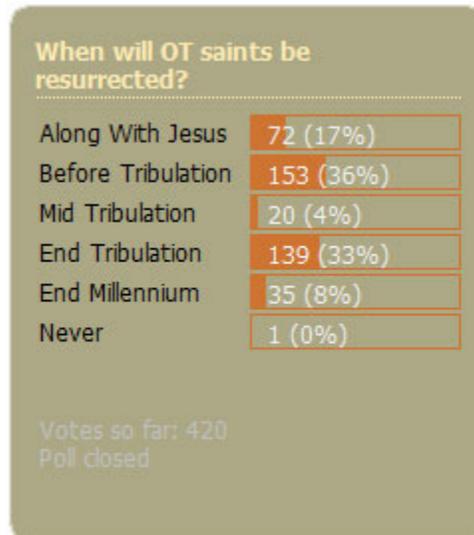


[When Will the OT Saints Be Resurrected?](#)

The question of when will the Old Testament Saints be resurrected was put to the reader in March's poll titled "When Will the OT Saints Be Resurrected?" The 420 respondents cast their vote among a number of categories. The result showed a wide range of opinions as to when they thought this resurrection would occur along God's prophetic timeline. The results are as follows:



Multiple Resurrections

Dr. David Reagan in his article ["Resurrections and Judgments"](#) explains that the Bible reveals there will be more than one resurrection.

Jesus clearly taught that there would be more than one resurrection. In [John 5:29](#) He refers to a *"resurrection of life"* and a *"resurrection of judgment."* The apostle Paul confirmed this concept in his defense before Felix when he stated that he believed the teaching of the prophets *"that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked"* ([Acts 24:15](#)).

Of course, it could be argued that the two resurrections referred to in these scriptures will occur at the same time. Thus, because they will happen simultaneously, there is, in effect, only one resurrection. However, the Scriptures establish the fact that the resurrection of the righteous will occur in stages.

In other words, the Bible does not teach one resurrection or even two resurrections in number. Rather, it teaches that there will be two resurrections in type which will be conducted in stages, resulting in several resurrections — at least four, to be specific — three for the just and one at the end of the Millennial Kingdom for the unjust.

The Resurrection of the Just

That the resurrection of the righteous will occur in stages is clearly taught in [1 Corinthians 15:20-24](#). In fact, the first stage of the resurrection of the righteous has already happened, for verse 20 says that *"Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep."*

Verses 22 and 23 go on to explain that all who have died in Christ shall be made alive, *"but each in his own order: Christ, the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming."*

The imagery of the harvest that is used in these verses is a key to understanding the first resurrection — the resurrection of the righteous.

The Harvest Imagery

In Bible times the harvest was conducted in three stages. It began with the gathering of the first fruits which were offered as a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God.

It proceeded with the general harvest. But not all was taken in this harvest. Some of the crop was left in the field to be gathered by the poor and the needy. This was called the gleanings ([Leviticus 19:9-10](#)).

Using this imagery, the Bible presents the resurrection of Jesus as the "first fruits" of the resurrection of the righteous. The gathering of the Church Age saints, living and dead, at the appearing of the Lord (the Rapture) is thus the general harvest stage of the resurrection of the righteous ([John 14:1-3](#) and [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#)).

But there is a third and final stage to this resurrection of the righteous. It is the gleanings, and it occurs at the end of the Tribulation when the Lord's Second Coming takes place. At

that time two final groups of the righteous will be resurrected: 1) the Tribulation martyrs ([Revelation 20:4](#)), and 2) the Old Testament saints ([Dan 12:2](#)).

Some people are startled by the thought that the Old Testament saints will not be resurrected until the end of the Tribulation. But keep in mind that the Rapture is a promise to the Church, and the Church only. Also, the book of Daniel makes it clear that the Old Testament saints will be resurrected at the end of the *"time of distress"* ([Daniel 12:1-2](#)).

So the first resurrection, the resurrection of the righteous, occurs in three stages, beginning with Christ, continuing with the Church at the Rapture, and culminating with the Tribulation martyrs and the Old Testament saints at the return of Jesus.