

Realized Eschatology

The Resurrection of the Dead

Introduction

1. Before we begin this morning's lesson of "The Resurrection of the Dead," I want to review briefly what Realized Eschatology or the 70 AD doctrine involves.
 - A. It begins by taking the approach that ALL prophecy has been fulfilled, including those pertaining to **the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the judgment, and the end of the world.**
 - B. Furthermore, this doctrine revises the prophecies about Christ establishing his kingdom to say that the kingdom of Old Testament prophecy was fully established at the Lord's second coming, when the dead were raised, when the world ended, and when the judgment occurred – **ALL of which occurred in 70 AD at the destruction of Jerusalem.**
2. Last week our lesson pertained to the second coming of Christ. The Realized Eschatologist believes that the second coming of Jesus happened in 70 AD and is not going to happen in the future.
 - A. This position is believed because they make the second coming of Jesus figurative instead of literal.
3. In this lesson, I am going to be noting what the Realized Eschatologist believes and what the Bible teaches concerning the resurrection of the dead.

Realized Eschatology View of the Resurrection

- 1. The 70 AD theorists believe and teach that the resurrection, about which the New Testament has much to say, has already occurred.**
 - A. It occurred in 70 AD when the Roman army destroyed the ancient city of Jerusalem. Therefore, they deny that there will be a future resurrection of the dead from the graves.**
 - B. To most Bible believers this is an unbelievable position to accept. “How can someone believe that the dead have been raised when there are so many graveyards?”**

- 2. When I first heard of this doctrine, I thought that they were talking about a bodily and literal resurrection from the dead. But this is not the case.**
 - A. The Realized Eschatologist believes that the resurrection about which Jesus and the writers of the New Testament spoke was a spiritual resurrection, not a bodily resurrection.**
 - 1) They say the body that was raised from the dead at the destruction of Jerusalem was the suppressed spiritual body of Christ, that is, the church.**
 - a) They believe that Judaism suppressed the church until 70 AD when the Romans destroyed the temple. Then the church was released from that Jewish suppression and therefore in a figurative sense was raised from the dead.**
 - B. Max King, in his book *“The Spirit of Prophecy”* in commenting on 1 Corinthians 15, which is the great resurrection chapter of the New Testament said this:**

The natural body that was sown answers to the fleshly or carnal system of Judaism in which existed prophecies, types, and patterns from which came the spiritual body designed of God. Judaism answers to the field or the world in which the good seed was sown (Matthew 13:37-38). This *natural body*, receiving its death blow at the cross and beginning then to wax old and decay (Hebrews 8:13), became a nursery or seed-body for the germination, growth, and development of the spiritual body by means of the gospel. Thus, out of the decay of Judaism arose the spiritual body of Christianity that became fully developed or resurrected by the end-time. Hence, this is the primary meaning of Paul's statement, "*It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body.*" (**SOP, P. 200**).

- 1) **After reading this statement, among many others in his book, it is hard for me to accept the conclusion of some that say this doctrine (theory), is just a series of misunderstandings.**
 - a) **No, brethren, this doctrine is a systematic effort to rewrite the scriptures!**
 - b) **The apostle Peter writes:**

2 Peter 3:16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

Who Will Come Forth From the Graves?

1. In his debate with Gus Nichols in July 1973, Max King says the church “was in the grave or the casket of Judaism (which he also calls Babylon) until the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem.”
 - A. We may have a dilemma here. If the church was born on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and was raised from the grave of Judaism in 70 AD, when did the church die?
 - 1) Would it not need to die first, before it is raised? When did it die? **The truth is, the church was not raised from the casket of Judaism in 70 AD, or at any other time.**
2. When the New Testament discusses a resurrection, it is discussing the resurrection from the grave. Both JESUS and the apostle Paul teach this. Jesus said:

John 5:28-29 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth – those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

- A. Jesus is talking about a resurrection from graves. It takes a lot of twisting of scripture to cause a misunderstanding of these verses – and that is what the 70 AD theorists have done.

B. Jesus said: “all who are in the graves will come forth” and He says that this coming forth is a “resurrection.”

1) The Realized Eschatologist says Jesus is speaking of the grave of Judaism.

a) Max King said in his debate “I deny John 5:28 is a literal grave in the cemetery somewhere.”

b) Jesus IS NOT discussing a resurrection of the church from the grave of Judaism. Jesus is talking about literal death and a literal resurrection from literal graves.

2. The apostle Paul said:

Acts 24:15 I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that **there will be a resurrection of the dead**, both of the just and the unjust.

A. Paul, like Jesus, was talking about people, good and bad, resurrecting from the graves.

1) Most assuredly there remains a future resurrection of the dead that is not spiritual but literal.

Paul’s Teaching of a Bodily Resurrection

Examining the text of 1 Corinthians 15:

1. This chapter begins in verses 1-8 by showing that the facts of the gospel are critical. They consist of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ – which he says must be believed.

2. Verses 17-18: Notice that Paul does not say “if Christ is not risen,” then the church has perished. No! He states that without the bodily resurrection of Christ there is no hope for those who have died in Christ.

3. **Verse 20: Firstfruits guaranteed a harvest. The resurrection of Jesus guarantees that there will be a future resurrection.**
4. **Verses 21-23: When Jesus returns, the dead (all the dead), will be raised from their graves.**
 - A. **Paul goes on to present the consequences of denying the resurrection of the dead (verses 29-34).**
 - B. **Next, he anticipates objections to the bodily resurrection (verses 35-50).**
 - C. **Finally, he praises the victory over death God gives us in Christ through the resurrection (verses 51-58).**
 - 1) **The false doctrine of Realized Eschatology denies that this will happen. Those who believe this doctrine do not believe that there will be a future resurrection from the graves.**
5. **All those who believe that the resurrection is past, which the Realized Eschatologist believes, places them in the same company of two men in the Bible.**

2 Timothy 2:16-18 But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.

The Gospel of Christ Teaches That We Will Be Raised!

1. Jesus said:

John 6:40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

A. Jesus said the resurrection will take place at the last day.

John 6:44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

A. Again, we read that the resurrection will take place at the last day.

- 1) Remember, that the doctrine of Realized Eschatology says that Jesus is discussing the resurrection of the dead church from the grave of Judaism, and that the last day is September 70 AD.
- 2) Also, this doctrine says that no literal graves were opened and no physical bodies were raised at that time, just the dead church from the casket of Judaism.

John 6:54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

A. Jesus is speaking of individuals literally being raised from the dead. He isn't discussing a resurrection of a cause.

- 1) This resurrection will occur at the last day.

2. According to Jesus, the last day, the day the dead will be raised, is the day of judgment.

John 12:48 He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him – **the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.**

A. How did those who lived during the lifetime of Jesus understand these words? How did those who walked and talked with Jesus understand the resurrection and the last day?

1) If Jesus used “resurrection” to mean the resurrection of a dead church from the grave of Israel and if He used the “last day” to mean the last day of Jerusalem in 70 AD, then those closely associated with Him would have a full and complete understanding of it.

a) But that was not the case!

3. Martha understood what the resurrection was.

A. In John 11, Jesus returned to Bethany upon the death of his good friend Lazarus. Notice what He said to Martha:

John 11:23 "Your brother will rise again."

B. How did Martha understand these words of Jesus?

1) Was she affected by a future type of resurrection in 70 AD that is now taught by Realized Eschatologists?

a) Absolutely not! She understood exactly what Jesus meant when He told her *“your brother will rise again.”*

John 11:24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

- C. Martha understood Jesus to mean that Lazarus would be raised in the resurrection at the last day.**
- 1) She had no knowledge of a resurrected dead church from the grave of Judaism.**
 - 2) All she knew and understood was that her dead brother, Lazarus, would “rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”**
 - a) Would this not have been the right time for Jesus to correct her ignorance about the resurrection and the destruction of Jerusalem?**
- D. You see, Martha got it right – she truly understood what Jesus meant by the resurrection.**

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, **though he may die, he shall live.**

Conclusion

- 1. Faithful Christians have so much to look forward to.**
- 2. We can look forward to the resurrection in the last day to be with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ eternally.**
- 3. The apostle Paul assures us of our hope of immortal glory.**
2 Corinthians 5:1-8

