

The Resurrection of Christ and the History of Redemption

David W. Chapman, Covenant Theology

Intro. — the lack of theological reflection on the resurrection in contemporary Protestant/Evangelical theology

I. Historical Context

A. Resurrection in the OT

1. Resuscitations and Assumption in the OT

Elijah and the widow's son (1 Kings 17:17-24; cf. Heb 11:35)

Assumptions of Enoch (Gen 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11-12)

2. "Resurrection" of national Israel from exile

Hosea 6:1-3; 13:14; Ezek 37:1-14

3. Individual life after death pictured (in poetry)

1 Sam 2:6 (cf. Deut 32:39)

Job 14:14; 19:25-27

Ps 16:10; 49:15; (both could refer to avoidance of death; also cf. Ps 73:24)

Isa 25:8; 26:19

Dan 12:1-3, 13

4. Texts Christians understood of the resurrection of the Messiah

Isa 53:10-12; Ps 16:10; 22:19ff.; 49:15 (cf. Acts 2:31ff.; 13:32ff.; Heb 11:19; 1 Pet 1:11)

“And so, having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to take place; that the Christ was to suffer, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He should be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.” (Acts 26:22-23)

B. Resurrection in Second Temple Judaism

1. Diversity of views

Sadducees vs. Pharisees (Matt 22:23; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27; Acts 23:6-8; 24:14-15; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.14-16)

2. Clear evidence of belief in resurrection among some

2 Macc 7:10-14, 23, 29; 14:46; 4 Ezra (= 2 Esdras) 7:32-43

C. Resurrection in Jesus' ministry

1. Taught resurrection of the dead

e.g. Matt 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40

2. Raised others from the dead (e.g., Matt 11:5)

Widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:11-17)

Jairus' Daughter (Mark 5:21-24, 35-43; Matt 9:18-19, 23-26; Luke 8:40-42, 49-56)

Lazarus (John 11; also in chpt. 12)

also cf. Matt 27:52-53

II. The Intention of Jesus and the Resurrection

A. Passion/Resurrection Predictions in the Synoptics

Matt 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22

Matt 17:22-23; Mark 9:31

Matt 20:18-19; Mark 10:33-34; Luke 18:31-33

Matt 26:31-32; Mark 14:27-28

B. Other Resurrection Predictions in the Synoptics

Sign of Jonah (Matt 12:39-40)

After the Transfiguration (Matt 17:9; Mark 9:9-10)

Pharisees remember Jesus' own prediction (Matt 27:63)

Jesus says this prediction was based on the OT (Luke 24:45-46)

C. John and the Resurrection

"Destroy this temple" (John 2:19-22; cf. Matt 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29; Acts 6:14)

"I am the Resurrection" John 11:1-44

III. The Gospel Accounts of the Resurrection

A. Mark — a short, but potent, account (Mark 16; cf. Passion/Resurrection predictions above)

B. Matthew — the authority of the Son of Man (28:18; 26:64-65; cf. 27:41-44)

C. Luke — a prophesied redemptive event leading to the ascension and Pentecost (24:26, 46; 24:44-53; Acts 1:1-11)

D. John — the one who is the resurrection makes the doubters believe and reinstates Peter (11:4, 14-15, 25-27, 41-46; 20:19-31; 21:1-23)

IV. Aside: Historicity and the Resurrection

- A. *You* should be prepared to defend the resurrection
- B. First Century believers were not dupes
 1. They understood the stakes if not historically true (1 Cor 15:12-19, 32)
 2. They understood that others rejected the evidence (Matt 28:11-15)
 3. They knew of those who doubted (Matt 28:17; John 20:24-29)
 4. They presented testimony evidence (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-29; Acts 1:3; 10:40-41; 13:30-31; 1 Cor 15:3ff.)
 5. They were aware of the opposition they would face in proclaiming Jesus' resurrection (Acts 4:2; 5:29-33; 17:18, 32; 23:6-8; 24:20-21; 26:22-23)
- C. Alternate theories

The banes of these theories: (1) the detail of Jesus' death in the Gospels; (2) the detail of the resurrection accounts in the Gospels; (3) the willingness of early Christians to die for this belief

V. Resurrection outside the Gospels

- A. The Necessity of Resurrection in the Apostle Paul

1 Cor 15 (also e.g., Rom 1:3-4; 10:9; 2 Tim 2:8)
- B. Resurrection in the Proclamation of the Early Church (e.g., Acts 1:22; 2:24-36; 3:15, 20-21, 26; 4:10, 33; 17:31; Heb 6:2; 1 Pet 1:3; 3:18)

VI. Some Theological Implications of Jesus' Resurrection

- A. Christ's resurrection is proof of his status as Son of God (Rom 1:4).
- B. Jesus' resurrection indicates the power of God (Eph 1:20), a power which even avails to believers (cf. 2 Cor 1:9).
- C. Jesus' resurrection provides the basis for his exaltation to the right hand of God and the ministries Jesus performs in the Father's presence (e.g., Rom 8:34).
- D. Belief in Jesus' resurrection is necessary to salvation (Rom 10:9) and hence is an inherent part of the Gospel (1 Cor 15:4-8; 2 Tim 2:8).

- E. Jesus' resurrection is the basis for the believer being born again (1 Pet 1:3) which provides the context for Christian hope.
- F. Jesus' resurrection provides salvation (1 Pet 1:3; 3:21; Col 2:13) and even justification (Rom 4:24-25).
- G. Believers are resurrected with Christ (Col 2:12), and thus they are released from slavery to sin in order to bear fruit (Rom 6:4-11; 7:4; cf. Col. 3:1ff.); they also (in some mysterious way) are already seated with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph 2:6).
- H. Jesus' resurrection is the basis for the resurrection of believers (John 11:25-26; Acts 4:2; Rom 8:11; 1 Cor 6:14; 15:20-23; 2 Cor 4:14).
- I. Jesus' resurrection illustrates what the "spiritual bodies" will be like in the resurrection of believers (1 Cor 15:42-49).

VII. The Resurrection of Believers (e.g., John 5:28-29; 6:40ff.; also Matt 22:30ff./Mark 12:26//Luke 20:37; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor 15; Phil 3:11; 2 Tim 2:18)

Conclusion