

April 1, 2018 - Revelation 20: 1- 6 - The First Resurrection

Introduction:

Simon Greenleaf was the greatest legal mind this country has ever produced (1783-1853). He was the famous Royal Professor of Law at Harvard University.

H.W. Knott says of his great authority in jurisprudence, "...Greenleaf is to be ascribed the rise of the Harvard Law School to its eminent position among the legal schools of the United States. Greenleaf produced a famous work entitled "A Treatise on the law of Evidence; a three volume work which is still considered the greatest single authority on evidence in the entire literature of law and is used throughout the entire world.

While still professor at Harvard he applied these rules of evidence to the resurrection of Christ and the testimony of his disciples. He published his book entitled " An examination of the testimony of the four evangelist by the Rules of Evidence administered in the Courts of Justice. The bottom line was their testimony must be true and so was the resurrection according to the legal "Bible" of our times. This book has been reproduced by Baker House books in 1965 from its original writing. More evidence exists for Christ Resurrection than there is that Alexander the Great was an emperor. We have far more historical proof of the resurrection than we do thousands of pieces of information which we routinely accept as fact every single day.

Just as there is evident for Christ resurrection so there is Biblical assurance and hope that another resurrection shall take place. This is of all believers. You can have no part in the first Resurrection unless you have a part in Christ Resurrection. John is saying that all those who reign with Christ are included in what he calls "the first resurrection." But first ...

I The Binding of Satan vv. 1-3

1. First, it was done at the cross. Satan was defeat and by faith we have victory over him. Yet, there will be a literal binding of Satan it follows the Second Coming of our Lord. It is clearly related to that event which closes Chapter 19 (remember, there is no chapter break here at all in the original); this binding of Satan occurs after Jesus appears in visible glory. Notice Jesus did not do the binding! An angel whom Jesus sends to bind Satan did it with a great chain.

a) It indeed must be a very great angel, possibly, Michael the archangel. This angel not only binds Satan with the chain ("chain" being a metaphor for restraining him), but he throws him into the Abyss and locks and seals the door. It is not merely a binding that is in view.

First, the chain speaks of severe restraint. It is obviously not a physical chain but what it symbolizes is literal. Satan is a spiritual being and you cannot bind a spiritual being with a literal chain. The chain is a symbol of extreme restraint, a limiting of his power and ability to function. This also implies that all the evil spirits under his command will also be imprisoned. Second, he is not only bound but he is thrown into the Abyss, which pictures a total removal from the earth. Remember that, in Chapter 9, an angel came with a key to the Abyss, open it,

and out of it came a horde of demonic beings who poured onto the earth. Now Satan is cast there and sealed in so no one can open up the pit from the inside or outside.

Third, the purpose for this removal of Satan is clearly stated here: "to keep him from deceiving the nations any-more." You are well aware that this is what Satan has been doing throughout this whole church age. He has been deceiving the nations. He deceives them with lusts for power and greed. He deceives them about the true values of life. These lies have been poured into human ears from unseen and invisible powers for centuries. It will ceased at the...

II. The Millennium vv 3c-5

1. The word millennium is a Latin word that means "a thousand years." The phrase thousand years appears six times in the first seven verses of chapter 20. It is reasonable to assume this entire chapter is about literal events that will happen at Christ's second coming to earth.

2. The millennium ends as John declares he (20:3) must be loosed seems to indicate Satan must be set free for a short period of time at the close of the millennium because the people born during the millennium must be tested.

3. What reason is there for a millennium after Jesus comes back?" Here is the answer: A thousand years of peace and blessing is to demonstrate, beyond question, the fact that everyone finds hard to believe: that we belong to a fallen race, and everyone is born with a basically evil or fallen nature. No one wants to believe that! Try teaching that in public school today.

4. Satan has become the ultimate excuse of man for the evil in the world. Much of it does come from the devil, without a doubt. That is why he must be taken out of the scene before world-wide peace can come. But not all evil comes from the devil. God will impress upon humanity what Jeremiah declares so plainly, "The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" That is why everyone needs salvation. We are desperate and hopeless without it. ---Invitation.

If we do not have a Savior there is no hope for anyone because of the taint of evil within us which affects all we do. That is very hard for people to believe. God knows what goes on in your thoughts -- your heart and your motives -- there is no question but that the biblical picture of man is accurate. We are born with a fallen nature. The millennium will prove that to be true.

III The Mystery Resurrection vv. 6 & I Cor. 15:11-22, 51-58

1. **Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power...** This would clearly establish the fact that there is more than one resurrection? If you have a first, surely there must be a second. In First Corinthians 15 Paul speaks of the order of resurrection and it says of Jesus that he was "the first fruits from the dead." So the first resurrection here reaches back to include this resurrection.

2. Revelation 20:6 clearly excludes from the second death those who are part of the first resurrection, and thus implies those who participate in the second resurrection are destined for eternal death. At Jesus' coming, the dead in Christ will be resurrected, and saints who are alive at the time will be transformed. Both of these groups will then receive bodies like Jesus' resurrected body--bodies that are immortal, imperishable, glorious, and powerful.

---Thus, the first resurrection must include all the dead in Christ. It is also clear from these verses that the resurrections of the dead in Christ and the lost dead are separated by 1,000 years. Jesus distinguish between the two resurrections, even though He did not specify the time difference (see John 5:28-29 with me). Paul called it the "Mystery" resurrection

a) Why is this called a mystery? A mystery in the scriptures is a previously hidden truth now revealed by God. When Paul speaks of sleep he means death... we shall not all die! There is a generation that shall not die but shall be changed "Metalasso' to be changed where we get our words metaphorsis.

b) We note that the "corruptible" meaning our moral bodies has been changed to immoral body like that of our resurrected Lord. Heaven does not except sinful moral flesh nor our carnal things. These are left behind. That is why at the rapture all your belongings will be left where- ever you are and you will be given a resurrected body like Christ.

The glorious news is we are resurrected with our Saviour and Lord the Bride groom of the church. Those who have not excepted Christ shall be left behind. The power of His resurrection gives us a new life in the here and now and a wonderful life in the hereafter not to mention the hell on earth that we will be deliver some. The hereafter for us will be unspeakable, remember Paul's saying...I Co.2[9] **But as it is written, 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**

Conclusion:

Will your resurrection be one of joy or one of judgment? Will it be of the first or second?

Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we've been given a brand-new life and have everything to live for, including a future in heaven - and the future starts now! Because of the resurrection you can have a new identity and a new life that outshines anything in the past. That's the power of the resurrection! But there is a limit to that power. God will not force himself on anyone. Won't you decide today that you are going to let the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead have an impact on your life?