Easter 2023

**THE FIRST RESURRECTION OR THE SECOND DEATH**

**FUNNY – Trying to read the specs on the trailer tires.**

**JESUS LOVES YOU… AND HE’S HERE TODAY TO HELP YOU… IF YOU’LL OPEN YOUR HEART TO HIM.**

**MAY GOD OPEN YOUR EYES TO THE LOVE AND SALVATION OF JESUS!**

**WHAT IS EASTER ABOUT? … IT’S ABOUT THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS.**

**AND WHY IS THAT SO IMPORTANT?**

**Romans 3:23 (NKJV)** All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

**Romans 6:23 (NKJV)** For the wages of sin is death.

**THIS DEATH DOESN’T ONLY MEAN PHYSICALLY DYING… IT MEANS ETERNAL DEATH, SEPARATED FROM GOD AND ALL GOODNESS… I’LL SHOW YOU THAT IN A FEW MINUTES.**

**1 Corinthians 15:3 (NLT)** Christ died **for our sins**.

**Isaiah 53:5–6 (CSB)** He was pierced because of our rebellion, crushed because of our iniquities; punishment for our peace was on him, and we are healed by his wounds. **6** We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished him for the iniquity of us all.

**IF JESUS HADN’T PAID THE PENALTY FOR OUR SINS, NO HUMAN BEING COULD BE FORGIVEN.**

**AND IF JESUS WAS NOT RAISED FROM THE DEAD, THE WORLD’S ONLY SAVIOR WOULD STILL BE DEAD.**

**1 Corinthians 15:17 (NLT)** If Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.

**IS THAT BAD? HERE’S SOMETHING EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW…**

**THINGS WILL NOT ALWAYS BE AS THEY ARE NOW… JESUS IS COMING AGAIN SOON –– AND HIS SECOND COMING WILL BE VERY DIFFERENT FROM HIS FIRST.**

**ULTIMATELY, EACH OF US HAVE TWO OPTIONS… 1) THE FIRST RESURRECTION… OR 2) THE SECOND DEATH. THOSE ARE THE ONLY TWO OPTIONS.**

**HOW DO WE KNOW THAT? BECAUSE THE BIBLE TELLS US WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE.**

**AMONG OTHER PLACES IN THE BIBLE, GOD REVEALED THE FUTURE TO THE APOSTLE JOHN IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION… LET’S READ A FEW THINGS THAT GOD SHOWED JOHN…**

**Revelation 1:10–11 (NLT)** It was the Lord’s Day, and I was worshiping in the Spirit. Suddenly, I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet blast. **11** It said, “Write in a book everything you see, and send it to the seven churches in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”

**Revelation 4:1 (NLT)** Then as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, “Come up here, and I will show you **what must happen after this**.”

**SKIP FORWARD TO WHAT GOD SHOWED JOHN ABOUT THE END OF THE AGE**

**Revelation 20:11–15 (NLT)** I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. **12** I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God’s throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. **13** The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. **14** Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. **This lake of fire is THE SECOND DEATH**. **15** And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.

**THE SECOND DEATH IS WHEN SINFUL—UNSAVED PEOPLE ARE RESURRECTED… JUDGED… AND THEN THROWN INTO A PLACE CALLED THE LAKE OF FIRE FOR ETERNITY.**

**THAT’S THE SECOND RESURRECTION.**

**MY PRAYER IS THAT THIS DOES NOT HAPPEN TO ANY OF YOU, BUT THAT YOU LISTEN CLOSELY TO ME TODAY.**

**THIS WILL ONLY HAPPEN IF YOU REJECT THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD’S LOVE AND SALVATION AND, INSTEAD, BELIEVE THE DECEPTION OF SATAN, WHICH THE BIBLE SAYS MOST OF THE WORLD WILL BELIEVE.**

**AND GOD HATES THE DEVIL FOR DECEIVING THE WORLD… LET’S READ WHAT GOD SHOWED JOHN ABOUT THE DEVIL’S FUTURE…**

**Revelation 20:10 (NKJV)** The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And **they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.**

**HELL WAS NOT CREATED FOR HUMAN BEINGS… IT WAS CREATED TO PUNISH THE DEVIL.**

**ALL OF THIS WILL HAPPEN AFTER JESUS COMES BACK…**

**Matthew 25:31–33, 41 (NKJV)** “**When the Son of Man comes in His glory** **[2ND COMING]**, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. **32** All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. **33** And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. **… Verse 41** “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the **EVERLASTING FIRE prepared for the devil and his angels**:

**SOME PEOPLE SAY THESE BIBLE PROPHECIES WILL NEVER HAPPEN**

**MANY DOUBTED 1ST COMING OF JESUS THE MESSIAH**

**IN 4000 BC, GOD PROPHESIED IN GENESIS 3:15 THAT ONE DAY A WOMAN WOULD HAVE A CHILD WHO WOULD WAR WITH THE SPIRIT WHO DECEIVED MANKIND… AND THAT THOUGH IT WOULD HURT HIM… HE WOULD WIN … AND IT HAPPENED!**

**IN 1000 BC, DAVID PROPHESIED IN PSALM 22 ABOUT THINGS THAT WOULD HAPPEN—OVER 1,000 YEARS LATER—DURING JESUS’ CRUCIFIXION… THAT THEY WOULD PIERCE HIS HANDS AND HIS FEET… CAST LOTS FOR HIS CLOTHING… AND THAT HE WOULD SAY, “MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME”. … AND THEY HAPPENED!**

**IN 740 BC, THE PROPHET ISAIAH PROPHESIED IN ISAIAH 7:14 THAT THIS MESSIAH WOULD BE BORN OF A VIRGIN. … AND IN ISAIAH 53:5 THAT HE WOULD BE WOUNDED FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS… BRUISED FOR OUR INIQUITIES… AND THAT BECAUSE OF HIS STRIPES, WE WOULD BE HEALED … AND IT HAPPENED!**

**IN 735 BC, THE PROPHET MICAH PROPHESIED IN MICAH 5:2 THAT JESUS WOULD BE BORN IN A TOWN CALLED, BETHLEHEM… AND THAT THOUGH HE WAS BORN A BABY, HE WOULD BE A PERSON WHO HAD LIVED FROM ETERNITY PAST. … AND IT HAPPENED!**

**IN 520 BC, THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH PROPHESIED IN ZECHARIAH 9:9 THAT THERE WOULD BE SINGING AND SHOUTING IN JERUSALEM WHEN THEIR MESSIAH KING CAME RIDING INTO THEIR CITY ON A DONKEY. … AND IT HAPPENED!**

**ASTROPHYSICIST,**[**DR. HUGH ROSS**](https://reasons.org/team/hugh-ross) **WAS INITIALLY A SKEPTIC OF THE BIBLE… BUT DR. ROSS WAS LATER CONVINCED BY THE EVIDENCE THAT WORDS OF THE BIBLE ARE TRUSTWORTHY. HERE’S WHAT HE WRITES:**

*“Unique among all books ever written, the Bible accurately foretells specific events––in detail––many years, sometimes centuries, before they occur. Approximately 2,500 prophecies appear in the pages of the Bible, about 2,000 of which already have been fulfilled to the letter—[with] no errors. The remaining 500 or so reach into the future… Since the probability for any one of these prophecies having been fulfilled by chance averages less than one in ten (figured very conservatively), and since the prophecies are for the most part independent of one another, the odds for all these prophecies having been fulfilled by chance without error is less than one in 102000 (that is 1 with 2,000 zeros written after it)!”* –– **Dr. Hugh Ross**

**DR. PETER STONER, WHILE HE WAS PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF SCIENCE AT WESTMONT COLLEGE, GATHERED 600 MATHEMATICS STUDENTS TO MATHEMATICALLY DETERMINE THE PROBABILITY THAT ONE INDIVIDUAL COULD FULFILL THE PROPHECIES OF THE MESSIAH. WHEN THEY DID THE MATH, THEIR BEST ESTIMATE WAS THAT THE ODDS OF:**

* + **1 man fulfilling just 8** of the bible prophecies were 1 in 10 to the 17th power (1 in 10 with 17 zeroes behind it).
  + **1 man - 48 prophecies** = 1 in 10 to the 157th power. That’s one in a trillion, trillion, trillion (13 total)…makes lottery look like a sure thing.

**WHAT’S THE POINT?**

**THE POINT IS THAT IF THE MANY PROPHECIES OF JESUS’ FIRST COMING PROVED TO BE TRUE… ALONG WITH ALL OF THE OTHERS OF THE 2,000 FULFILLED PROPHECIES… THEN THERE SHOULD BE NO DOUBT THAT JESUS’ SECOND COMING WILL HAPPEN AS WELL… INCLUDING THE JUDGMENT… AND THE SECOND DEATH.**

**WELL, IS THERE ANY WAY TO AVOID THE SECOND DEATH? OH YES, BUT THERE’S ONLY ONE.**

**AND THAT’S WHY IT’S CALLED THE GOSPEL… THE GOOD NEWS!**

**John 3:16 (NIV)** For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

**John 14:6 (NKJV)** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

**JESUS MADE A WAY FOR EVERY HUMAN BEING TO BE PART OF SOMETHING CALLED, THE FIRST RESURRECTION.**

**Revelation 20:6 (NKJV)** Blessed and holy is he who has part in **THE FIRST RESURRECTION**. Over such **THE SECOND DEATH** has no power.

**YOU SEE… JESUS’ RESURRECTION PROVIDED EVERY HUMAN BEING WITH AN EXTREME-CONSEQUENCE-DO-OR-DIE-LIFE-AND-DEATH OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE A RESURRECTION OF THEIR OWN… A RESURRECTION THAT RESCUES THEM—ONCE AND FOR ALL—FROM THE SECOND DEATH. IT’S CALLED THE FIRST RESURRECTION.**

**SO WHAT IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION?**

**1 Thessalonians 4:13–17 (NLT)** And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. **14** For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died. **15** We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. **16** For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, **THE BELIEVERS who have died will rise from their graves**. **17** Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.

**1 Corinthians 15:51–53 (NLT)** Let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! **[Believers only]** **52** It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. **53** For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

**Matthew 25:13 (NKJV)** Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

**SO WHAT CAN WE DO?**

**John 3:3, 6–7 (NKJV)** Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” **… VERSE 6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7** Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

**YOU WERE BORN PHYSICALLY BY YOUR PARENTS, BUT NOW YOU MUST BE BORN SPIRITUALLY BY THE HOLY SPIRIT… YOU MUST BE FORGIVEN OF YOUR SINS, AND YOUR SPIRIT INSIDE MUST BE RE-BORN INTO GOD’S FAMILY.**

**Romans 10:9 (NLT)** If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

**HOW DO YOU OPENLY DECLARE THAT JESUS IS YOUR LORD?**

1. **YOU BEGIN SAYING IT WITH YOUR MOUTH AND BELIEVING IT IN YOUR HEART**
2. **JESUS COMMANDED THAT ALL NEW BELEIVERS COME AND BE BAPTIZED IN WATER TO SHOW THAT YOU UNDERSTAND HOW JESUS’ TOOK YOUR PLACE AND DIED ON THE CROSS… AND THAT YOU ACCEPT HIS DEATH AS YOUR DEATH… THEREFORE THROUGH JESUS, YOU’VE PAID FOR YOUR SINS… AND THROUGH HIS RESURRECTION, YOU ARE BORN AGAIN… AND WILL BE PART OF THE FIRST RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.**

**Mark 16:15–16 (NKJV)** [Jesus said], “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. **16** He who believes and is baptized will be saved.”

**BEING BAPTIZED IN WATER IS THE FIRST STEP TO OPENLY DECLARING THAT JESUS IS YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR.**

**PETER SAID IN…**

**Acts 2:38 (NASB 2020)** Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**BEING BAPTIZED IS LIKE A PERSONAL DRAMA ACKNOWLEDGING THAT YOU ARE ACCEPTING JESUS’ DEATH ON THE CROSS AS BEING YOUR DEATH… IF YOU WILL, GOD WILL… AND THAT GOD IS RAISING YOU UP SPIRITUALLY, AND GIVING YOU A NEW LIFE.**

**Romans 6:4 (NLT)** For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.

**EX – Jesus set me free from sexual addiction when I was a teenager… and He’s been blessing my life in many other ways since then.**

**IF YOU WANT TO BE SAVED FROM THE SECOND DEATH… AND INSTEAD, BE PART OF THE FIRST RESURRECTION… GOD IS INVITING YOU TO TAKE TWO STEPS:**

1. **TO BEGIN CONFESSING JESUS AS YOUR LORD TODAY AND BE FORGIVEN OF YOUR SINS**
2. **TO COME NEXT SUNDAY TO BE BAPTIZED IN WATER**