

8-13-2023 Sunday Sermon Message

Devotional of the Week: Psalm 91:1-16

Text: Revelation 20:4-6

Title: **The Blessing of the Rapture (First Resurrection)**
Reigning with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom

The Bible says that there is first and second resurrection. The first resurrection is the glorious resurrection, but the second one is the shameful and cursed resurrection.

Jesus said of this:

" And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."(John 5:29)

The prophet Daniel also prophesied about the resurrection:

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."(Daniel 12:2)

In order to understand the glorious first resurrection and the shameful and damn resurrection, we need to look closely look into the words of God.

After the first man, Adam, sinned, and brought sin, curse, and death into the world because of sin. The Apostle Paul testified:

" Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"(Romans 5:12)

The Apostle John testified against those who deceive themselves by saying that they have no sin in them saying they are not sinners:

" If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. "(1 John 1:8)

Knowing that all the people of the world were born sinners and were cursed to die because of the sin of the first man (Romans 6:23), God went to the serpent (the devil) that caused the first man to die immediately after he sinned, and told him of His plan to bring back to life for those who believe in Christ, God's only begotten Son:

" Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."(Genesis 3:14-15)

God chose Abraham and gave his grandson Jacob a new name, Israel, and chose his descendants to be his women (**Isaiah 54:5, " For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called."**) He planned to send His only begotten Son into the world in the name of Jesus to be sacrifice for the sin, curse, and death that stained the whole world because of Adam, and to take away the sins of the world through His blood. John the Baptist proclaimed to the world that Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God which take away the sin of the world (John 1:29)

God planned to give those who are raptured three times an immortal, incorruptible body to reign with His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in His kingdom forever and ever.

The first to participate in the rapture were the Old Testament Saints. The Old Testament saints, who were under the law forgiven of the sins of the flesh by the blood of beasts, and whose flesh died and were in the bosom of Abraham in the earth, when the Lord Jesus Christ shed His blood and died, and resurrected on the third day, they came out of the graves and entered the holy city, clothed with immortal and incorruptible bodies, and were seen and raptured into heaven. They had waited a long time in an earthly paradise until the Lord Jesus Christ shed His blood. The Apostle Matthew, who saw this, testified of this fact. The Apostle Paul He testified of these **as the First fruits** (1 Corinthians 15:23):

" Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."(Matthew 27:50-53)

After the Lord Jesus Christ shed His blood, died, and resurrected to take away the sins of the world, we believed in His death, burial, and resurrection, and were saved (1 Corinthians 15:1-3). The Apostle Paul testified of the New Testament saints who participated in the second rapture:

" But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death,

by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."(1 Corinthians 15:20-23)

The Apostle Paul also testified of those who raptured for the third and final time, participating in the first resurrection:

"Then the end will come, when the Lord will abolish all principalities, and all powers and powers, and dedicate his kingdom to God, the Father.(1 Corinthians 15:24)

The Apostle John participated in the rapture for the third and final time, bearing witness of those who reigned with Christ for a thousand years:

" 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."(Revelation 20:4)

I These are the tribulation saints who were martyred in the Tribulation and participated in the first resurrection to be raptured. The Apostle John testified of these beforehand:

" And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."(Revelation 6:9-11)

Second rapture, regarding the New Testament saints who would participate in the first resurrection, the Apostle Paul testified that they the Christ's. When he wrote to the Galatians, he testified of those who are Christ's:

" But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."(Galatians 5:22-24)

The one who is Christ's, of the Apostle Paul testified, is what Jesus said, a Christian who is born again of water and of the Spirit, and in whom the kingdom of God is established. Therefore, these are spiritual man who does not follow the flesh, but the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul testified of the kingdom of God:

" For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."(Romans 14:17-19).

The Apostle John bore witness to the resurrection of the dead, who are resurrected to be not glorious and damned. These are the souls of those who lived and died before the law and who will stand before the White Throne according to the works of their conscience, and those who did not keep the law in the time of the law and therefore did not enter into the bosom of Abraham, and those who did not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in the present age and whose souls fell into hell to be judged by falling into the lake of fire. The Apostle John testified of what he saw:

" And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 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. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."(Revelation 20:11-15)

Whosoever is born in the Age of Grace is blessed to be saved by grace through faith and receive eternal life and participate in the first resurrection if he believes in and receives the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our sins according to the scriptures, and buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Therefore, all men must receive this blessing to be raptured before the Great Tribulation comes to pass.

Amen! Hallelujah!