

THE CONCEPT OF RESURRECTION AS DEFINED IN JOHN 5:25–29

Dindo Paglinawan*

Abstract

Most biblical scholars in the NT associate a spiritual view for οἱ νεκροί in John 5:25, who will be raised in the present, while they consider a literal view for οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις in John 5:28-29 who will be resurrected in the future. This paper contends for the timeline of the event of the resurrection in the lense of the ἔρχεται ὥρα concept and essential syntactical similarities of the participants of the resurrection described as οἱ νεκροί in John 5:25 and οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις in John 5:28-29. The investigation of the ἔρχεται ὥρα concept in the NT shows that purely futuristic themes like resurrection become available in the present. At the core of John's use of ἀνάστασις lies a concrete notion of resurrection, which introduces the essence and a unique timeline of the event. A bodily resurrection in both texts should not be seen as separate events, for the future has begun in the person and presence of Christ. Like in Lazarus's case, resurrection events in John's day validate the future resurrection.

Keywords: resurrection, dead, life, judgment, future, voice

INTRODUCTION

Resurrection is a significant theme in the Holy Scriptures.¹ Its basics include Jesus's resurrection as firstfruits from the dead (1 Cor

* Dindo C. Paglinawan (paglinawan_d@aiaas.edu) is a PhD candidate in New Testament Studies at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the Philippines (<https://www.aiaas.edu>) and an ordained minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

¹ Unlike other themes (e.g., sin, salvation, judgment, remnant, etc.) that pervade throughout the Bible, the idea of resurrection is not frequently dealt in the OT (see 1 Kgs 17:20–24; 2 Kgs 4:32–37; 2 Kgs 13:30, 31; and Dan 12:2).

15:20),² the future hope of all believers (1 Thess 4:13–17),³ and the immortality of life at the second coming of Jesus (1 Cor 15:51–55). John 5:25–29 is among the key passages in the NT for the concept of resurrection⁴ and is the only reference among the gospels that associates φωνή⁵ (“voice or sound”) as the means of resurrecting the dead. During the NT period, the possibility and reality of the resurrection were debated (Matt 22:23; Mark 12:18; Acts 23:8; and 1 Cor 15:12–13). However, in John 5:25–29, scholars focus more on the time (present or future) or kind (spiritual or bodily) of resurrection.

The resurrection in John 5: 25–29 apparently presents a contradiction in aspect. The raising of οἱ νεκροί “the dead” in v. 25 can be assigned in the present (in Christ’s day), while that of οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις (“those in the tombs”) in vv. 28–29 will be in the future. Both texts (v. 25 and vv. 28–29) use ἔρχεται ὥρα (“an hour is coming”) as a time indicator for the resurrection. Although there is a slight difference because the adverbial phrase καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν (“and

² “Firstfruits” is an OT agricultural concept primarily used in the context of offering to the Lord the first fruits of the ground—harvested at various times during the agricultural seasons (e.g. Exod 23:16, 19; 34:26; Lev 2:12; Num 28:26; Neh 10:35). Commenting on the firstfruits (ἀπαρχή) in 1 Cor 15:20, Ryken et al. say that Christ’s resurrection is the assurance of the believer’s resurrection in the future. Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, Tremper Longman III, Colin Duriez, Douglas Penney, and Daniel G. Reid, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), s.v. “Firstfruits.”

³ Ladd considers resurrection as “the heart of the early Christian message.” George E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 317.

⁴ An examination of the OT passages in the first note above may infer that the idea of resurrection in those passages is undeveloped, while the concept is more evident in the NT (Matt 16:21; 27:53; Mark 5:21–24; Luke 7:11–17; 14:14; John 5:25–29, 11:25; 38–44; 9:36–42; 20:7–11; 1 Cor 15: 50–55; Phil 3:10, 11; 1 Thess 4:16, 17; Rev 20:5, 6).

⁵ Of all NT passages pertaining to the resurrection, the significance of the concept of resurrection in John 5:25–29 is built on the importance of φωνή (“voice”) for the raising of the dead to life. When one hears the voice of Jesus he or she is resurrected. Of course, it is true that 1 Thess 4:16–17 and 1 Cor 15:51–55 also introduce the concept of φωνή through the imagery of the trumpet call. Nevertheless, one cannot exclude the possibility that Paul’s φωνή in relation to resurrection might have been learned from Jesus. Thus far, the φωνή concept in John is first in the gospels so long as the occurrence from the direct speech of Jesus is concerned.

now is”) is attached with ἔρχεται ὥρα in v. 25, but not with ἔρχεται ὥρα in vv. 28–29. The time indicator simply suggests a resurrection at the present (v. 25), while it stands as it will be in the future (vv. 28–29). It should be noted that resurrection in the present is unacceptable by those who believed in this hope in Jesus’s day (Matt 22:23–33; John 6:39, 54; 11:24). However, Christ’s presence brings what belongs to the last day to the present, as Borchert and Beasley-Murray argue.⁶

The reality of the resurrection in the present, in v. 25, is linked to two main views. The first view refers to the resurrection from spiritual death and the second view points to spiritual and literal death. In favor of spiritual death, Carson and Morris mention that ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν (“an hour is coming and now is”) refers to the future resurrection life of the dead now operative as life for the spiritually dead.⁷ This idea makes sense, especially if v. 25 is seen together with v. 24, which already emphasizes a passing from death to life for those who have heard and believed in the Son.⁸ In this sense, the force of spiritual resurrection in v. 24 is carried out in v.

⁶ For example, see Gerald L. Borchert, *John 1–11*, NAC 25A (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 240; George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC 36 (Dallas: Word, 2002), 76; Rodney A. Whitacre, *John*, IVPNTC 4 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 130.

⁷ Donald A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 256; and Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 281–282. See also F. F. Bruce, *New International Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 1242; Gail R. O’Day, “John,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 9:584–585; D. Moody Smith, *John*, *Harper’s Bible Commentary*, ed. James L. Mays (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 1055; Joseph S. Excell, *The Biblical Illustrator* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978), 13:456; Gerald L. Borchert, “John,” in *Mercer Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Watson E. Mills (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1995), 1056. See also Earl D. Radmacher, ed., *Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Commentary* (Nashville, Nelson, 1999), John 5:25–29; W. Hendriksen and S. J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953–2001), 1:199.

⁸ See Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, AB 29A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), 219.

25. Though the forgoing view is too specific, others tend to be general, saying that life/eternal life is envisaged in the text.⁹

On the other hand, scholars who argue for both spiritual and literal death reason that the adjective νεκροί in v. 25, which literally means “dead bodies,” is not only limited to spiritual death¹⁰ but refers to spiritual and literal death. A variation of this view is Tertullian’s idea of purely literal dead: “What is ‘the dead’ but the flesh?”¹¹ In this view, however, he is tentative and not certain. Thus, I did not categorize it as a possible third option. Unlike v. 25, the resurrection of οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις in vv. 28–29 receives no divergent views as to a bodily resurrection¹² and judgment to both good and evil, though there might have been a debate on the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked during early Judaism.¹³

Given the variegated approaches to the time and the kind of resurrection in John 5:25–29, this paper first attempts to determine the time frame of ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν in v. 25 and ἔρχεται ὥρα

⁹ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 188–189; Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 1:653.

¹⁰ Borchert, *John 1–11*, 240. Francis Nichol accepts the interpretation of a spiritual resurrection of οἱ νεκροί in v. 25, but he also mentions a partial resurrection (physical resurrection) regarding the saints who were resurrected at Jesus’s resurrection (Matt 27:52, 53). See “Is Coming, and Now Is” [John 5:25], in *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed. Francis D. Nichol, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1976–1980), 5:952. Cf. Merrill C. Tenney, *The Gospel of John*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 9:64; J. Carl Laney, ed., *Moody Gospel Commentary: John* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992), 113; William H. Van Doren, *Gospel of John: Expository and Homiletical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1981), 462.

¹¹ For example, Tertullian also seems to agree with a physical or literal resurrection of the dead in John 5:25 by saying, “What is ‘the dead’ but the flesh?” Information derived from Joel C. Elowsky, ed., *John 1–10*, ACCS 43A (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 197.

¹² For example, John C. Brunt, “Resurrection and Glorification,” in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen, Commentary Reference Series 12 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 354. For further discussion, see R. A. Muller, “Resurrection,” *ISBE* 4:145–150.

¹³ Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 655.

in vv. 28–29. Second, this paper aims to proffer an exegetically sound decision on οἱ νεκροί. Aware of the scholarly discussion on the topic, this paper explores (a) the context of Jesus’s defense in favor of his deity and equality with God (vv. 19–47)¹⁴ concerning the present resurrection of v. 25 and (b) the syntactical relationship between the οἱ νεκροί in v. 25 and οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις in vv. 28–29, in its specific unit, to decide whether the resurrections in both texts are one or different in terms of kind.

TEXT AND LIMITS OF THE PASSAGE

The Greek¹⁵ has some textual variants, dealt in footnotes no. 17–20. The variance can be classified as minor and does not obscure the passage’s theological message. Regarding the limits of the passage, scholars divide it in several ways: vv. 19–30,¹⁶ vv. 20–29,¹⁷ and vv. 25–29.¹⁸ Brown divides vv. 19–30 into two further sections and assigns vv. 19–25 to a realized eschatology and vv. 26–30 to a final eschatology;¹⁹ the previous depicts a spiritual resurrection, while the latter refers to the literal resurrection.

¹⁴ Although Brown, Keener, and others consider the context of Jesus’s claim of authority in regard to resurrection (vv. 25–29), they have not explored the topic in a wider literary context. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, 216–230; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 245–55; and Borchert, *John 1–11*, 228–48.

¹⁵ Based on Eberhard Nestle et al., *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th ed. (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012).

¹⁶ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 75; Gary M. Burge, *John*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 177; and Ernst Haenchen et al., *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 243.

¹⁷ See J. H. Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John*, 2 vols., ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1929), 242–43.

¹⁸ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 281; and Borchert, *John 1–11*, 240.

¹⁹ Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, 212–13.

Greek	Translation
25 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστίν ²⁰ ὅτε οἱ νεκροὶ ἀκούσουσιν ²¹ τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ οἱ ²² ἀκούσαντες ζήσουσιν. 26 ὡσπερ γὰρ ὁ πατήρ ἔχει ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, οὕτως καὶ τῷ υἱῷ ἔδωκεν ζωὴν ἑαυτῷ.	Truly, truly I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who will hear [it] will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so he also gave to the Son to have life in himself.
27 καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κρίνειν, ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν. 28 μὴ θαυμάζετε τοῦτο, ὅτι ἔρχεται ὥρα ἐν ἧ ἡ πάντες οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις ἀκούσουσιν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκπορεύονται οἱ τὰ ἀγαθὰ ποιήσαντες εἰς ἀνάστασιν ζωῆς, οἱ δὲ ²³ τὰ φάσκαλα πράξαντες εἰς ἀνάστασιν κρίσεως.	And he gave authority to him to make judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this, that an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice, and those who have done good will come out into the resurrection of life, but the ones who have practiced evil into the resurrection of judgment.

²⁰ In some manuscripts, καὶ νῦν ἐστίν after ἔρχεται ὥρα in v. 25 is omitted, maybe with the intention of making it flat with ἔρχεται ὥρα without καὶ νῦν ἐστίν in v. 28.

²¹ The morphology of ἀκούσουσιν in v. 25 and v. 28 is rendered in middle form (ἀκούσονται) but in subjunctive mood (ἀκούσωσιν) in some manuscripts. The reading ἀκούσουσονται is another variance of ἀκούσουσιν in v. 28. Which of these readings is the best? In this case, the argument in favor of early dating, though important, may not matter too much. Viewed together with the genitive φωνῆς, the reading of these verbs in the middle form is not likely because the subject of the verbs is not at the same time the source of φωνή.

²² The article οἱ in front of ἀκούσαντες is also omitted, which makes ἀκούσαντες function adverbially instead of having an adjectival force. Moreover, the subjunctive reading is also not possible. Based on the 103 occurrences of the conjunction ὅτε “when” at the beginning of a clause (excluding John 5:25), the indicative rather than the subjunctive mood occurs (except Luke 13:35). It should be noted, however, that ὅτε in this text is primarily an addition, which is not found in some manuscripts.

²³ The οἱ δὲ in v. 29 has alternative readings such as οἱ καὶ οἱ. The reading rendered in NA28 is the likely reading, associating the conjunction δὲ with a disjunctive force—making a contrast between those who have done good and those who

There is a good reason to treat vv. 25–29 as the limit of the passage. This pericope can be considered as one section for two reasons. First, both v. 25 and vv. 28–29 are opened and closed with the theme of resurrection—the resurrection theme resembles an inclusio. Second, the opening of v. 25 is introduced by the expression ἀμὴν ἀμὴν²⁴—indicating that the saying is worthy of one’s attention. On the other hand, vv. 28–29, the closing verses open with a catching tone through the imperative μὴ θαυμάζετε (“do not marvel”), which functions as a prohibitive imperative. The usage of μὴ θαυμάζετε does not convey that the act of raising the dead to life is trivial. On the contrary, it brings marvel as in the case of Lazarus’ resurrection (John 11:38–12:26). In this respect, the phrase μὴ θαυμάζετε in v. 28 serves as a counterpart of ἀμὴν ἀμὴν in v. 25.

LITERARY CONTEXT OF JOHN 5:25–29

The passage under study is inseparable from the narrative context of John 5. Scholars suggest various outlines in discussing the flow of the narrative. The two-fold section of Morris and Carson,²⁵ the three-fold section of Brown and Burge,²⁶ and the four-fold section of Beasley-Murray and Köstenberger²⁷ are examples of these outlines. However, this study follows a triple-section outline but in a different passage division: the healing at the pool of Bethesda on

have done evil.

²⁴ The phrase ἀμὴν ἀμὴν appears 25x in the book of John (1:51; 3:3, 5, 11; 5:19, 24, 25; 6:3, 26, 32, 47, 53; 8:51, 58; 10:1, 7; 12:24; 13:20, 21, 38; 14:12; 16:20, 23; 21:18).

²⁵ John 5:1–18, 19–47. Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 264–75. John 5:1–15, 16–47. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 240–46. See also Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the New Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1997), 223–224.

²⁶ John 5:1–15, 16:30, 31–47. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, 205–22. John 5:1–15, 16–18, 19–47. Burge, *John*, 172.

²⁷ John 5:1–9, 9–18, 19–30, 31–47. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 73–77. John 5:1–4, 5–9, 9–15, 16–47. Köstenberger, *John*, 176–83. See also Harold L. Willmington, *Willmington’s Bible Handbook* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1997), 609–10; Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Gospel of John*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 142–69.

Sabbath (vv. 1–15), Jews’ plot to kill Jesus (vv. 16–18), and the speech of Jesus in defense of his deity and equality with God (vv. 19–47). Table 1 shows the progression of events from causation to conflict and from conflict to a possible resolution, which is not achieved in chapter 5.²⁸

Table 1. *Progression of the Main Sections of John 5*

Vv.	Content of the Passage	Development of the Plot
1–15	The healing at the pool of Bethesda on Sabbath	Causation
16–18	The rage of the Jews to persecute Jesus	Conflict
19–47	The speech of Jesus in defense for his authority and equality with God	(Possible) Resolution

The first section deals with the healing of the invalid man on the Sabbath (vv. 1–15). The event occurred on a particular “feast of the Jews”²⁹ at the Pool of Bethesda, where a multitude of invalids laid, waiting to be healed (vv. 1–4). In such a place, Jesus encountered an

²⁸ The end of chapter 5 does not show that the religious leaders were convinced of the defense Jesus made in favor of his authority and equality with God. Moreover, chapter 6 cannot be considered as the continuation of the previous chapter because 6:1 introduces another setting.

²⁹ See Köstenberger, *John*, 176; Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 241. The feasts of Trumpets, Tabernacles, Pentecost, and Passover, are among others that are suggested. See B. Noack, “The Day of Pentecost in Jubilees, Qumran, and Acts,” *ASTI* 1 (1962): 72–95; J. Bowman, “The Identity and Date of the Unnamed Feast of John 5:1,” in *Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William Foxwell Albright*, ed. H. Goedicke (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), 43–56. Commenting on the difficulty of naming the unspecified feast, Borchert puts it thus: “The problem of searching for a name for the unnamed feast is that it involves filling in what is perceived to be a chronological gap in John, failing to realize the theological nature of these festival statements and the cyclical pattern that focuses these chapters on Passover.” Borchert, *John 1–11*, 230. But, for Carson (*The Gospel According to John*, 241), the unnamed feast likely serves only as a historical marker informing that Jesus was present in Jerusalem, and it has nothing to do with a thematic link if this feast is unidentified.

invalid man (ill for 38 years) whom he healed (vv. 5–7). Thus, Jesus commanded him to take up his bed and walk, and he could walk (vv. 8–9). The Jews, having seen the invalid taking his bed on the Sabbath, questioned him regarding the authority that had given him the order to do the action. The invalid referred them to Jesus's authority (vv. 10–15). At first glance, the Jews seemed to be angry at the invalid man for his unacceptable action, but their rage was directed at Jesus when they knew that he healed him on the Sabbath (cf. Matt 12:9–14; Mark 3:2–6; Luke 13:10–17; 14:1–6).³⁰

The second section deals with the hatred and plot of the Jews to kill Jesus (vv. 16–18). Now John focuses the story on Jesus and the Jews and narrates that Jesus was persecuted (ἐδίωκον) because “he was doing (ἐποίει) these things on the Sabbath” (v. 16). Here, the progressive imperfect (ἐδίωκον) describes the action of the persecution since the cause is attributed to the healing (ἐποίει) on Sabbath (also described in a progressive action in past time from John's point of view). Unlike Jesus's answer to the religious leaders about the Sabbath controversy in Mark (2:28), Jesus appealed to his relationship and prerogative with the Father (John 5:17),³¹ as he explained (ἀπεκρίνατο³² “he answered”) why he did healing on the Sabbath, of which he was persecuted. This response triggered the rage of the Jews, who began plotting to kill Jesus, for at that time, he not only healed on Sabbath but also claimed equality with God (v. 18).

In the last section, Jesus continued his claims on equality with God (vv. 19–47). He became more specific and out loud in sharing with the Father the prerogative to raise the dead and give life (vv.

³⁰ See Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 210.

³¹ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 274.

³² The verb ἀποκρίνομαι (“to answer”) in different forms appears a total of 78 times in the fourth gospel. The aorist passive form in the third person singular dominates the uses (e.g., 1:21; 2:19; 5:7; 6:7; 20:28). However, the middle form appears only twice in this chapter (5:17, 19). Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, 214, mentioned that Abbot (E. A. Abbot, *Johannine Grammar* [London: Black, 1906], § 2537) considers it as a more formal answer.

21, 24–26) and to execute judgment (vv. 22, 27). Then, he mentioned that several witnesses support his claim (vv. 31–47). Viewed in the entire narrative, Jesus’s healing of the invalid man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath (vv. 1–15) serves as the cause of the conflict between Jesus and the Jews (vv. 16–18), in which he attempted to resolve as he spoke of the prerogatives that he has with the Father and the witnesses to his equality with God (vv. 19–47).

In the truest sense, the content of Jesus’s speech does not only address the issues of the invalid’s healing on Sabbath (v. 19) and his equality with God (vv. 21–22, 26–27). A closer look at the passage suggests that even when the Jews questioned the nature of Jesus’s works and his deity, he still appealed to them to hear his word and believe in him to be saved—passing from death to life (vv. 24, 34).³³ Therefore, in the entire narrative of John 5, Jesus tried to deal with the invalid man for his physical healing and the spiritual healing of the Jews (broader audience in the narrative).

The Placement of the Passage

Like the section John 5, there is also a diversity in the subsections of vv. 19–47 as reflected in the commentaries of Morris (vv. 19–24, 25–29, 30–47),³⁴ Burge (vv. 19–30, 31–40, 41–47),³⁵ Newman and Nida (vv. 19–23, 24–29, 31–40, 41–47),³⁶ and Bryant and Krause (vv.

³³ The speech in John 5:19–47 is addressed primarily to the Jews as indicated by the use of αὐτοῖς (“them”), which points back to its antecedent οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι (“the Jews”) in v. 18. The significance of Jesus’ speech is evidenced by the use of the phrase ἀμῆν ἀμῆν (“truly truly”), a phrase which appears 25x in the book of John (1:51; 3:3, 5, 11; 5:19, 24, 25; 6:3, 26, 32, 47, 53; 8:51, 58; 10:1, 7; 12:24; 13:20, 21, 38; 14:12; 16:20, 23; 21:18). Jesus used this phrase to introduce an important saying or message. Further in this speech, Jesus made the Jews aware of their spiritual condition (vv. 38, 39, 44). Thus, ample opportunities were provided for them to believe in him and eventually be saved.

³⁴ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 275–85.

³⁵ Burge, *John*, 177–79.

³⁶ Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Gospel of John*, 53–169.

19–29, 30–47).³⁷ This study adopts Morris’ segmentation but applies a different label to the three subsections in Jesus’s long discourse (vv. 19–47), attempting to answer the conflict between him and the Jews (vv. 16–18). The outline below shows that Jesus’s speech is arranged symmetrically. Jesus began by validating his claim of equality with God (vv. 19–24) by pointing out that what he did relates to what his Father is doing in terms of giving life, raising the dead, and executing judgment (vv. 19, 21, 22, 24). Then he spoke on the theme of resurrection to substantiate his claim of equality with God (vv. 25–29), highlighting that just “as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself” (v. 26) and to execute judgment (v. 27). This means that Jesus can give life to the dead, and judge them as well (vv. 25, 28–29). Finally, he had shown that there are witnesses concerning his deity (vv. 30–47). He made mention of John, who bore witness to the truth (vv. 33–35), and pointed out that his works and the Father’s are the witnesses that he was sent by the Father himself (v. 36). To establish the placement of vv. 25–29, the structure of vv. 19–47 below.

- A vv. 19–24 – the validity of Jesus’s claim of equality with the Father
- B vv. 25–29 – the power to resurrect as proof of Jesus’s authority
- A’ vv. 30–47 – the witnesses of Jesus that testify about his deity

The chiasmic structure shows that there is a literary connection between units A (vv. 19–24) and A1 (vv. 30–47), at least based on the structural pattern at the opening of the speech in both units and on the evidence Jesus used in substantiating his equality with God in each unit. A close reading at the beginning of vv. 19–24 and vv. 30–47 shows that Jesus used similar vocabularies, which contain an idea of negation as indicated by the clauses οὐ δύναται ὁ υἱὸς

³⁷ Beauford H. Bryant and Mark S. Krause, *John*, The College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1998).

ποιεῖν ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ οὐδέν (“the Son can do nothing”) in v. 19b and οὐ δύναμαι ἐγὼ ποιεῖν ἄπ' ἑμαυτοῦ οὐδέν (“I can do nothing on my own”) in v. 30a. Moreover, at the opening of both units, Jesus used related expressions in favor for his equality with God when he mentioned that he also does what the Father is doing (v. 19c) and that he judges according to what he hears from the Father (v. 30c). In unit A (vv. 19–24), Jesus substantiated his claim of equality with God by pointing out that the Father shared with him the power (v. 21) and the authority to judge (v. 22). While in unit B (vv. 30–47), Jesus mentioned about the witnesses of his deity (John the Baptist [vv. 33–35], the works that he and his Father are doing [vv. 36–37], the Scriptures [v. 39], and Moses [vv. 45–47]) to verify his authority. Although units A and A1 are literarily and structurally established, these only convey the placement of unit B (vv. 25–29) in this section and accentuate the apex of the chiasm. Here, unit B (vv. 25–29) is seen as the core explanation of Jesus’s deity and his equality with God. And his authority to resurrect the dead to life and execute judgment on the living and the dead makes him equal to God.

Thematic Analysis

From a literary perspective, John 5:25–29 shows a threefold sub-unit that depicts two recognizable themes: resurrection (vv. 25, 28–29) and life and judgment (vv. 26–27). As noted above, the pericope emphasizes that resurrection is tenable evidence of Jesus’s deity and equality with God. Table 2 displays the said themes and graphically depicts that the speech of Jesus is opened and closed with the theme of resurrection (v. 25 and vv. 28–29). Its placement in the pericope not only forms an inclusio, but its recurrence two times also focuses on the theme’s significance. In this context, to give life and to raise one from the dead are exclusive attributes of God alone. Since Jesus shared these prerogatives (vv. 21, 24), he is also God.³⁸ The theme of life and judgment (vv. 26–27) connects to

³⁸ Jesus in the fourth gospel is the exact revelation of the father. Mark L. Strauss, *Four*

this theme and is not out of the picture nor detached from the concept. It builds to it—highlighting that Jesus can raise the dead to life, because the Father shared with him the power to give life (v.26). He can also execute judgment because the Father had given him the authority to judge (v. 27). These prerogatives make Jesus equal with God (vv. 26, 27)³⁹ In this sense, Jesus’s authority to give life and to pass judgment is seen in the act of the resurrection both in v. 25 and vv. 28–29.

Table 2. *Structure of John 5:25–29*

Vv.	Content of the Passage	Thematic Idea
25	Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now it is, when the dead (ones) will hear the voice of the Son of God and the ones who hear will live.	Resurrection
26–27	For just as the Father has life in Himself, so also He has given to the Son to have life in Himself. and Also He has given him authority to do judgment, because He is the Son of man.	Life (eternal) and Judgment
28–29	Do not marvel this thing, an hour is coming in which all the ones in the tombs will hear His voice and they will come out; the ones doing good things for the resurrection of life, but the ones practicing evil things for the resurrection of judgment.	Resurrection

The microstructure of the passage in Table 3 shows that the

Portraits, One Jesus: An Introduction to Jesus and the Gospels (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 25, 245ff.

³⁹ Jesus’ equality with God is seen not only in the prerogative that the Father and the Son have in common, but it is also noticeable in the use of the comparative conjunction ὡσπερ (“as,” “just as,” or “in the same way”) in vv. 21, 26. For the different uses of this conjunction, see Daniel B. Wallace, *The Basics of New Testament Syntax: The Abridged of Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 299.

terms ζήσουςιν, ζωήν, and ζωῆς from the root ζάω (“live”), and κρίσιν and κρίσεως from the root κρίσις (“judgment”) are distributed to the theme of resurrection in v. 25 and vv. 28–29. The theme of life and judgment (vv. 26–27) is not only placed in between the theme of resurrection (vv. 25, 28–29) but also attached to it.

Table 3. *Microstructure of John 5:25–29*

Vv.	Content of the Passage	Main Thought
RESURRECTION		
25	Truly, truly, I say to you that an hour is coming, and now it is when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live (ζήσουςιν)	introduction of the saying time element object of resurrection means of resurrection idea of <i>life</i>
LIFE AND JUDGMENT		
26	Just as the Father has life (ζωήν) in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life (ζωήν) in himself.	introduced by conjunction idea of <i>life</i> (core)
27	And (καί) he has given him authority to execute judgment (κρίσιν), because he is the Son of Man	introduced by conjunction idea of <i>judgment</i> (core)
RESURRECTION		
28–	Do not marvel at this	introduction of the saying
29	that an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear the voice of him (Jesus) and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life (ζωῆς), and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment (κρίσεως)	time element object of resurrection means of resurrection idea of <i>life</i> and <i>judgment</i>

The possible emphasis of the attachment of the theme of life (v.

26) to the theme of resurrection (vv. 25, 28–29) may accentuate that the goal of resurrection is to perpetuate life for those who believe in him (vv. 25, 29a). For this reason, it appears that the resurrection and life are intertwined and never to be separated. This means that when one speaks of resurrection, he speaks of life itself.⁴⁰ On the other hand, the attachment of the theme of judgment (v. 27) to the theme of resurrection highlights a resurrection for judgment or condemnation (v. 29b). Thus, Jesus is projected as the judge both for the living and the dead. Already in the OT, Daniel described this point by using the imagery of peoples' awaking from the sleep⁴¹ of the dust to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt, at the time of the end when Michael will arise to deliver his people (Dan 12:1–2). If Daniel's description here refers to the event of the resurrection, then the time of its application is partly understood by the NT's use of ἔρχεται ὥρα, a time indicator for raising the dead to life or to judgment (John 5:28–29).⁴²

In the immediate context, it is obvious that Jesus's claim of deity and equality with God through his power to judge and to resurrect the dead to life (5:25–29) was not immediately seen by the Jews. Yet, when one considers the events in chapter 5 in broader literary segments, within the Festivals cycles (chs. 5–11),⁴³ Jesus's use of the

⁴⁰ This supposition is valid only when resurrection is not for condemnation. The resurrection of those who have done evil in John 5:29 carries the condemnation motif implied in the second resurrection in Rev 20:6.

⁴¹ Miller says that "sleep" is a metaphor frequently used to describe physical death (John 11:11–14; Acts 7:60; 1 Thess 4:13; and 1 Cor 15:51). Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*, NAC 18 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 316. For more information on sleep metaphor, see Wilson Paroschi, "Death as Sleep: The (Mis)use of a Biblical Metaphor," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 28.1 (2017): 26–44.

⁴² For some scholars who see the connection of Dan 12:2 to John 5:28–29, see Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, 220; Bernard, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 245; Jon L. Dybdahl et al., *Andrews Study Bible* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2010), John 5:29.

⁴³ The setting of feasts in chs. 5–11 is one of the contexts to be considered. Borchert, *John 1–11*, 223. Several festivals are mentioned in this section: John 5:1 mentions an unidentified feast of the Jews where Jesus was present during the Sabbath, John 6:4 mentions the Passover feast of the Jews, John 10:22 narrates of the Feast of Dedic-

clause ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν⁴⁴ ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ (“I will raise him on the last day”) for four times (6:39, 40, 44, and 54), might be considered as sayings that support his prerogative to resurrect the dead. Here, the timeline of the resurrection of those who will believe in Jesus as the Bread of life is similar to the time aspect of the resurrection in John 5:28–29. Further, within the Festivals cycles (chs. 5–11), Jesus’s act of resurrecting Lazarus from the grave (11:1–44) might be considered as evidence of his power to raise the dead to life. It should be noted that the event of Lazarus’ resurrection was present in John’s time. If this is so, it corresponds to the time aspect of the resurrection in John 5:25. For this reason, the parallelism between the resurrection of the dead in John 5:25 and Lazarus’ in John 11:1–44 in terms of the time aspect highlights a visible proof for Jesus’s deity and equality with God (Table 4).

Table 4. *Time Aspects of the Resurrection Concept in the Festivals Cycles*

Vv.	Resurrection	Festivals Cycles	Time Aspects
5:25	Resurrection of the dead	Unidentified Feast	Present
5:28–29	Resurrection of the good and wicked	Unidentified Feast	Future
6:22–59	Resurrection of the believers	Passover Feast	Future
11:1–44	Resurrection of Lazarus	Passover Feast	Present

tion, then John 11:55 mentions again the Passover. For varied organizational patterns in chs. 5–11 used by different scholars, and on the sequence of events, see Borchert, *John 1–11*, 223–30.

⁴⁴ John 6:39 reads: ἀναστήσω αὐτὸ ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, while v. 40 reads: ἀναστήσω ἐγὼ αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, then vv. 44 and 54 reads: ἀναστήσω ἐγὼ αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

WORDS STUDIES AND SYNTAX

ἔρχεται ὥρα

The time aspect of the resurrection in John 5:25–29 is introduced by the phrase ἔρχεται ὥρα (“an hour is coming”). This phrase appears seven times in the NT only in the book of John (John 4:21, 23, 5:25, 28–29, 16:2, 25, 32).⁴⁵ Three occurrences are marked with a time indicator (4:23; 5:25; 16:32), while the other four have no time indicator mentioned (4:21; 5:28–29; 16:2, 25). It should be noted that ἔρχεται ὥρα is used exclusively by Jesus alone. Generally, the application of ἔρχεται ὥρα broadly refers to the future events not remote in Jesus’s time, at the time of Jesus if ἔρχεται ὥρα comes with a present time indicator, or at the second coming of Jesus when the context requires a distant future application. The first four uses of ἔρχεται ὥρα appear in the context of Cana (2:1–4:54)⁴⁶ and Festivals Cycles (5:1–11:57): the woman at the well (4:1–42) and the invalid man at the pool of Bethesda (5:1–47), respectively. Within these narrative accounts, the use of the phrase is fairly distributed; two are used in the story of the woman at the well (4:21, 23), and two are also mentioned in the healing of the invalid at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath (5:25, 28–29).

In the context of Jesus’s encounter with the woman at the well (4:1–42), he used ἔρχεται ὥρα without a time indicator when he spoke to the woman concerning the coming hour when the people will no longer worship God in the physical temple, neither on the mountain⁴⁷ nor at Jerusalem (4:21). In the same context, he used it

⁴⁵ Based on BNT, in BibleWorks 8 (Norfolk, VA: BibleWorks, 2009).

⁴⁶ The Cana Cycle outlines the events of Jesus’ ministry at Cana (2:1–11), Capernaum (2:12) through Jerusalem (2:13–24), Nicodemus (3:1–36), to the woman at the well in Samaria (4:1–42), and Galilee (4:43–54). This is a modified sequence of events from the Cana Cycle of Gerald L. Borchert. See Borchert, *John 1–11*, 151.

⁴⁷ Gerizim is known as the holy mountain of the Samaritans, where they built a temple after the return of the Jews from the exile of Babylon. See Siegfried H. Horn, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary (SDABD)*, rev. ed., Commentary Reference

again in v. 23, but at this time, Jesus used ἔρχεται ὥρα with a time indicator καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν (“and now is”) when he mentioned that this worship has come in time through the worship of the Father “in spirit and truth.” It is supposed that the woman might have reasonably understood this point when Jesus revealed that he was the Messiah (4:25–26, 29–30). However, in the context of the healing of the invalid at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath (5:1–47), Jesus mentioned first ἔρχεται ὥρα with καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν as a time indicator when the dead will be raised in the present (5:25). Then, he used ἔρχεται ὥρα without a time indicator when he mentioned of the resurrection of those in the tombs for life or judgment (5:28–29). Putting these occurrences together in Table 5, a chiasm of ἔρχεται ὥρα is observed, highlighting the presence of the future in the present, both in the themes of worship and resurrection.

Table 5. *Chiastic Structure of ἔρχεται ὥρα in Cana and Festivals Cycles*

Vv.	Occurrences of ἔρχεται ὥρα	Context
4:21	ἔρχεται ὥρα	Worship
4:23	ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν	Worship
5:25	ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν	Resurrection
5:28–29	ἔρχεται ὥρα	Resurrection

The syntax of all ἔρχεται ὥρα occurrences in John is most likely futuristic present,⁴⁸ either focusing on completely futuristic or ingressive-futuristic. In John 4:21, Jesus states: “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming (ἔρχεται ὥρα) when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.” The futuristic present use of ἔρχεται ὥρα in this text is seen as entirely futuristic,

Series 8 (Washington: Review and Herald, 1979), s.v. “Gerizim.”

⁴⁸ For more discussion of the syntax of Greek present tense, see Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 535–37.

which may have focused on immediacy or certainty. If the stress of Jesus's use of ἔρχεται ὥρα is on immediacy, then it would mean that the time when the worship of God will not be done neither on the mountain nor at Jerusalem "is on the way, and it would soon take place." Whereas, if the stress of Jesus's use of the phrase is on certainty, then it would mean that "when it will come," the people will no longer worship the Father on the mountain or at Jerusalem.

However, the worship that will be done neither on the mountain nor at Jerusalem should be seen along with the concept of the temple where God's presence abides. In this sense, John's use of the temple in Rev 21:22 is significant: "And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb." While several connotations can be associated with the temple, God's people in the Bible times always associate it with the presence of God (Exod 25:8).⁴⁹ But, in the eschatological New Jerusalem, the temple is no more, it is not to mean that there is no temple at all, but because, the temple is God Himself and the Lamb (Rev 21:22).⁵⁰ Thus, in John 4:21, the ἔρχεται ὥρα as completely futuristic is likely focusing on the idea of certainty. It means that, in the coming hour, the people will no longer worship the Father in a literal temple found in the mountain or Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, in John 4:23, Jesus said: "But the hour is coming, and is now here (ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστίν) when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him." With the mention of καὶ νῦν ἐστίν as a time indicator of ἔρχεται ὥρα, the syntax of the phrase may be futuristic present in an ingressive–futuristic aspect.⁵¹ It

⁴⁹ For more information, see Stephen F. Noll, "Tabernacle, Temple," *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book, 1996), 1165–67.

⁵⁰ See Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 1090.

⁵¹ Wallace made mention of John 4:23 as an example of a mostly futuristic present. See Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 537.

emphasizes that the worship of the Father “in spirit and truth” is not only taking place in the present, but it continues to its completion. In this sense, the worship of the Father without any locus of a physical temple in John 4:21 will be a complete realization of the worship of the Father “in spirit and truth,” which started in John 4:23.

Similarly, the context of the healing of the invalid at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath (5:1–47) reveals that ἔρχεται ὥρα follows the same trend in the usage of the syntax. As Jesus made his defense for his deity and equality with God (vv. 19–47), he made mention of the resurrection (vv. 25–29) as part of his attestations. In John 5:25, he said: “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming (ἔρχεται ὥρα), and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.” Like John 4:23, the syntax of ἔρχεται ὥρα with καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν in John 5:25 is futuristic present with ingressive-futuristic sense. The use of ἀκούσουσιν and ζήσουσιν (“they will hear and they will live,” respectively) in predictive future⁵² elucidates that, although resurrection is now available in the present, the dead will yet to be raised at some time.

The preceding idea is that the raising of the dead to life has started in the present and progresses to its completion—the general resurrection of the deceased to life (vv. 28–29). However, the Jews in Christ’s time had difficulty accepting the resurrection’s availability in the present. For example, when Martha engaged in conversation with Jesus concerning the resurrection of her brother, Lazarus, she said that his deceased brother would rise on the last day (11:24). In response, Jesus said to her: “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he dies, yet shall he live” (v. 25). In this perspective, resurrection is undeniably a future concept (cf. Dan 12:2), but it has become a reality in the present through the

⁵² A parallel text is found in Jesus’ promise to the thief: “Truly, I say to you today, you will be with me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43).

person of Jesus. Therefore, Jesus's presence brings the future resurrection into the present.

Unlike v. 25, Jesus did not associate a time indicator with *ἔρχεται ὥρα* in vv. 28–29: “Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming (*ἔρχεται ὥρα*) when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice, and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.” With the absence of a time indicator, the plain rendering of *ἔρχεται ὥρα* is a futuristic present with a focus on certainty.⁵³ The time of application must be linked to a distant future, because the context calls for a general *ἀνάστασις* (“resurrection”) of the righteous and the wicked (vv. 28–29; cf. 1 Thess 4:16, 17; Rev 20: 5, 6). Thus, in the context of John 5, the resurrection in vv. 28–29 will consummate the raising of the dead to life in v. 25, which has come in the present. Presumably, the anticipated future fulfillment is more significant in scope than what has occurred.

In the final parting message of Jesus to his disciples (13:1–17:26), he used again *ἔρχεται ὥρα* for the last three times. First, Jesus mentioned *ἔρχεται ὥρα* when he spoke about the hatred of the world towards God's people (15:18–16:3). Jesus said: “The hour is coming (*ἔρχεται ὥρα*) when whoever kills you will think he is offering service⁵⁴ to God” (16:2). In this text, the use of *ἔρχεται ὥρα* is futuristic present as completely futuristic with focus on immediacy because the forthcoming event is the persecution which may come to the disciples after the death of Jesus (cf. John 21:18–19; Matt 26:3). Acts recorded the persecution of the disciples after the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 7:54–60; 8:1–3; 9:1–2; 12:1–5).

Second, Jesus used again *ἔρχεται ὥρα* in the pericope concerning peace for the disciples (John 16:25–33). At the opening of this sec-

⁵³ The certainty of resurrection is perhaps noticeable by the use of *μὴ θαυμάζετε* (“do not marvel”) in the opening clause in v. 28.

⁵⁴ Paul thought he served God best while persecuting the pledging early church (Acts 26:9).

tion, he said: “The hour is coming (ἔρχεται ὥρα) when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father” (16:25; cf. 14:26; 16:13). Examined in its context, the syntax of ἔρχεται ὥρα is futuristic present in ingressive-futuristic, as evident in the reply of the disciples in v. 29: “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech!” The complete fulfillment of Jesus’s saying in v. 25 can be associated with the coming of the παράκλητος “another comforter”—the Holy Spirit, who will teach all things to the disciples (14:26; 16:13).⁵⁵ And third, Jesus used ἔρχεται ὥρα just before the closing verse of the pericope about peace for the disciples (16:25–33). He said: “Behold, the hour is coming (ἔρχεται ὥρα), indeed it has come (καὶ ἐλήλυθεν), when you will be scattered,⁵⁶ each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me” (16:32). The use of ἔρχεται ὥρα in this passage is associated with a time indicator καὶ ἐλήλυθεν (“it has come”). Hence, the usage of the phrase is futuristic present in ingressive-futuristic. Jesus’s forthcoming death is the event’s completion (Matt 26:3).

In summary, ἔρχεται ὥρα in the book of John is solely a Johannine concept, exclusively used by Jesus in some of his significant direct speeches. Jesus used the said expression to define the concept of time for eschatological worship and resurrection, which are available in the present in Jesus’s person. However, his death and resurrection provide meaning and certainty of the eschatological hopes. Therefore, the biblical concept of the last day began at Jesus’s First Advent, and it is seen as the fulfillment of (some) OT eschatology⁵⁷ (e.g., Joel 2: 28–29; Amos 9:11–12; cf. Acts 2:17–18 15:16–

⁵⁵ See “Show You Plainly,” [John 16:25], *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 5:1049. See also Beasley-Murray, *John*, 286–87; Bernard, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 518–19.

⁵⁶ The text alludes to Zech 8:7: “‘Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who stands next to me,’ declares the LORD of hosts. ‘Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; I will turn my hand against the little ones’” (Zech 13:7).

⁵⁷ Scholars called it “realized eschatology,” a view popularized by C. H. Dodd and others that (some) of the eschatological passages in the Bible do not refer to the fu-

17). It is no wonder that in John 5, there is a present and a future reality of the resurrection. Which one has a present reality in John?

ἀνάστασις and ἀνίστημι

The noun *ἀνάστασις*, “resurrection,” appears forty-two times in the NT,⁵⁸ and only six (in five different verses) occur in John’s writings. John associates a future time to the *ἀνάστασις* of the good for life and the evil for judgment in John 5:29. Similarly, in John 11:24, the *ἀνάστασις* of Lazarus that Martha had in mind is in the future. The *ἀνάστασις* in John 11:25, however, is in the present, as evident in Jesus’s statement: “I am the resurrection and the life.” But, John switches again to the future when he makes mention of the first *ἀνάστασις* in Rev 20:5 and 6. In John’s use of *ἀνάστασις*, he appears to emphasize the resurrection mentioned in John 11:25. Table 6 underscores *ἀνάστασις* in John 11:25 not only about its cause but the starting point of it as well.

Table 6. *Chiastic Structure of ἀνάστασις in Five Different Verses*

Passage	Context of ἀνάστασις	Time
John 5:29	ἀνάστασις (2x [of good and evil])	Future
John 11:24	ἀνάστασις (of Lazarus)	Future
John 11:25	ἀνάστασις (“I am the resurrection and the life)	Present
Rev 20:5	ἀνάστασις (first resurrection – blessed and holy)	Future
Rev 20:6	ἀνάστασις (first resurrection – no second death)	Future

ture but to matters occurring within the biblical period, especially to Jesus’ life and ministry. See Millard J. Erickson, *The Concise Dictionary of Christian Theology*, rev. ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossbooks, 2001), s.v. “Eschatology, Realized.”

⁵⁸ BibleWorks 8. The following occurrences of *ἀνάστασις* is bracketed with the concept of “no resurrection” Matt 22:23; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27; Acts 23:8; 1 Cor 15:12; 13. The use of *ἀνάστασις* in Acts 2:34 is the only use which is not translated in English as resurrection.

John's use of ἀνάστασις displays two perspectives of time, namely, the present reality of the resurrection in the person of Jesus and the resurrection on the last day. The NT consistently upholds these two aspects of time for the concept of the resurrection. Its consistency is cemented by connecting the present aspect of ἀνάστασις with Jesus's resurrection⁵⁹ from the dead and the future ἀνάστασις with the resurrection of all righteous dead.⁶⁰ In the same way, the verb ἀνίστημι⁶¹ "raise," when it is used in the context of the resurrection, depicts only two time aspects, the present and the future. The present still describes the resurrection of Jesus from the dead,⁶² and the future describes the general resurrection of the dead.⁶³ In light of the time of application of the noun ἀνάστασις and the verb ἀνίστημι in the NT, it is deduced that Christ's resurrection in history is the basis of a future resurrection of the dead of all ages (cf. 1 Cor 15:12–15). Because his resurrection took place in John's days (present in their time), we need not see that event remotely separated from a future resurrection of the dead because, in him, the last day begins (Heb 1:1–2).

Similarly, the terms ζωή and κρίσις also underscore the present and future aspects of time. Although eternal life (John 6:40; 12:25) and judgment (e.g., 2 Pet 2:4, 9; and Rev 18:10) are futuristic, John presents that a person who believes Jesus is assured of eternal life in

⁵⁹ See John 11:25; Acts 1:2; 2:31; 4:2, 33; 17:32; 23:6; 24:21; 26:23; Rom 1:4; 6:5 (metaphor); Phil 3:10; Heb 11:35; 1 Pet 1:3; and 3:21. It should be noted that 2 Tim 2:18 use ἀνάστασις in the present, but it is a misuse of others who did not understand the timing of the general future resurrection because to them it has happened in the present. By this teaching, Paul said: "They are upsetting the faith of some" (1 Tim 3:18).

⁶⁰ See Matt 22:28, 30; Mark 12:23; Luke 14:14; 20:33, 35, 36; John 5:29 (2x); 11:24; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor 15:21, 42; Heb 6:2; Rev 20:5, and 6.

⁶¹ The verb ἀνίστημι appears 108x in the NT (BibleWorks 8). For more information see A. Oepke, "ἀνίστημι," *TDNT* 1:368–72.

⁶² See, for example, Mark 8:31; 9:9; 9:31; 10:34; Luke 18:33; 24:7; 24:46; John 20:9; Acts 2:24, 32; 17:3; and 1 Thess 4:14. The only application ἀνίστημι other than Jesus is in raising Tabitha when she died (Acts 9:40).

⁶³ See (for e.g.) Mark 12:25; John 6:40; and 1 Thess 4:16.

the present (e.g., John 3:15, 16, 36; 5:24; 6:58; 1 John 5:9–13), release from judgment or condemnation (3:18a), and has escaped from death to life (John 5:24). Nevertheless, if one chooses to refuse from “hearing” and “believing” in Jesus, he is deprived of eternal life in the present (3:36; 1 John 5:12b), goes into judgment (3:18b; cf. 12:31), and remains in death (12:25).

οἱ νεκροί

The phrase οἱ νεκροί (“the dead”) is the key to unlocking the issue of the kind of resurrection in John 5:25. Examining its syntax and how it is used in the book of John determines whether it refers to a spiritual or a literal resurrection. There is a strong unity between the participants of the resurrection in v. 25 and the participants in vv. 28–29. In Table 6, the syntax of οἱ νεκροί in v. 25 and οἱ (with ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις) in vv. 28–29 emphasizes that the kind of the dead in v. 25 who will be raised to life in the present is congruent to the type of the dead in vv. 28–29 who will be resurrected in the future.

Table 7 shows that οἱ νεκροί indicates the participants of the resurrection in v. 25, while οἱ⁶⁴ (with ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις) refers to the participants of resurrection mentioned in vv. 28–29. Noticeably, the οἱ νεκροί in v. 25 and the substantival article οἱ in vv. 28–29 share similar gender and number. Moreover, the two nouns (one is introduced only by an article) have the same syntax usage; both are functioning as the subject of the verb ἀκούσουσιν (“they will hear”). The article οἱ in front of νεκροί in v. 25 is syntactically used as a generic article (describing a class), while the οἱ describing ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις in vv. 28–29 is anaphoric, pointing back to οἱ νεκροί in v.

⁶⁴ The phrases οἱ νεκροί (“the dead”) in v. 25 and the οἱ (“the [ones]”) in v. 28 are parallel in gender and number and also in the usage. In the context of the raising of the dead in vv. 25–29, the οἱ νεκροί in v. 25 functions syntactically as substantive, or it can be an individualizing article under substantive. In this case, οἱ νεκροί in v. 25 serves as an antecedent of οἱ in v. 28–29.

25. The syntactical connection seems to suggest that the οἱ νεκροί in v. 25 and the οἱ describing ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις in vv. 28–29 should be given the same interpretation regarding the kind of resurrection. Verses 28–29 are clear that the οἱ (with ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις) refers to the literal dead. The addition of ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις⁶⁵ (“in the graves”) after the article οἱ in vv. 28–29 can hardly be spiritualized because ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις is identified as the locus where the dead ones are buried. If the οἱ (with ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις) in vv. 28–29 is understood as literally dead; therefore, the οἱ νεκροί in v. 25 should also be taken literally.

Table 7. *The Participants of the Resurrection in John 5:25 and 5:28–29*

Resurrection in John 5:25	Resurrection in John 5:28–29
ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν ὅτε οἱ νεκροὶ ἀκούσουσιν ἐν ἧ' πάντες οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀκούσουσιν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκπορεύσονται οἱ τὰ ἀγαθὰ ποιήσαντες ⁶⁶ εἰς ἀνάστασιν ζωῆς, οἱ δὲ τὰ φαῦλα πράξαντες εἰς ἀνάστασιν κρίσεως.	

⁶⁵ The term μνημείοις is derived from the word μνημεῖον, which means “monument,” “grave,” or “tomb.” See BAGD, s.v. “μνημεῖον.” In the examples given by Bauer in the lexicon, all the occurrences of μνημεῖον refer to what is physical and never has had a spiritual sense.

⁶⁶ The participle οἱ ποιήσαντες (ποιέω) associated with τὰ ἀγαθὰ indicates those who will be raised for life. It stands in contrast with the participle οἱ δὲ πράξαντες (πράσσω) connected with τὰ φαῦλα, which signifies those who will be resurrected for judgment. The verbs ποιέω and πράσσω reveal that both verbs share almost an identical gloss. While πράσσω means “to exercise,” “practice,” “accomplish,” or “act,” on the other hand, ποιέω means “to do,” “act,” or “perform.” See J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1930), s.v. “ποιέω,” “πράσσω.” Although ποιέω and πράσσω are synonymous, there is a stark difference between the two. The root ποιέω implies performance, denoting productive action, whereas the root πράσσω connotes a practice which is done habitually. See C. G. Wilke and C. L. Wilibald Grimm, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, trans., rev. and enl. by Joseph Henry Tayer (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), s.v. “ποιέω.” Moreover, there is another reference to ποιέω and πράσσω in John 3:20–21. In this passage, πράσσω is used for the wicked acts of those who refused to come to the light and hate the light,

Participants	Syntax	Verb	Participants	Syntax	Verb
οἱ νεκροὶ	Nominative Plural, Substantiver	ἀκούσουσιν	οἱ (ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις)	Nominative Plural, Substantiver	ἀκούσουσιν

This supposition is also supported by the concept of φωνή “voice.”⁶⁷ In vv. 25–29, the resurrection of the dead is accomplished through τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ (“the voice of the Son of God”) in v. 25, or simply τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ (“the voice of Him” or “His voice”) in vv. 28–29. In the NT, when the concept of φωνή⁶⁸ (whether stated or implied) is used in the context of resurrection, it is consistently linked to the literal dead. In Luke 7:11–17, when Jesus raised the widow’s son into life, the concept of φωνή is evident. He said: “Young man, I say to you raise” (v. 14), then the dead sat up and began to speak (v. 15). Another instance is in John 11:38–44 when Jesus resurrected Lazarus from the dead, he said: “Lazarus, come out” (v. 43), and Lazarus came out (v. 44). Similarly, in Acts 9:36–43, when Peter raised Tabitha to life, he said: “Tabitha, arise” (v. 40), then Tabitha was made alive (v. 41). Paul also raised Eutychus from the dead (20:7–12). When Eutychus was found dead, Paul said: “Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him” (v. 10), and they found out that Eutychus was alive again (v. 12). Furthermore, in 1 Cor 15:50–54, Paul said that when the trumpet shall be sounded, the dead will be raised into the imperishable body (v. 52). The same attestation is mentioned in 1 Thess 4:16, 17, there is a sounding of the trumpet first, and then the dead in Christ will rise (v. 16). Given the idea of the application of the concept of φωνή to the literal resurrection of the dead in the NT, the use of φωνή both v. 25 and vv. 28–29 strengthens the interpretation of a literal or physical resurrection of the dead, particularly in v. 25.

whereas ποιέω is used for the honest actions of those who come to the light.

⁶⁷ See Bauer, BAGD, s.v. “φωνή.”

⁶⁸ The word φωνή, occurs 139x in the NT, and 70x in John and Revelation (Bible-Works 8).

Additionally, the rest of the occurrences (seven more times) of the root νεκρός⁶⁹ (root of νεκροί) which means “dead” in the gospel of John, seem to refer to a physically dead person (John 2:22; 5:21; 12:1, 9, 17; 20:9; 21:14). If this is so, it is unlikely to advocate a spiritual resurrection in John 5:25. The kind of resurrection of the dead in view in v. 25 is not a spiritual resurrection, but a physical one. Keeping this idea in mind, it may be conceivable that the power that Jesus manifested in the act of the resurrection of Lazarus (see 5:25; 11:38–44)⁷⁰ serves as a direct application of the resurrection, which is already available in the present as Jesus mentioned in John 5:25. Whereas the resurrection in vv. 28–29 is seen as a future completion of the resurrection already made available through Christ’s presence. However, without Christ being resurrected from the dead, there will never be any hope of resurrection because he is “the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Given the evidence above, the resurrection of the οἱ νεκροί in John 5:25 and the οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις in John 5:28–29, refer more likely to a bodily resurrection. While the resurrection of the dead in v. 25 is strangely present, the resurrection of those in the tombs in vv. 28–29 is markedly future. These two time aspects of resurrection are not contradictory because in the First Advent of Jesus, the “last day” has begun (Heb 1:2). Although the resurrection in John and the entire Bible is generally anticipated in the future, its reality was

⁶⁹ In the NT, not including the use of νεκρός with reference to sin, the only occurrences of νεκρός that refer to spiritual dead are found in Luke 15:24, 32; Rom 6:13; Rev 3:1. See Bauer, BAGD, s.v. “νεκρός.”

⁷⁰ In the chronological analysis of the miracles that Jesus did in his time, the resurrection of Lazarus is preceded by the resurrection of the widow’s son at Nain, Jairus’s daughter. The miracle of the healing of the invalid man at the pool of Bethesda precedes these accounts. It is in this context that Jesus made a discourse on resurrection. See John Laidlaw, *Studies in the Miracle of our Lord* (Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1984).

already made available in the present (in Jesus's time) through the person and the presence of Jesus,⁷¹ who said: "I am the resurrection and the life" (11:25). In this sense, the time of the application envisaged of the expression ἔρχεται ὥρα particularly when it comes with a time indicator καὶ νῦν ἐστίν, is defined mainly by Jesus's presence.

Even if the hope of resurrection is built on Jesus himself, without his resurrection from the grave, there could have been no assurance of a future resurrection. Paul attested that the faith of the believers would have been in vain without him being raised from the dead (1 Cor 15:14, 17, 19), but Jesus was risen (Matt 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–1). For this reason, the believers can hope for the resurrection because his resurrection is also their resurrection (1 Thess 4:13–14).⁷² His is the "first fruit" that guarantees our resurrection. Thus, it is not proper to consider Jesus's resurrection (past) remotely detached from the believers'. In principle, his resurrection and believers are both couched in the last day timeframe (John 6:39, 40, 44, and 54; cf. Heb 1:2).

Since the resurrection in John 5:25 is present, it is likely to see it as a forecast of the resurrection of the dead whom Jesus raised to life in his time (e.g., 11:38–44; Matt 27:52). In a sense, the resurrection of the dead who were raised by Jesus in his lifetime, in principle, becomes a foretaste of what is going to happen to the believers in the general resurrection of the dead in the future (John 5:28–29; cf. 1 Thess 4:16). Thus, there is a concrete confirmation concerning the resurrection of the believers in the future, because Jesus had demonstrated this promise by resurrecting some of the dead in his time, not just based on his own resurrection. Though death constantly threatens the existence of life on Earth, there is hope beyond

⁷¹ Brunt notes: "Resurrection is more than a future event. It is a living hope made real through the presence of Jesus." Brunt, "Resurrection and Glorification," 354.

⁷² A demonstration of a firm belief in the resurrection of God's people is seen in the story in 2 Macc 7, where a woman is allowed to watch her seven sons being tortured because they refused to eat pork. Her sons died one after another, and all expressed hope for the future resurrection.

this. The hope of resurrection eliminates the fear of death, “O death, where is your sting” (1 Cor 15:55). However, all of these depend on one’s close and personal relationship with Jesus. Continuously living and believing in Jesus is the only key for the believers to remain in the hope of the resurrection (John 11:26).