

RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

When we think “resurrection”, we immediately think of the resurrection of Jesus.

The recorded circumstances leading up to the resurrection of Jesus, surrounding its occurrence, and following this unfathomable event, are so fantastic...so remarkable...so evidentially indisputable, that it is no wonder that “it” changed the course of human history like nothing else before or since. Indeed, the whole idea of Christ being raised from the dead and being alive...at this very moment...is such an amazing aspect of our faith that it elevates the “power”, if you will, of the Christian message to a level that transcends any tenet of any other major religious belief system. And its effect, the great hope that it gives to “whosoever believes” is that, as stated by W.J. Sparrow-Simpson, a contributor to the Oxford Library of Practical Theology, ”The Resurrection of Jesus is the promise of our Resurrection also.”

It is important, however, to also consider the general concept of resurrection; the wider use and additional examples of it throughout the Bible. Keep in mind, however, that at the times of their occurrence they impacted a relatively few, and could essentially be categorized as “healings” when compared to the “ETERNAL SHIFT” that occurred as the result of the resurrection of Jesus.

- Bodily resurrections occurred in the Old Testament
- The resurrection of Jesus was foretold/prophesied – Old Testament & New Testament
- Jesus performed resurrections in the presence of His followers
- Predictions of believers’ resurrection and nonbelievers’ resurrection
- Jesus was raised from the dead

A. RESURRECTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. I Kings 17:21, 22 ²¹Then he (*Elijah*) stretched himself upon the child three times, and called to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray You, let this child's life return to him." ²²The LORD heard the voice of Elijah, and the life of the child returned to him and he revived.
2. II Kings 4:32-35 ³²When Elisha came into the house, behold the lad was dead and laid on his bed. ³³So he entered and shut the door behind them both and prayed to the LORD. ³⁴And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth and his eyes on his eyes and his hands on his hands, and he stretched himself on him; and the flesh of the child became warm. ³⁵Then he returned and walked in the house once back and forth, and went up and stretched himself on him; and the lad sneezed seven times and the lad opened his eyes.

B. PROPHECY OF CHRIST’S RESURRECTION

Old Testament -

1. Ps. 16: 9, 10 ⁹Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices;
My flesh also will dwell securely.
¹⁰For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol;
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

2. Hosea 6: 2 ²"He will revive us after two days;
He will raise us up on the third day,
That we may live before Him.
³"So let us know, let us press on to know the LORD
His going forth is as certain as the dawn;
And He will come to us like the rain,
Like the spring rain watering the earth."

New Testament -

1. Matt. 16:21 ²¹From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.
2. John 2:19-22 ¹⁹Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."
²⁰The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" ²¹But He was speaking of the temple of His body.
3. Matt. 17:22, 23 ²²And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men; ²³and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day."
4. Luke 9:22 ²²saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day."
5. Luke 18:31-34 ³¹Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. ³³and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again."

C. JESUS RAISED PEOPLE FROM THE DEAD

1. Matt. 9:24-26 ²⁴He said, "Leave; for the girl has not died, but is asleep." And they began laughing at Him. ²⁵But when the crowd had been sent out, He entered and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶This news spread throughout all that land.
2. Luke 7:14, 15 ¹⁴And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!" ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother.
3. John 11:43, 44 ⁴³When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." ⁴⁴The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

D. PREDICTIONS OF THE FUTURE RESURRECTION OF BELIEVERS AND NONBELIEVERS

1. Dan. 12:2, 13 ²"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. ¹³"But as for you, go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age."
2. Is. 26:19 ¹⁹Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.
3. John 5:28, 29 ²⁸"Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, ²⁹and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.
4. I Cor. 15:21-23 ²¹For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. ²²For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. ²³But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

E. JESUS WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

What gives us such confidence to believe that Jesus rose from the dead? On second thought, are we really that confident about it, or is it just that we are weak people that need something spiritual, something "beyond" us to use as a crutch to believe in and to help make us feel good about the question of the ages, "Why are we here, and where are we going"?

Messianic Prophecy	Odds Without God
1. Jesus would be a descendant of David.	10^4 (1 in 10,000)
2. Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.	10^5 (1 in 100,000)
3. Jesus would be a miracle worker.	10^5 (1 in 100,000)
4. Jesus would present Himself as a King riding on a donkey	10^6 (1 in 1,000,000)
5. Jesus would be betrayed by a friend for 30 pieces of silver.	10^6 (1 in 1,000,000)
6. Jesus would be crucified.	10^6 (1 in 1,000,000)
7. Jesus would first present Himself as King 173,880 days from the decree of Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem.	10^6 (1 in 1,000,000)
Total Probability (without God)	10^{38} (1 in 100 billion, billion, billion, billion)

Some theological points regarding the resurrection of Jesus

- He was sinless, therefore His body could not experience decay - Acts 13:35
- He was sinless, therefore death had no power over Him - Acts 2:24
- He had to fulfill scripture; without His resurrection, there is no salvation - I Cor. 15:17
- He was resurrected bodily; with a glorified body...never to die again Luke 24:36-40
- His resurrection declared Him firstborn of all creation, righteous, thus justified – Col. 1:15-18

1. Matt. 28:1-7, 11-15 ¹Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. ²And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. ³And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. ⁵The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. ⁶"He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. ⁷"Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you."
2. John 20:2-7 ²So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." ³So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb. ⁴The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first; ⁵and stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in. ⁶And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself.
3. John 20:10-18 ¹¹But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb; ¹²and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. ¹³And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away." ¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" (which means, Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'" ¹⁸Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and that He had said these things to her.
4. Luke 24:13-31 ¹³And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴And they were talking with each other about all these things which had taken place. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself approached and began traveling with them. ¹⁶But their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him. ¹⁷And He said to them, "What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you are walking?" And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸One of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to Him, "Are You the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days?" ¹⁹And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people, ²⁰and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to the sentence of death, and crucified Him. ²¹"But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. ²²"But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive. ²⁴"Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see." ²⁵And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶"Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" ²⁷Then beginning with Moses and with

all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. ²⁸And they approached the village where they were going, and He acted as though He were going farther. ²⁹But they urged Him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is getting toward evening, and the day is now nearly over." So He went in to stay with them. ³⁰When He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight.

5. Luke 24:36-40 ³⁶While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be to you." ³⁷But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. ³⁸And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹"See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." ⁴⁰And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.
6. John 20:24-29 ²⁴But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." ²⁶After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing." ²⁸Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."
7. I Cor. 15:6 ⁶After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;
8. I Cor. 15:7 ⁷then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles
9. Acts 7:54-58 ⁵⁴Now when they heard this, they were cut to the quick, and they began gnashing their teeth at him. ⁵⁵But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; ⁵⁶and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." ⁵⁷But they cried out with a loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse. ⁵⁸When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul.
10. I Cor. 15:8-19 ⁸and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. ¹¹Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed. ¹²Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁴and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. ¹⁵Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁷and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

CONCLUSION

²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
Rom. 3:23

²³For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Rom. 6:23

¹⁷**and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.**
I Cor. 15:17

I am of the firm opinion that the overwhelming majority of Christians came to believe in the resurrection of Jesus because it was revealed to them by the Holy Spirit through very few scriptures or maybe even through just one scripture in the Word of God, OR simply through the Holy Spirit-empowered testimony of another believer. Any one of these scenarios involving a revelation from the Holy Spirit brings about ALL the confidence we initially need to believe...and be saved. Fortunately, once we begin studying, God has also provided MANY documented reliable, definitive, and hard pieces of evidence in His Word supporting the fact of this momentous event and thus, reinforces our initial salvation belief. These additional pieces of evidence give us the often-needed strength to solidify our resolve that JESUS IS ALIVE...AND HE IS LORD.

Why did the Father resurrect His Son?

- Well, since Jesus was sinless, He couldn't REMAIN dead.
- How about if we just make it simple. We could go into all the detailed theology of why, but how about this...
- First of all, we, when reminded, are indescribably overwhelmed...brought to our knees...weep with the deepest sense of gratitude...without a doubt KNOW, that Christ's guiltless, sacrificial, substitutionary death on the cross for the remission of sin was the greatest expression of God's love in all of history.
- But three days later we received a DOUBLE PORTION; Christ's resurrection, which was the answer to an equally huge human need regarding one's ability to believe in God; the need to have a GOD WITH SKIN ON. What do you think became the disciples' enabling strength/motive/reason for "going into all the world to preach the Gospel, NO MATTER WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES???" SEEING A RESURRECTED, ALIVE IN THE FLESH, REALLY, REALLY, REAL GOD!!!
- Their eye witness account, over five hundred of them, can with complete confidence be said to give undeniable credibility and reliability to THE FACT of His resurrection. HE IS ALIVE!!!

He's Alive – Don Francisco

The gates and doors were barred
And all the windows fastened down
I spent the night in sleeplessness
And rose at every sound
Half in hopeless sorrow
And half in fear the day
Would find the soldiers breakin' through
To drag us all away

And just before the sunrise
I heard something at the wall
The gate began to rattle
A voice began to call
I hurried to the window
And looked down into the street
Expecting swords and torches
And the sound of soldiers' feet

There was no one there but Mary
So I went down to let her in
John stood there beside me
As she told us where she'd been
She said they've moved Him in the night
And none of us knows where
The stone's been rolled away
Now His body isn't there

We both ran toward the garden
Then John ran on ahead
We found the stone and the empty tomb
Just the way that Mary said
But the winding sheet they wrapped Him
in
Was just an empty shell
How or where they'd taken Him
Was more than I could tell

Something strange had happened there
But just what I didn't know
John believed a miracle
But I just turned to go
Circumstance and speculation
Couldn't lift me very high
'Cause I'd seen them crucify him
Then I saw him die

Back inside the house again
The guilt and anguish came
Everything I'd promised Him
Just added to my shame
'Cuz when at last it came to choices
I denied I knew His name
And even if He was alive
It wouldn't be the same

Suddenly the air was filled
With strange and sweet perfume
Light that came from everywhere
Drove the shadows from the room
And Jesus stood before me
With His arms held open wide
And I fell down on my knees
And I just clung to Him and cried

He raised me to my feet
And as I looked into His eyes
Love was shining out from Him
Like sunlight from the skies
Guilt in my confusion
Disappeared in sweet release
And every fear I'd ever had
Just melted into peace

He's alive! He's alive!
He's alive and I'm forgiven
Heaven's gates are open wide
He's alive! He's alive!
He's alive and I'm forgiven
Heaven's gates are open wide
He's alive! He's alive!
He's alive and I'm forgiven
Heaven's gates are open wide
He's alive! He's alive!
He's alive! He's alive!

In case you want to listen to this song again,
here's the link. ☺
<http://new.music.yahoo.com/don-francisco/tracks/hes-alive--639924>

