

The Eight Resurrections

by Ezekiel T. Abernathy III

There are only two kinds of death mentioned in Scripture: 1) physical death, the first death, and 2) the second death, or being cast into the Lake of Fire. But it may surprise you to know, my Beloved, that there are four kinds of resurrection mentioned in Scripture: 1) spiritual resurrection, also known as regeneration or being born again, 2) baptismal resurrection, a symbolic, testimonial point of contact for the believer, 3) temporary resurrection of the body (e.g., Lazarus, Jairus' daughter, Eutychus, and other contemporary examples), and 4) eternal resurrection of the body.

With respect to eternal resurrection of the body, there are five different occurrences of eternal resurrection which occur in Scripture as follows: 1) the resurrection of Christ, 2) the pre-tribulational resurrection-rapture of the Bride, 3) the mid-tribulational resurrection of Enoch and Elijah, 4) the so-called "First Resurrection" which refers, not to baptismal resurrection, but rather to the post-tribulational rapture of those martyred during the Great Tribulation, and 5) the Second Resurrection, also known as the post-millennial, general resurrection of the just and unjust who have died during the Millennial Reign and also of all the unjust throughout the history of the world.

What I would like to discuss in this article are the various resurrections to which I have referred. I refer to them as "The Eight Resurrections," that is, 1) spiritual resurrection, 2) baptismal resurrection, 3) temporary resurrection, 4) Christ's resurrection, 5) the Pre-Tribulational resurrection 6) the Mid-Tribulational resurrection, 7) the "First Resurrection" and 8) the Post-Millennial resurrection. Now we should not be surprised that these variations on the theme of resurrection are eight in number for it so happens that eight is the number of resurrection because Christ was raised on the eighth day—the day after the Sabbath, the seventh day, had ended. So I believe that Brother J.N. Darby, Brother C.I. Scofield, and I have the Spirit of God on this matter in flat contradiction to the bishop-approved *Athanasian Creed* of carnal churchianity which states that Christ

shall come again to judge the living and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies and shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life eternal, and they who indeed have done evil into eternal fire. This is the catholic faith, which except a man have believed faithfully and firmly he cannot be in a state of salvation.

If there's one thing I know about God, it's that He never does anything so simple-minded as what's presented in the *Athanasian Creed*. The actualities of how all the mechanics of Christ's advents play out in human history is quite complex as we shall see and takes a mind full of the Holy Ghost to see through all the clutter and be able to see the beautiful prophetic system which is set forth within the jigsaw puzzle of God's Holy Word. By discovering the true interpretation, we shall escape the errors of the Great Whore and Eastern Whorethodoxy and find the true salvation promised to those who are faithful to and love his precious *parousias*.¹

Let's take a look at spiritual resurrection. The Word describes it in Ephesians 2:5: "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." Only those who are spiritually dead can be spiritually resurrected. A man stumbled in drunk to one of my Bible Prophecy Crusades in Montgomery, Alabama. As I gave the altar call he staggered forward to receive Christ as his personal savior. What did I do? Did I send him away and tell him to come back when he was sober? Of course not! Had he left that service he might have been hit by a car and ended up in a Devil's Hell. So what did I do? I led that poor, ole soused-up drunk in the sinner's prayer, asking Jesus to come into his heart and make him born again and as he fumbled over the words with such a slur that even his own mother couldn't understand him, you know what happened? God saved him, filled him with the Holy Ghost, and sobered him up from the drink, but got him so drunk on the Holy Ghost that he couldn't even stand up for four hours. Hallelujah! Some of the brethren told me that when he got in the taxi to go home, he couldn't stop talking in tongues long enough to give the taxi driver his address. And the next night the taxi driver showed up at the meeting, wondering what all this craziness

was about, and got saved! Now that's spiritual resurrection! It's miraculous! It's instantaneous! It's glorious!

The Word also speaks of baptismal resurrection in Colossians 2:12 which states that we are both buried and resurrected with Christ in baptism through the faithfulness of the operation of God which raised Christ from the dead. So great was the faith of the early Christians in baptism as a point of contact that some of them had the practice of being baptized on behalf of the dead. The Apostle Paul asks the Corinthians, "What shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?"² You see, my Beloved, baptism is a point of contact for the release of faith and it appears these early Christians were getting baptized, serving as proxies for the dead, in order to try to release their faith on behalf of those who had died in order to access the power of God to try to resurrect those dead folk and bring their spirits straight back into their bodies in a temporarily resurrected state. They'd apparently had some success at this because Paul doesn't rebuke them for this practice. Rather he uses it to argue for the truth of the resurrection of the dead because he knew that this practice was based squarely on the Christian faith in the resurrection of the dead.

Now I'm not suggesting that we revive this early church practice like the Mormons have, though I do believe in the restorationist view of the church. But what I am suggesting is that you can experience a kind of baptismal resurrection if you'll release your faith, using baptism as a point of contact. Every year folks report a kind of resurrectional experience as they release their faith while being baptized in the Jordan River. Surely, baptism is an outward expression of an inward faith, but let's not miss the use of baptism as a point of contact for the release of resurrection power, even if it's just a temporary fix.

The early Christians believed in the power to raise the dead. Jesus raised the dead and he said that the true believer would do the same and even greater.³ Temporary resurrection still happens today. Brother Bob Dinkins has claim to at least two occurrences in his own ministry while holding overseas crusades—one in Zambia and the other in Cambodia. I know of several who have had near death experiences—one who was clinically dead for 15 minutes. Last year, a dead man was raised from the dead up on the stage during a Benny Hinn Healing Crusade in Ghana.⁴ These temporary resurrections are marvelous and wonderful, but they are

only dim reflections of that marvel and wonder of the eternal resurrection of the body which occurred in the case of Jesus and which will occur at each one of the four eternal resurrections predicted in Holy Scripture.

The first great resurrection predicted in Holy Scripture is the next to occur in God's prophetic calendar. Brother Edgar C. Whisenant miscalculated the date of this event in his little booklet *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be In 1988*. He had the concept, but he didn't have the date right and as we all know, the rapture did not occur last year. The mighty event Brother Whisenant tried to pinpoint is that secret, resurrection-rapture combo to take place at the lightning-flash coming-of-Christ when He steals away His Bride to their Wedding Reception, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. As the dead rise to meet the Lord in the air and the living believers are raptured to meet them, they see the Holy Spirit, God's restraining force, absenting the earth along with them in bodily form as a dove. But then they also see two saints of old, Enoch and Elijah, God's Two Witnesses who cheated death, descending to earth to pay the penalty of sin which is death and to continue their prophetic ministry in opposition to the Antichrist who is soon to be revealed. Meanwhile, Christ escorts His Bride back to the throne room of heaven for the Wedding Reception lasting 42 months or 3½ years. During that time, believers will rejoice in their salvation and those who are happy to have been raptured will receive the crown of righteousness given to those who love His appearances.

Then, just as the festivities of the Wedding Reception are winding down, the attentions of the Lamb and of his new Bride will turn toward the earth where a battle is raging between the Antichrist and God's Two Witnesses, Enoch and Elijah. As the cheering, raptured multitudes look on from the grandstands of heaven, a sudden, united gasp echoes through the banquet hall of the Lamb as the Beast slays Enoch and Elijah with a flame of fire from his mouth. But three and a half days later, the Mid-Tribulation resurrection occurs and Enoch and Elijah are raised and raptured back to heaven to join the Bride for the Bema Bonfire following the Reception. For the next 3½ years, during the Great Tribulation, the Tribulation Proper, the Time of Jacob's Sorrow, the quality of the believers' works is tested in the Bema Bonfire. Even the works of Enoch and Elijah are tested. Only those whose works endure the bonfire will receive crowns and jewels in exchange for their quality work. Then, just at the close of the seven years, the Lamb will stand up from His Bema Judgment Seat and declare war on planet

earth, recruiting His newlywed Bride along with Enoch and Elijah as military accomplices to join Him in the conquest to which they merrily agree.

The so-called “First Resurrection” is really the third great resurrection (the Pre-Tribulational rapture being the first and the Mid-Tribulational rapture being the second). It is predicted to come at the end of the Great Tribulation just as the Lamb and His new Wife are descending on heavenly, white steeds to do battle in the Valley of Megiddo. In transit from heaven to earth, the Lamb decides he wants more recruits for the battle and he resurrects those martyred during the Tribulation and raptures those who remain alive of the 144,000 Jewish evangelizers and the Gentile remnant who, in turn, join His troops for the Battle of Armageddon. A horrific blood-bath ensues, making the *Guinness Book of World Records*, with bridle-deep rivers of clotting blood oozing in the Valley of Megiddo, turning it into a fertile plain for the astounding agricultural produce of the Millenium. The Victory won, the Lamb descends on Mount Olivet, splitting it in twain to create the great Valley of Decision for the separating of the sheep and the goats in order to inaugurate the Millennial Reign. The Lamb, His Wife, and the raptured 144,000 and Tribulational martyrs take their seats in the Valley of Decision, surrounded by the ranks of the angelic hosts in order to carry out the Pre-Millennial Judgment of Purification to usher in the Lord’s Millenium of peace, prosperity, and Temple ritual-purity.

The Word of God vividly describes this First Resurrection in Revelations 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 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 lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be

priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

The Millennial Reign of Christ on the earth is in view here. This passage tells us that the souls of those martyred during the Great Tribulation are going to be alive, enthroned, and vested with authority to judge the nations, reigning with Christ for a 1,000 years. So 144,000 of these thrones will belong to the 144,000 Jews who were sealed as witnesses of the Lamb during the Tribulation. In addition to the 144,000, we must include the countless multitudes envisioned in Revelations 7:9-14 who came out of the Great Tribulation. Now that's a lot of thrones, but I am convinced that these thrones are amazingly comfortable being made on the angelic production line of heaven. A thousand years is a long time to remain seated. The royal authority promised to the Post-Tribulationally raptured in chapter 20 is the same thing promised in Revelations 2:26-27:

And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

Now when exactly Christ receives this authority from the Father is not clear. What seems to be happening here is that John, being in the Spirit on the Lord's Day or, rather, the Day of the LORD, is actually hearing the words, not of the First-Century-A.D.-ascended-Jesus, but of the Post-Tribulationally-returned-Jesus to whom Father Jehovah has just delivered the Millennial Kingdom. How else could a believer rule with a rod of iron unless Christ himself had already received this prerogative from Jehovah as he states here?

So that kind of authority over the nations will not be available to believers until the inauguration of the Millennial Reign. John the Revelator calls this thousand-year living and reigning with Christ the "First Resurrection" and says that those who participate in it are exempt from the Second Death which is the Lake of Fire. During this time, those who participate in the First Resurrection reign as kings and serve as priests, not only of God, but also of Christ.

Now John the Revelator tells us in Revelations 1:6 that Jesus has already “made us kings and priests unto God and his Father,” but apparently, during the Millenium, those who partake in the First Resurrection are going to be priests not only to the Father, but also to Christ as stated in Revelations 20:6. So what is the difference between being a priest only to the Father, as we are now, and a priest of both the Father and the Son as some will be during the Millennial Reign? Well, I believe that currently we are priests unto the Father alone because we, together with the Holy Spirit, are the restraining force currently holding back the just wrath of Jehovah God by preventing the revelation of Antichrist, the Man of Sin, as stated in II Thessalonians 2:7. Nevertheless, during the Millennial Kingdom, those who participate in the Post-Tribulational First Resurrection immediately preceding the Millennial Reign will be Priests of both the Father and the Son because they will resume the restraining function of holding back the wrath of the Father while also channeling the abundant life of the Son which will result in the unprecedented peace and prosperity of the thousand-year Kingdom of the Son.

During this thousand years Satan is bound and thrown into the bottomless pit. You see, there’s an authority that comes with the First Resurrection that doesn’t necessarily come with just any resurrection. The First Resurrection gives a spiritual authority over Satan to bind him for 1,000 years. You see the goods of the Millenium cannot be plundered unless Satan is first bound. That’s what Jesus was talking about when he said, “But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.”⁵ You see how the First Resurrection gives authority over the Strong Man, Satan? It also gives kingly authority to judge and rule the nations with a rod of iron and wield the nuclear judgment of God on disobedient nations during the Millenium.⁶ It also gives a priestly authority to ward off Divine Judgment and channel Divine Blessing. But that First-Resurrection authority has an expiration date. It ends after 1,000 years when Satan is loosed, the nations join Satan in rebellion against God, and the Wrath of God culminates in the Great White Throne Judgment.

So the Word clearly states that those beheaded during the Great Tribulation, the latter half of the Seven-Year Tribulation period will be resurrected in the “First Resurrection” at the end of the Tribulation and will

reign with Christ during the Millenium. But what about us believers who will have been raptured prior to the Seven-Year Tribulation period? What will we be doing during the Millenium?

Well, I believe that we too will be part of the kingly, priestly restraining force during the Millenium even though the Word doesn't specifically mention us as such. You see, my Beloved, there is some way in which we share in the authority of the First Resurrection even though we will have already been raptured prior to it before the Tribulation even starts. I can't lay it out for you chapter and verse, but I know my God, hallelujah, and my God would not withhold that kind of authority from us who are the first to believe. We can't be too technical or hung up on the words or otherwise when we hear the words "First Resurrection" we will think of the first case of eternal, bodily resurrection—the Resurrection of Christ with Whom we can be co-resurrected in baptism if we'll just release the force of our faith based on the Word. But Revelations is very clear. The term "First Resurrection" does not refer to that First of Resurrections but rather to the Post-Tribulational Resurrectional Rapture which immediately precedes the Millennial Reign.

Now the Kingdom of the Son has an expiration date. Now I know that Luke 1:33 states that "of his kingdom there will be no end," but my Bible also tells me in First Corinthians 15:24 that there's coming a day at the very end of days when the Son "shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father." When does this occur? It occurs at the end of the Millennial Reign which lasts exactly 1,000 years to the very day. Paul tells us that the Son forfeits his Millennial Kingdom, giving this great gift back to the Father, after he has subdued the last enemy which is Death. Now that occurs at the Second Resurrection when all of those mortals living during the Millenium are resurrected along with all of the unsaved from all ages.

Now you may be surprised to hear that there are mortals living during the Millenium, but, yes, the Word says there are in Isaiah 65:20:

There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner [being] an hundred years old shall be accursed.

You see, Brother, Death must reign throughout the Millennial Reign of Christ until He finally subdues it 1,000 years after His Bodily return to Planet Earth. It will be difficult for us believers, raptured either in the Pre-Trib, Mid-Trib, or Post-Trib resurrections to sit back and watch as people continue to die during the Millennial Reign of Christ. We will often ask, *Why?* But, I'm sure that Jesus will respond to our questionings with a wink, saying, "It's not over yet, Folks!" One thing I've learned studying prophecy, it's a whole different view to look at things from God's perspective.

You see, during the Millennial Reign the Last Day Proper will still be in the future. The final day of the one thousand years will be the Blessed Hope of faithful believers who die during the Millennium just as the Pre-Trib Rapture was our Blessed Hope. At that point in time, all of the rest of the dead who were not raised at Christ's resurrection⁷ or at the Pre-Trib, Mid-Trib, or Post-Trib Resurrectional Raptures will be raised at the end of the Millennial Reign. Then, when Death has been utterly defeated and the animal sacrifices in the Millennial Temple finally abolished, the Son will deliver the Kingdom up to Father Jehovah who will sit on His Great White Throne and judge those resurrected at this time in the Second or Post-Millennial Resurrection. Jesus will stand on the sidelines and occasionally blow his whistle and intervene for a true believer who died during the Millennium, but the vast majority of those judged at the Great White will be unbelievers, like Ishmael and Ahab, destined to burn for all eternity along with Satan and his demonic hordes in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. Father Jehovah will judge them while the Son turns a blind eye, unwilling to intercede for their salvation in order that God may be glorified in their eternal perdition, to Whom be all glory, honor, and praise forever and ever. Amen. 

¹ *Parousia* is the Greek word used for Christ's coming or His appearance or revelation, either secretly to the Church alone, or to Enoch and Elijah alone, or to the whole world at the End of the Tribulation. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Tim 4:8).

² I Cor 15:29.

³ Matt 10:8; Jn 14:12.

⁴ I've been requesting a copy of the video tape of this resurrectional incident ever since I heard about it last year, but so far, Brother Hinn hasn't responded to my request.

⁵ Matt 12:28-29.

⁶ “And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth” (Zech 14:12).

⁷ Matt 27:52-53.