

any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen."

In verse 19 God gives His reply to this complaint. As always, the answer is found not in human effort or human strength but in God's power. The verse describes in clear language the resurrection of the just. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust. for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." This verse is addressed to believers; it is the answer to their disappointment in failing to win the entire world to belief in their Lord. It tells them to shout for joy. To those who have died in sin, resurrection does not promise joy but punishment and misery. The verse clearly points to the resurrection of the just and to that alone.

Complete victory will not be brought about by human effort, not even by the preaching of the Gospel, though God does indeed mightily use human efforts for His purposes of bringing many to salvation. The ultimate solution comes only from Him. Verse 19 represents the great climax to the struggles of true believers through the ages -- God's divine miracle, the bodily resurrection of the just.

God's answer to the increasing frustration of His faithful servants will bring an end to their sorrow. Freed from the weakness of the mortal body, reunited with those who had died in the Lord, they will be forever with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:17).

After the great climax of joy for believers that is described in verse 19 the next three verses seem at first to be very strange. Is the arrangement accidental? Or do these three verses show what is to come next? If verse 20 is to be taken as following the great event pictured in verse 19, it shows the resurrected saints removed for a time from the area in which God's wrath is now to be displayed.

The next two verses (26:21-27:1) picture a great climactic outpouring of God's wrath upon the ungodly world. By itself this passage could hardly be taken as proof that such an event is to follow the resurrection of true believers. Yet anyone who has reached this conclusion from other passages will surely find additional evidence of it in these verses. God's people, the risen saints, who are in the presence of the