

Revelation 20:4-6 Handout

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

Q: Who are the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands?

A: Living Saints, members of the militant church, as proved by the analogy of faith and the analogy of Scripture.

Proof by the Hermeneutical Principle of the Analogy of Faith

1. If the Saints were dead saints resurrected, then the first resurrection must be physical, when the text tells us it is spiritual by good and necessary consequence.
2. If the Saints were dead saints resurrected, then it would create two classes of Saints on earth (one reigning [the resurrected Martyrs], and another not reigning [non-resurrected non-Martyrs]), which is an item of faith nowhere taught in the Scriptures.
3. If the Saints were dead saints resurrected, then it would teach only Martyrs as free from the second death, which is contrary to the Scriptures that teach ALL Saints are free from the second death.
4. If the Saints were dead saints resurrected, then it would teach another resurrection before the universal resurrection before the day of judgement, which is expressly contradictory to 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 that speaks of a resurrection of ALL then living and that died before together to meet with Christ in the clouds: “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Proof by the Hermeneutical Principle of the Analogy of Scripture

1. If the Saints are the then living Saints, called Martyrs because of their being followers of the Martyrs' faith and practice, keeping themselves from pollutions, then this is consistent with the Holy Spirit's use of the prophetic fulfillment of John the Baptist being Elijah (Malachi 4:5 with Matthew 11:14), by having the same spirit, faith, and faithful living as Elijah the prophet, as Jesus taught.
2. If the Saints are the then living Saints, called Martyrs because of their being followers of the Martyr's faith and practice, keeping themselves from pollutions, then this is consistent with the Holy Spirit's use of calling all the living saints "virgins" in Revelation 14:4, which are all living saints distinguished from the dead and whorish world. This also proves that the symbology of calling them martyrs or virgins is meant to call them so corporately, as successive in their generations.
 - a. Are we sure that Martyrs' the "souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus" must be taken as Saints then living, successive in their generations?
 - i. Yes, we know from such parallel texts in the prophets that speak about the gospel age. One example is Daniel 7:18 where the Saints are said to "take the kingdom which shall never have an end" but this cannot mean that Saints would live for the entire gospel age possessing the kingdom, but rather that the Saints' reign spiritually in Christ's spiritual kingdom, and this spiritual reign will never be interrupted, but that there will be a continual succession of a Church and of Saints, with the gates of hell never able to overcome them.
3. If the Saints are the then living Saints, called Martyrs because of their being followers of the Martyr's faith and practice, keeping themselves from pollutions, then this is consistent with the context of Revelation 20, which directly distinguishes humanity at that time in two categories: those who live and the rest, the dead.
4. If the Saints are the then living Saints, called Martyrs because of their being followers of the Martyr's faith and practice, keeping themselves from pollutions, then this is consistent with the larger context of the Apocalypse, specifically, Revelation 13:8, which allows only two categories of humanity on earth: those written in the Book of Life, and those who are not, which worship the beast, not following in the Martyr's faith and practice, nor keeping themselves from pollutions.