossians are written to the faithful saints whose heart's desire is to serve the Lord and be His true witnesses.

The cry during this dispensation has been almost entirely to go into all the world and preach the gospel, but the promised signs to follow have been missing. (Mark 16:15-18) We thank the Lord for every missionary and their work in leading many to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the first step. But how many have endeavored to enlighten those believers to know of the dispensation of the mystery which Paul said must be done? (Eph. 3:9) If they neglected to do this, they have not understood the Apostle Paul and the commission for this dispensation.

P Schafer

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