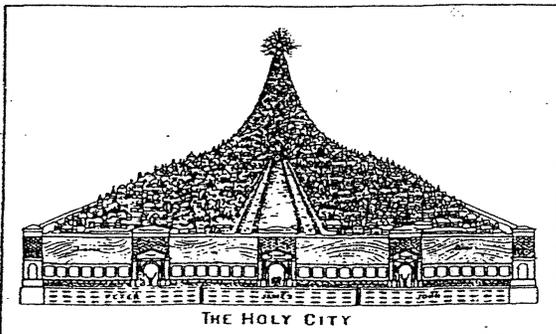
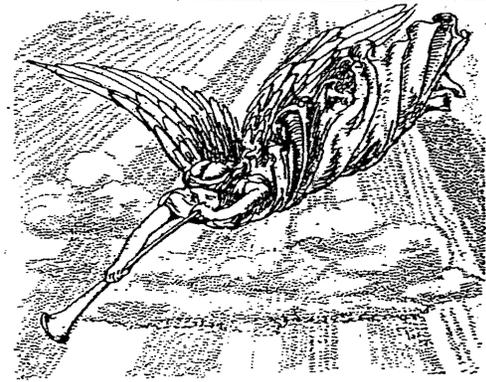
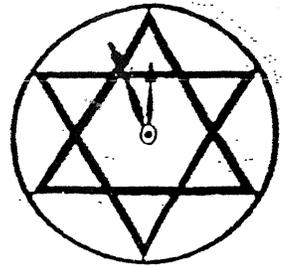
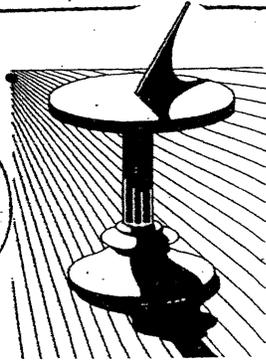
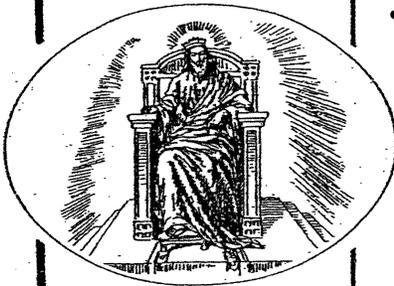
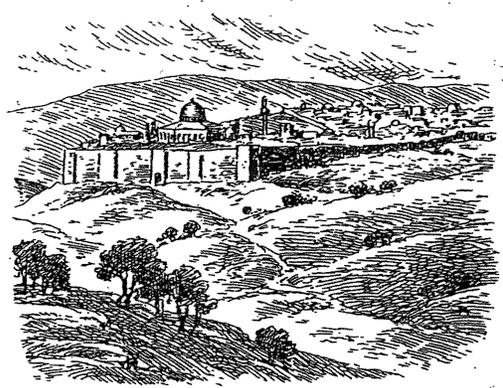


Practical Prophecies for Concerned Christians



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**PRACTICAL PROPHECIES FOR
CONCERNED CHRISTIANS**



Spring 2022 Prophecy Weekend

June 24-26, 2022

Friday, June 24

6:00 p.m. **THE BEST IS YET TO COME:** The Christian's Extraordinary Future

7:00 p.m. **THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH:** The Believer's Fondest Hope

Saturday, June 25

1:00 p.m. **OUR REWARDS AT THE BEMA SEAT OF CHRIST:** The Believer's Finest Hour

2:30 p.m. **A NEGLECTED TRUTH ABOUT THE FUTURE:** The Believer's Intermediate Body

4:00 p.m. **WHAT WILL WE BE DOING FOR ALL ETERNITY?** The Saint's Splendid Prospect

5:00 p.m.

Family Fellowship Dinner

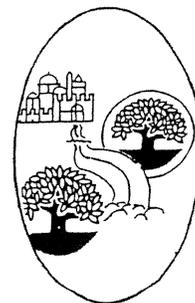


Sunday, June 26

9:30 a.m. **THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM:** The Christian's Eternal Home

6:00 p.m. **WILL CHRIST RETURN IN OUR LIFETIME?** An Overview of the Signs of the Times

***Fellowship
Baptist
Church***



1503 S.E. 6th Street.
Des Moines, Iowa 50315

Pastor Daniel Vance

(515) 244-6767

**COME AND
HEAR**

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

Table of Contents

1. The Best is yet to Come:	1
The Christian's Extraordinary Future	
2. The Rapture of the Church	5
The Believer's Fondest Hope	
3. Our Rewards at the Bema Seat of Christ.....	15
The Believer's Finest Hour	
4. A Neglected Truth about the Future.....	25
The Believer's Intermediate Body	
5. What Will We Be Doing for All Eternity?.....	40
The Saint's Splendid Prospect	
6. The Heavenly Jerusalem	51
The Christian's Eternal Home	
7. Will Christ Return in our Lifetime?.....	63
An Overview of the Signs of the Times	



The Benefits of An Intensive Study of Prophecy



1. It **a**cknowledges the inspiration and thus importance of the very words of Scripture.

2. It **b**lesses us with an essential knowledge of the future.

3. It **c**auses us to arrange the priorities of our life.

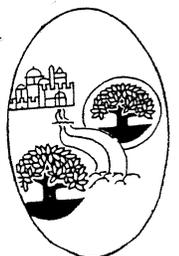
4. It **d**elights our heavenly Father who especially enjoins the study of prophecy (Rev. 1:3; 22:7).



5. It **e**xalts the Savior who is the Lord of history and prophecy.

6. It **f**ocuses on that which God considers to be truly important in our daily life and work.

7. It **g**ives us a new appreciation for the sovereignty and wisdom of God.



Is There Good News in this World of Wickedness and War?

The Best is Yet to Come

Good News

Manfred E. Haber, Th.D.

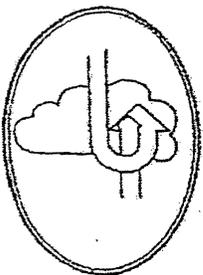
As one considers the national situation and international developments, it is easy to be discouraged. The believer, however, has every reason to be encouraged. If he is even somewhat acquainted with the biblical predictions concerning the glorious future of the saints, he should be elated. For Christians, the best is yet to come. However, many Christians are unaware of the blessed future foretold for them in the prophetic Word. Thus they are perplexed and pessimistic about the future, when, in fact, they should be sources of encouragement for others. We are to be able to give to others a reason for our hope (I Pet. 3:15).

Some time ago I spoke in a church on the East coast where prior to my arrival the new pastor, to become acquainted with his congregation, asked them how many of their parishioners could think their way through some of the major end time events. Out of a congregation of 150, only three folks raised their hands. We miss out on numerous blessings by being ignorant of the future, especially of events and activities of believers. The news for the saints is all good. Let me suggest seven prophecies relating to our glorious destiny.



1. The Readiness of the Saints:

Presently the believer is to be active for the Lord. He is to live as if the Savior were coming back today but to work as if the Lord were to tarry another 100 years. The Lord admonishes His servants, to “occupy till I come” (Lk. 19:13). While the believer carries out the Great Commission and his divinely assigned tasks, he should live with a spirit of eager expectancy. The fervent prayer of every dedicated believer should issue in the expectant, “Perhaps Today!” as he looks for the blessed hope of the rapture (Tit. 2:13; Phil. 3:20-21). It is wonderful news that the Lord might come back within the near future!



2. The Rapture of the Church:

The first disclosure of that glorious event was made by the Savior in the night before His crucifixion. He informed His disciples that He must leave them to build their heavenly home. As soon as that habitation is ready, He would return for them to take them there (John 14:1-6). Twenty years after this promise, Paul gives a detailed sequence of events surrounding our Savior’s return for us. At this glorious event the Savior returns in the clouds with the saints who have gone before. He resurrects the bodies of the dead saints and translates the living saints into His presence without

them having to die. This event will occur prior to the Tribulation, giving us cause for great comfort (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:9; 1 Cor. 15:51-52).

3. Rewards for the Believers:



Immediately after the rapture the Savior rewards church age believers at the judgment seat or bema (2 Cor. 5:10). At this time the Savior, our Bridegroom, decorates the Bride for the next event, the marriage of the Lamb. The issue at the bema is not the believer's **sins** but his **service**. It is not, as some teach, a "Protestant Purge-atory." The Christian is judged as a sinner at the cross, as a son during this life and as a servant at the bema. God makes a firm promise: "their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more" (Heb. 8:12; cf. Jer. 31:24). In fact, "then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor. 4:5). What could be more glorious than to hear our Savior say to each one of us, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant"? To me that makes the bema not a time of regret but rejoicing. It is the believer's finest hour as the Savior finds something good to say about each one of us.

4. Rejoicing at the Marriage of the Lamb:

While there rages a time of unprecedented tribulation on earth (Dan. 12:1; Rev. 4-19), the saints, i.e. the redeemed of the Church age, will enjoy a time of unimaginable celebration in heaven. As the long separation between the Savior and the earthly saints has ended, the Bridegroom will reward His Bride, then present her "without spot and wrinkle" (Eph. 5:27) to the Father. At the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9) Christ and His Bride are eternally joined. From the moment of this blessed union on, the Bride will eternally share in the prerogatives and prominence of Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom. The Church age saints will share a uniquely intimate position. Where Christ is, we will be. What He is doing, we will be doing (Rom. 8:17; 1 Pet. 2:9).



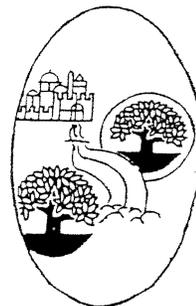
5. The Return With Christ:

After the bema and the Marriage of the Lamb in heaven, the Bridegroom will return with His Bride to earth. The Apostle John describes the spectacular scene as heaven opens and a white horse emerges "and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True . . . and the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean" (Rev. 19:11, 14). As the King of kings returns with His armies, the invaders of Israel are engaged at the campaign of Armageddon. When they see us descending with our leader, they will direct their weapons against us. We will witness their swift destruction as a sword of judgment proceeds out of His mouth (Rev. 19:15, 21). Through Christ we will be victorious over all our enemies!



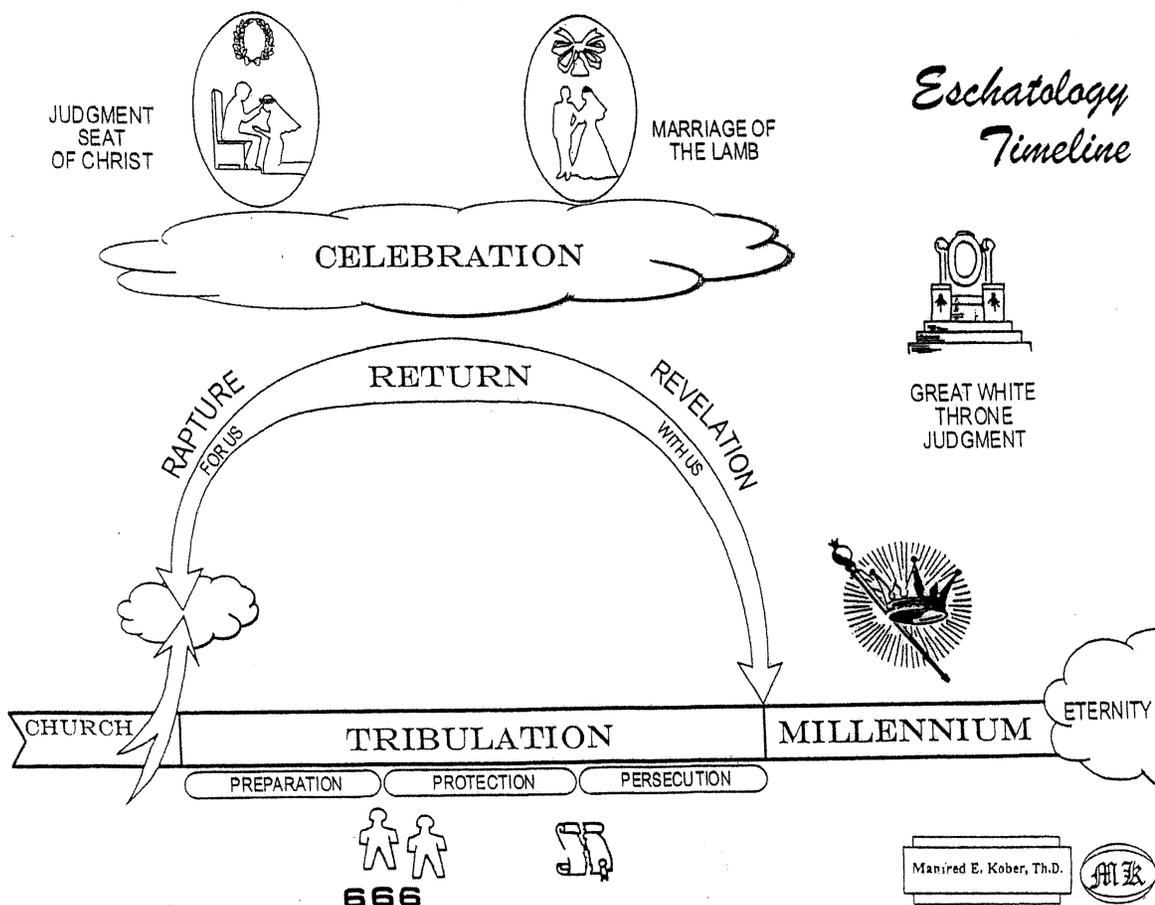
6. The Rule With Christ:

Another reason to be optimistic about his future relates to our future activity of ruling. Our rule with Christ includes, among many other activities, dining with Christ and exercising dominion with Christ. The Savior promised His disciples that He would eat and drink with them in the Kingdom. The believer's resurrection body, like Christ's, does not need food for sustenance, but can enjoy food (Acts 10:41). There appear to be at least two meals at the beginning of the Millennium. One is the Marriage Supper of the Lamb or some other meal with the Bride (Rev. 19:9; Mt. 26:29; Lk. 14:15-24; 22:30) with all the saints of all the ages present. The other meal seems to be for the entire world at the coronation of the Savior, featuring the best food and finest drink (Is.24: 23; 25:6). Every believer, whether spiritual or carnal, will participate in Christ's rule. Dominion is promised to every Church age believer (and tribulation martyr, Rev. 20:4) as part of the benefits of salvation. Those who have been committed to the Savior and consistent in their service apparently will receive greater responsibility (1 Cor. 6:2-3; Lk. 19:16-19).

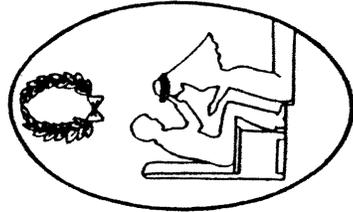


7. Residence in the New Jerusalem:

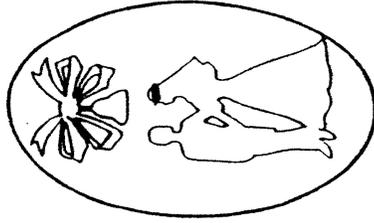
After the thousand-year reign of Christ, the Lord will remove every trace of sin from the universe by creating a new heaven and new earth. The New Jerusalem which Christ is presently constructing for us in heaven will at that time descend to earth. Every believer will dwell in that celestial city for all eternity. We will be joined by the triune God, the holy angels and all the saints of all the ages (Rev. 21:1-5; Heb. 12:22-24). Christ's millennial reign will continue into the eternal state. The Church will share in that rule and will thrill at the privilege of serving Him by ruling with Him forever and ever (Rev. 22:1-5). What a glorious destiny! If you have ever trusted in Christ as Savior, it is your destiny as well!



The Future and The Saint

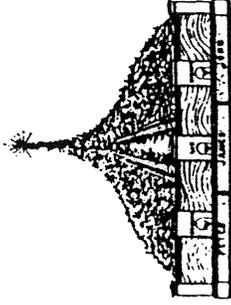


3 Rewards for the Believer
1 Cor. 3:11-4:5



4 Rejoicing at Marriage of the Lamb
Rev. 19:7-8

CELEBRATION



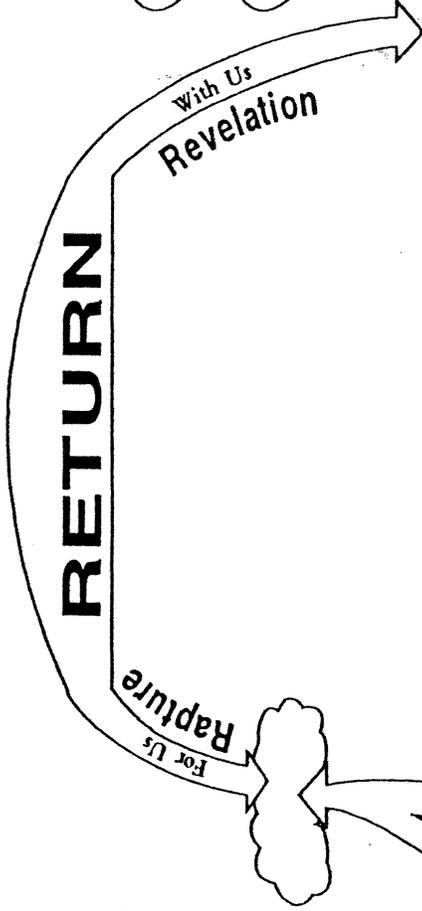
THE HOLY CITY
NEW JERUSALEM

1 Readiness of the Saints
Phil. 3:20

5 Return with Christ
Rev. 19:4-16

7 Residence in the New Jerusalem
Rev. 20:1-5

6 Rule with Christ
1 Cor. 6:2-3



2 Rapture of The Church
1 Thess. 4:13-18

Church Tribulation Millennium Eternity

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



The Rapture of the Church

The Believer's Fondest Hope



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

The Rapture of the Church:

THE BELIEVER'S FONDEST HOPE



INTRODUCTION

Many people have good reason to fear the events of the future. Believers, however, can rejoice because they will escape the dreadful events predicted for the last days. They know that any moment the rapture may snatch all genuine believers from the earth into the presence of Christ. The rapture is a distinct New Testament truth, taught by Christ in John 14 and, twenty years later, by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4. These two passages are central to our understanding how the present age will end. In John 14 we have **the solemn promise** of the Lord's return, in 1 Thessalonians 4 **a splendid picture** of His return. No prophecies need to be fulfilled before this event can transpire.

1A. THE PROMISE OF THE LORD'S RETURN: John 14:1-3



1b. The Savior's Precious Advice: 14:1

The disciples were perplexed and distressed about the Lord's prediction concerning His death and departure (13:31ff, cf. Luke 9:44f). They neither understood nor believed the Savior's words of comfort which have prompted believers through the ages to eagerly anticipate the return of Christ for them.

1c. Avoid fear: "Let not your heart be troubled"

2c. Acknowledge the Savior:

Trust in God is commendable but trust in Christ is indispensable because He is the only way to the Father (14:6). Personal acceptance of Christ is necessary to secure a place in the Father's house. Martin Luther is correct in observing that, "if he were not true God with the Father, this faith would be false and idolatrous" (Rudolf Stier, *The Words of Jesus*, 1879, V, 185).

2b. The Savior's Present Activity: 14:2

Christ made several promises to His disciples.

1c. Communion in the Father's house:

"In my Father's house are many mansions." While Christ and the disciples would soon be separated, in heaven, the Father's house, they would enjoy unbroken fellowship. The picture is that of an oriental home with courtyard and living quarters for all the family members, suggesting fellowship and intimacy.



2c. Construction of our Future Home:
Christ is presently constructing this abode.

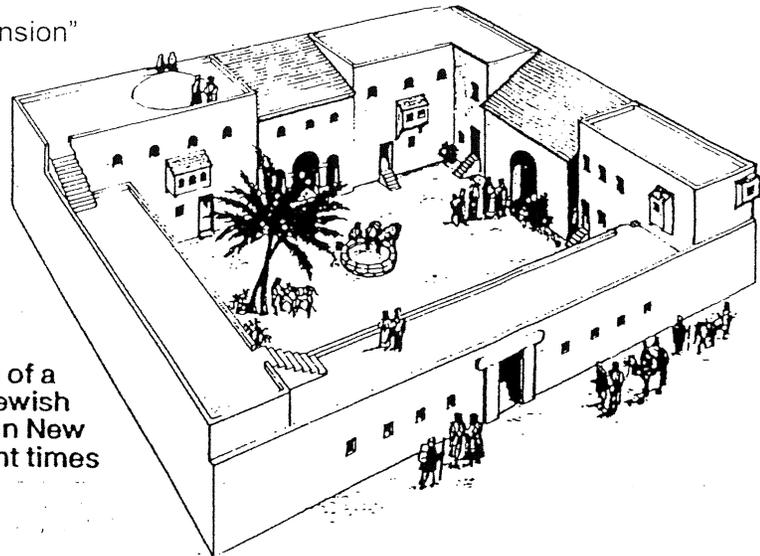
1d. The designation of "mansion"

The word mansion (*mone*), like its old English counterpart "meant a dwelling place rather than a sumptuous large house" (*Dictionary of N.T. Theology*, III, 229). Perhaps the modern term "condominium" best gives the sense of the Greek word. ("I've got a 'condo' just over the hillton?")

A Child of the King



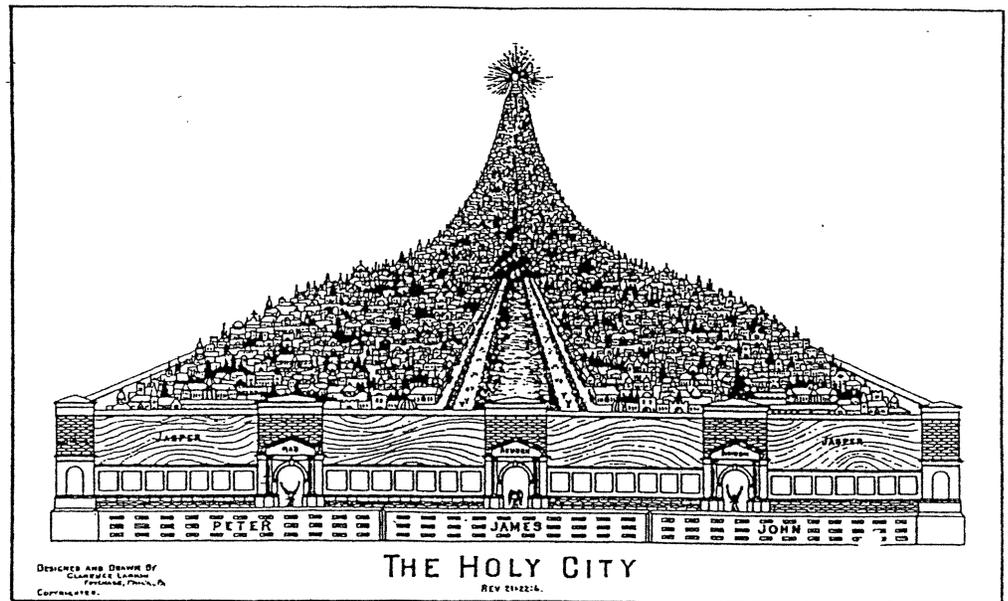
An heir to a man-sion, a robe, and a crown.



Model of a wealthy Jewish house in New Testament times

Eerdmans' Family Encyclopedia of the Bible, 214.

2d. The description of our eternal home:



Larkin, *Dispensational T.*
Page 148.

In Rev. 21:1-22:5 the actual description is given of our eternal home. It is a city, the New Jerusalem, with 12 foundations and 12 gates. Its dimensions, undoubtedly to be taken literally, stagger the imagination. "The city is laid out as a square. . .1500 miles, its

length and width and height are equal" (21:16 NASB) For 2000 years Christ has been constructing the city in heaven while completing the Church on earth. When the last building block is added to the city in heaven and the last believer is added to the Church on earth, Christ will return. It only took God six days to create the universe. What a magnificent place our eternal home must be! In glorious fellowship we will share the city with the triune God, the holy angels and all the redeemed (Heb. 12:22-23).

Our Bridegroom has gone to the Father's house to prepare the Bride's eternal home. At any moment He could return for us. No intervening events or special signs need to be anticipated. The promise of the Lord's imminent return constitutes the next event in God's prophetic program.

3b. The Savior's Promised Appearance: 14:3

1c. The Reception of Believers

Christ promised an abundance of abiding places in the Father's house. He must depart for a very good reason, namely to prepare our eternal home. Then the Savior would come and take the Bride into His presence forever.

2c. The Return to the Father's House

It should be noted that the believer eventually would be where Christ is, in the Father's house, that is, the third heaven or paradise (2 Cor. 12:1-4). If the posttribulationists are correct, Christ returns, we meet Him in the air, descend with Him to earth and rule with Him forever. If this scenario is true, then Christ spoke an untruth in John 14. In the posttribulational view the believer never spends a single moment in heaven.

2A. THE PICTURE OF THE RETURN OF THE LORD: 1 Thess. 4:1-18

1b. The Problems:

In 1 Thessalonians 4 the Apostle Paul discusses three major problems:

1c. The problem of immorality vs. 1-9

The Thessalonians had been saved out of a very pagan society and needed to be reminded that Christians should avoid every form of sexual immorality (v. 3).

2c. The problem of indolence vs. 10-12

Some believers at Thessalonica apparently had given up their means of livelihood in eager anticipation of the Lord's return. Having forgotten the Lord's admonition to "occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13), they had become dependent upon other believers.

Martin Luther once said, "If I knew the Lord were coming back tomorrow, I would plant an apple tree today." The believer needs to live as if the Lord were coming back today. He needs to work as if He were not retuning for 100 years.

3c. The problem of ignorance v. 13

The Thessalonians were inattentive when Paul taught them about the rapture. They were ignorant but should not have been. They all had hoped to live until the rapture. But the Lord tarried and some of their loved ones had passed away. Would they miss out on future blessings? Would they not be resurrected until after the Millennium?

2b. The Preview: v. 14

The Thessalonians should not be concerned about their departed love ones: "We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep." (NIV) Since every believer has identified with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection, he is safe with Jesus and will accompany Him at the rapture.

1c. The designation of "sleep":

cemetery - -

κοιμητήρια

Contrary to the teaching of the cults, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, the metaphor "sleep" describes the state not of the spirits and souls of individuals but of their bodies. When believers die, their bodies are placed in the ground. The term sleep is very fitting because they rest from their earthly labors and await the awakening of the resurrection. Interestingly, the English word cemetery is derived from the Greek *koimeterion*, that is, a place of sleep.

2c. The destiny of the saints and sinners:

The moment a believer dies he is present with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8). When the saint departs from this life, he is immediately present with Christ in heaven (Phil. 1:23) conducted there safely by the angels (Lk. 16:22).



When an unbeliever dies, his body is placed in the ground while his soul and spirit go immediately to the place of torment (Heb. 9:27). The Bible knows nothing of an intermediate state called purgatory or of a second chance for salvation after death.

3b. The Promise: v. 15

The doctrine of the rapture, Paul asserts, comes directly from the Lord, possibly revealed during Paul's three-year stay in Arabia (Gal. 1:17-18).

4b. The Picture: vs. 16-18

1c. The Return of the Lord, v. 16

Christ's coming will be heralded by three sounds:

1d. A shout: a cry of command.

2d. The voice of the archangel: Michael (Jude 9), perhaps in triumph.

3d. The trump of God: the last trump, a sound of deliverance, as God concludes His program for the Church. (1 Cor. 15:52; not to be confused with the seventh trump of Revelation 11:15).

2c. The Resurrection of the Dead, v. 16

At the return of the Lord the first event will be the resurrection of “the dead in Christ,” that is, the Church age saints (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:13).

3c. The Rapture of the Living, v. 17

The living believers will be “caught up together with them,” or reunited with those who fell asleep in Christ. The changing of our bodies will be instantaneous, “in the twinkling of an eye” (1 Cor. 15:52).

The term “rapture” is not found in the Bible but comes from the Latin *rapio*—to seize or snatch—accurately conveying the idea of sudden removal from this earth.

4c. The Reunion in the Air, v. 17

At the rapture we will meet our Lord and loved ones in the air. We have missed our believing relatives and friends who preceded us. They revel in God’s eternal presence, unperturbed by the succession of time. Withheld from them presently is anything that would detract from the bliss of heaven. On the other hand, their joy in heaven may be increased by knowing of the salvation of loved ones on earth (Luke 15:10).

5c. The Remaining with the Lord, v. 17

Being with the Lord forever includes returning with Him to heaven, rewards at the judgment seat, rejoicing at the marriage of the Lamb and ruling with Him during the Millennium and residing in the New Jerusalem for all eternity (Rev. 21:3; 22:1-5).

6c. The Reassurance from the Lord, v. 18

Their comforting hope was the descent of the Lord and their deliverance from the wrath of the tribulation period (1 Thess. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10; Rom 5:9). Were the believer to face the tribulation, then Paul’s concluding words would not be those of comfort but of caution.

CONCLUSION:

The believer’s fondest hope is the any-moment return of the Lord. The rapture is:

- (1) ***A comforting hope:*** 1 Thess. 4:18 “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”
- (2) ***A purifying hope:*** 1 John 3:3 “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”
- (3) ***A blessed hope:*** Titus 2:13 “Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing . . .”
- (4) ***A sure hope:*** 2 Peter 1:19 “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed. . .”

THE PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE

I THESSALONIANS 4

13 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.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 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.

16 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:

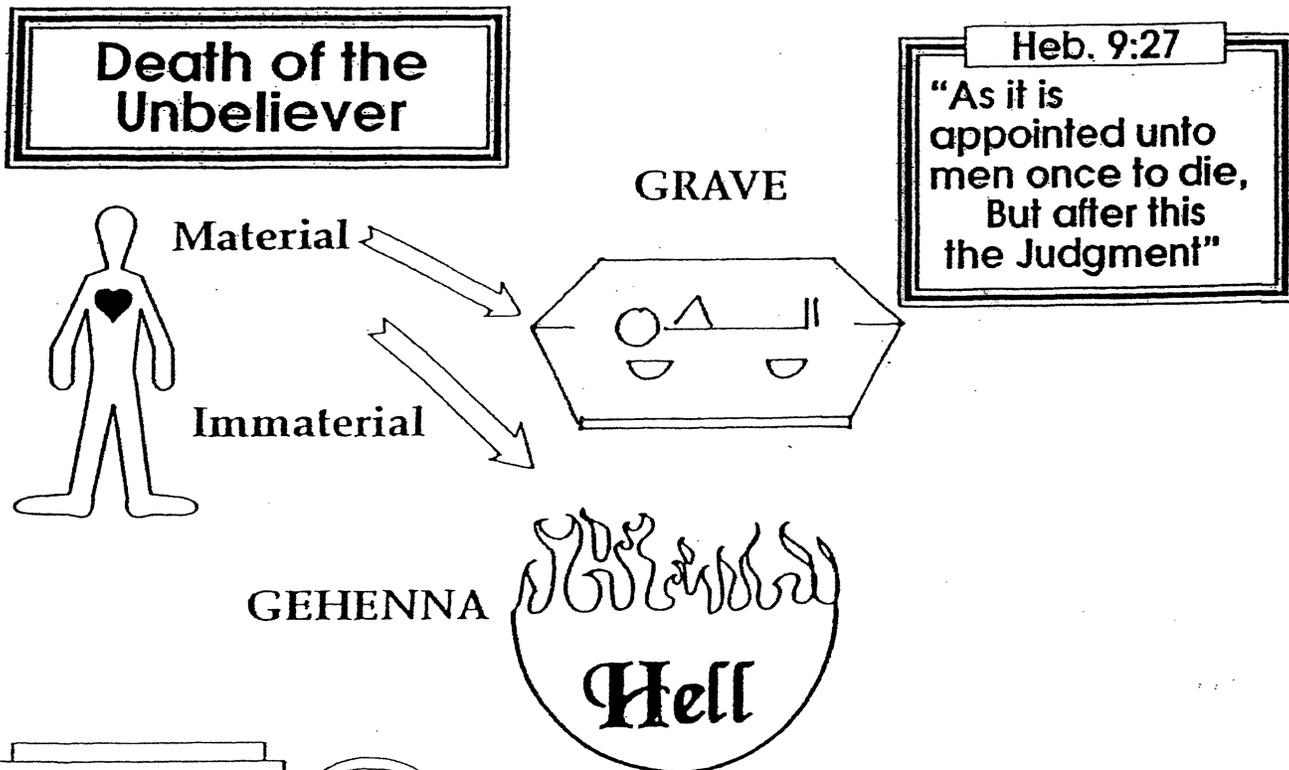
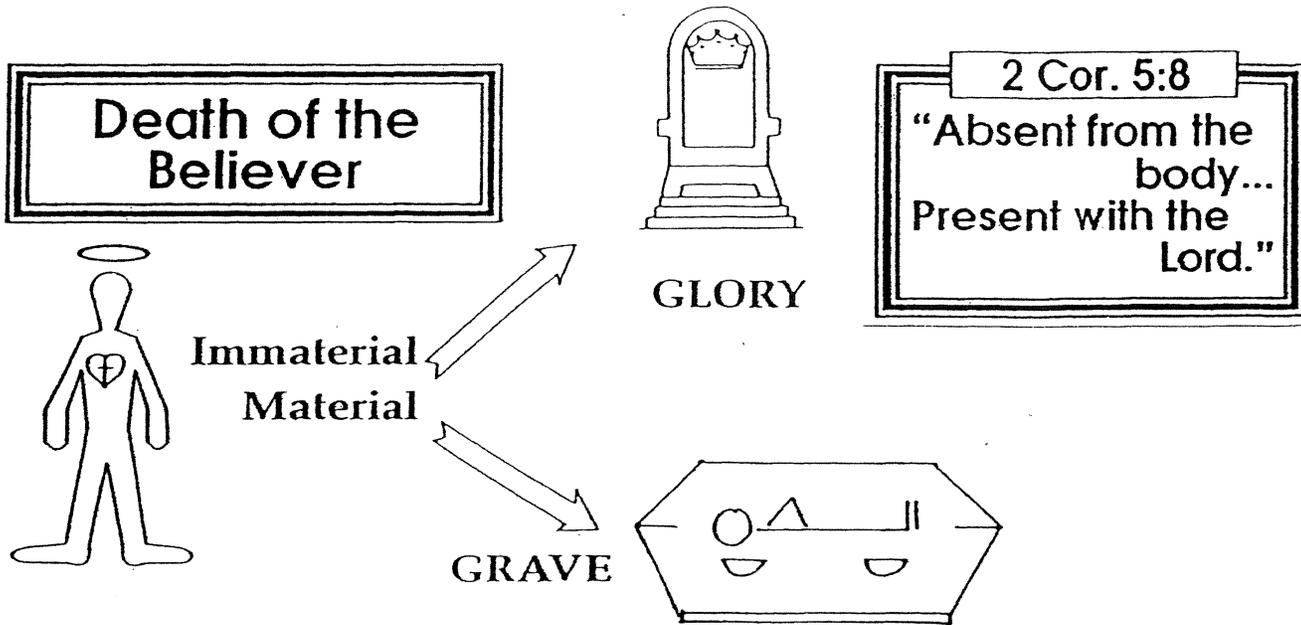
17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

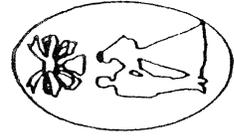
18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

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Death for Saints and Sinners





The Rapture



1

RETURN

5

REWARDS

II Cor. 5:10

6

Rev. 19:6-9
REJOICING

ACCOMPANIED BY
--SAINTS
--ANGELS

ANNOUNCED BY
--A SHOUT OR COMMAND
--VOICE OF THE
ARCHANGEL
--TRUMP OF GOD

LORD
WITH THE
LOVED ONES

4

REUNION

3

RAPTURE

2

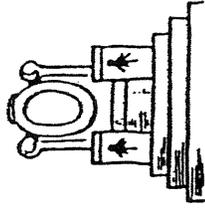
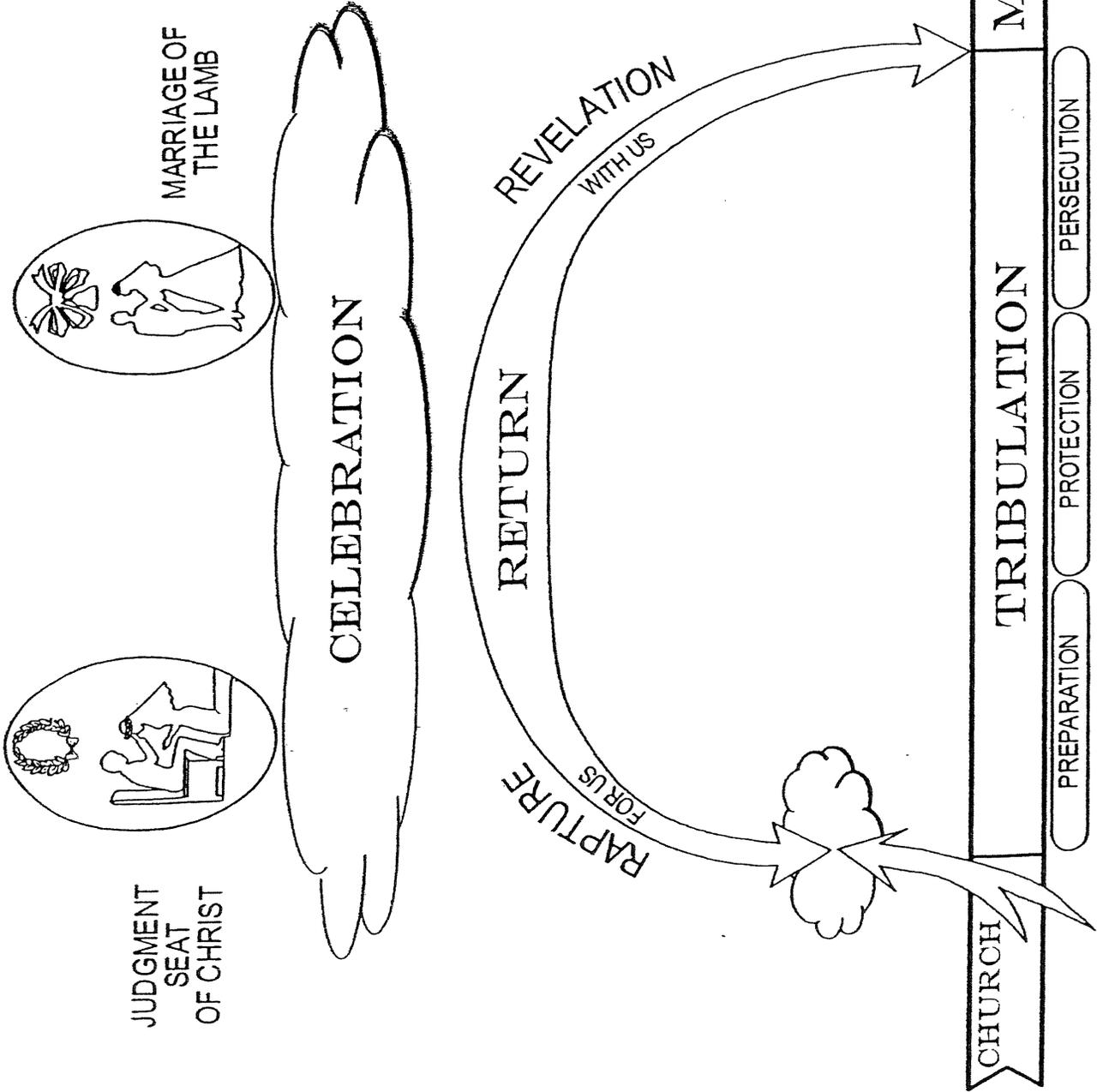
RESURRECTION
OF CHURCH-AGE SAINTS

7

REASSURANCE

I THESSALONIANS 4.
16 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: 17 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. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Eschatology Timeline



GREAT WHITE
THRONE
JUDGMENT



666



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST:

The Christian's Finest Hour



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

THE JUDGMENT SEAT: THE BELIEVER'S FINEST HOUR

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

1A. THE SESSION AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT:

1b. The issues at the judgment seat:



1c. Positively: Service and Rewards:

The Scriptures emphasize the work and rewards of the believer:

2 Cor. 5:10 "what he has done"

1 Cor. 3:13 "every man's work"

Eph. 6:8 "whatsoever good thing any man doeth"

Col. 3:23 "whatsoever ye do"

2c. Negatively: Not Sins

Christ's "one sacrifice for sins" (Heb. 10:12) brought "remission of these" (10:18) so complete that God can say, "I will remember them no more" (10:17)

2b. The interpretation of the judgment seat:

Is the Judgment Seat a *Protestant purgatory* or a *Christian's coronation*?

Is the Judgment Seat primarily a time of

tears or triumph?

gloom or glory?

remorse or rejoicing?

regret or recognition?

recrimination or recompense?

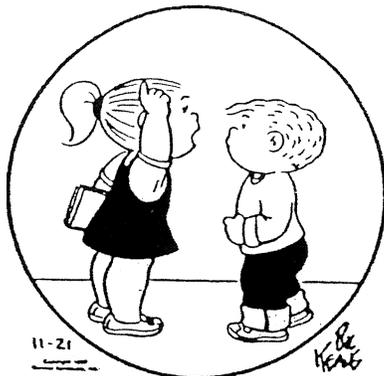
1c. The punitive view:

The judgment seat is a time of chastisement and shame:

1d. George Dollar says about Christ's action toward the believers:

He's going to take the good and faithful servants with Him; they will rule with Him over the earth. But He's going to send all of the wicked, lazy, unprofitable Christians. . .to outer darkness for one thousand years and they shall weep and there shall be gnashing of teeth (cited by Hoyt, *Bib. Sac.*, January-March 1980, 33).

FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



"After you die God plays back all your sins on videotape."

2d. Kenneth Dodson also writes of punishment at the judgment seat:

Justice toward His children demands that God reward them for both good works and bad works at the Judgment Seat of Christ. There will be crowns and rewards for good works. *There will be chastisement and stripes for bad works* (*The Prize of the Up-Calling or Paul's Secret of Victory*, 82 [emphasis added]).

Dodson further writes of God:

He has a videotape of every human life, with all the lines of human influence that have gone from that life into other human lives, *and He will play back all of these videotapes of all humanity*. This will be "God's Drama of History" (*Ibid.*, 77 [emphasis added]).

2c. The positive view:

Theologians holding this positive position maintain that Scripture teaches that all sins, both confessed sin and unconfessed, have been borne by Christ on the cross and that the Christian will never be faced with either at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (Hoyt, *Bib. Sac.*, January-March 1980, 36)

1d. Chafer and Walvoord support this view:

With reference to sin, Scripture teaches that the child of God under grace shall not come into judgment (John 3:18; 5:24; 6:37; Rom. 5:1; 8:1; 1 Cor. 11:32); in his standing before God, and on the ground that the penalty for all sin—past, present and future (Col. 2:13)—has been borne by Christ as the perfect substitute, the believer is not only placed beyond condemnation, but being in Christ is accepted in the perfection of Christ (1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:6; Col. 2:10; Heb. 10:14) and loved of God as Christ is loved (John 17:23) (Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 1974 ed., 282).

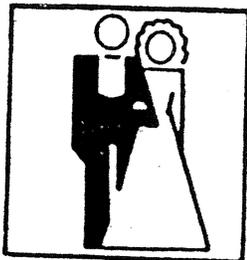
2d. Those who take a positive approach do not minimize the consequences of the believer's sins. Hoyt has well written on the subject:

The Bible does teach that there are and will be temporal and eternal *consequences* for the believer's sins. First, present unconfessed sin results in a *loss of desire* for service as one is out of experiential fellowship with God. Second, unconfessed sin also results in *loss of power* in the believer's life because sin grieves the Holy Spirit. Third, unconfessed sin results in *loss of opportunity* since the sinning believer is not living according to the will of God. These are three very real present consequences of unconfessed sin in the believer's life (*Bib. Sac.*, January-March 1980, 84, emphasis in the original).

3b. The individuals at the Judgment Seat:

1c. The individuals have experienced the rapture:

Would not the comfort of the blessed hope turn to consternation if the believer were to anticipate public humiliation after the rapture?



2c. The individuals constitute the Bride of Christ:

They are about to be joined eternally to the Bridegroom. What earthly bridegroom criticizes and chastises his bride just prior to the wedding and actually expects her to be at the ceremony? Instead of joining him joyfully at the altar, she will withdraw tearfully to her parents. Who could blame her?

3c. Some of the individuals have been in heaven for hundreds or thousands of years:

Will the saints who have enjoyed the splendors of heaven and the fellowship of the Savior for ages suddenly have that blessedness terminated by an event that will have the carnal ones among them in a state of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth?

2A. THE SUBLIMITY OF THE JUDGMENT SEAT:

It is safe to say that many believers are anything but anxious for the rapture because they have been taught to dread the *bema* after the rapture. A right understanding of the Judgment Seat puts an aura of anticipation over one's present and future life.

1b. The believer's recognition:

At the Judgment Seat the believer will be recognized by his Lord for his service. Hated by the world and misunderstood by other believers, the true worth of his character and conduct will receive divine recognition.

2b. The believer's rewards:

The New Testament revelation concerning the Church as a special company includes statements about the glorious destiny of the Bride of Christ, a company blessed in this life beyond any other group in human history (Eph. 1:3) and rewarded in glory in ways uniquely wonderful.

1c. Special rewards:

At the *bema* special Rewards are bestowed For faithful service. They are called crowns, or better, victor's garlands.

According to

Col. 3 and Eph 6

work should be done

--ethically

--energetically

--enthusiastically

--expectantly

2c. Individual rewards:

A second category of rewards involves the recognition of every action. The most routine activity of the life of the believer will either

receive a reward or forfeit a reward. Even "eating and drinking," if done for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31), will be rewarded. Paul encourages both bond slaves and free servants (Eph. 6:8c) that every good activity will be rewarded. While recognition and remuneration in this life may be minimal, the Lord will grant every good action "the reward of an inheritance." An action is worthwhile in God's eyes and suitable for reward if it is done from the heart (*kardia*, Col. 3:22) with the whole being (*ek pseuches*, Col. 3:23) and with the proper attitude (*eunoios*, Eph. 6:7).



The Judgment Seat of Christ









1. The Incorruptible Crown, to those who practice self-control (I Corinthians 9:24-27).
2. The Soul-Winner's Crown to those who are faithful in witnessing for Christ (I Thessalonians 2:19, 20).
3. The Crown of Righteousness to those who love and look for Christ's appearing (II Timothy 4:5-8).
4. The Crown of Life to those who endure trial because of their love for Christ (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10. See also John 21:15, 17).
5. The Shepherd's or Pastor's Crown to those who faithfully feed their flocks and live exemplary lives before them (I Peter 5:1-4).

Col. 3:22-24

²² Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of **heart**, fearing God. ²³ And whatever you do, do it **heartily**, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

Eph. 6:5-8

⁵ Servants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶ not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ with **goodwill** doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free.

The most routine matters of life take on a new meaning for the believer who realizes that every action may be, and if done properly, will be rewarded of God. A bitter spirit and a complaining attitude will forfeit reward. How glorious to know that if we "give it all we have," even housework and homework, not just "holy" work will someday receive "the reward of the inheritance."

3c. Universal rewards:

Some rewards are promised to every believer by virtue of the gracious provision of Christ in the atonement. Even carnal believers are blood-bought and may anticipate certain rewards. These rewards are not as a result of faithfulness in this life, but in response to God's gracious salvation. They belong to every Church Age believer who has been baptized into Christ.

1d. Divine appointment:

1 Cor. 6:2-3

Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? ³Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

Paul reminds carnal believers that they would participate in the millennial rule of Christ (rather than be excluded from the millennium). In addition, they would have the privilege of judging the angels.

2d. Divine affection:

1 Thess. 4:17

Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

The experience of the eternal presence of Christ and His everlasting love would be sufficient for the Bride of Christ. Every believer will be forever with the Bridegroom. What a comfort!

3d. Divine approval:

1 Cor. 4:5

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

Paul concludes the most lengthy discussion of the Judgment Seat with the observation that Christ at that time will reveal the innermost aspects of the human heart, not for the purpose of condemnation—"there is therefore now no condemnation" (Rom. 8:1)—but for the purpose of commendation. He will find something good to say about each one of us: "and then shall every man have praise of God." (1 Cor. 4:5) Will there be regrets at the *bema*? Certainly! But the overall emphasis is that of rejoicing.

How will the believer feel moments after the Judgment Seat? Paul concludes the most lengthy passage on the Judgment Seat with these arresting and comforting words (1 Cor. 4:5):

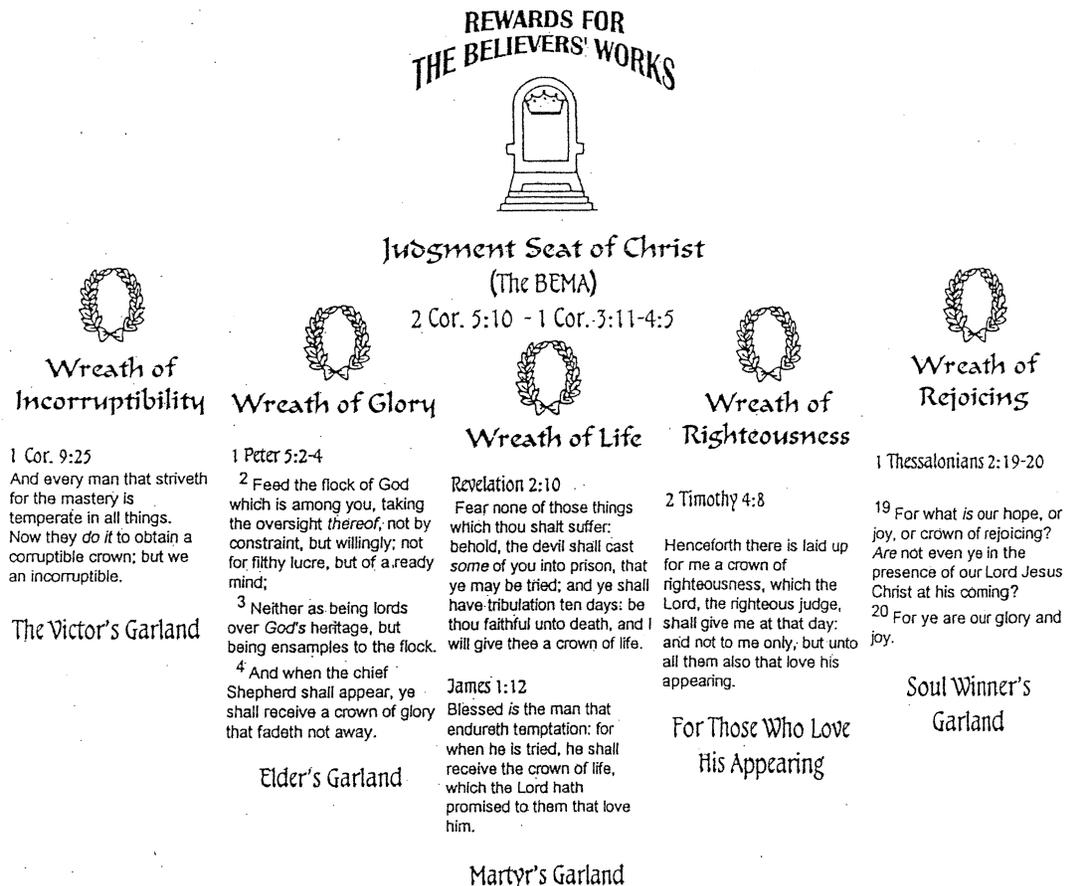
“And then shall every man have praise of God.”

To hear these words of commendation ringing in our ears will make it worth it all. **As the rapture is the believer's FONDEST HOPE, the Judgment Seat is the believer's FINEST HOUR.**

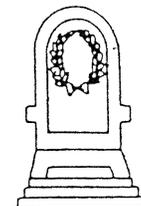
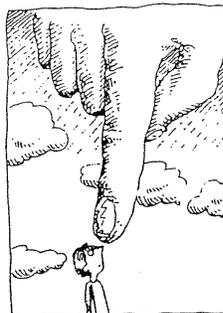
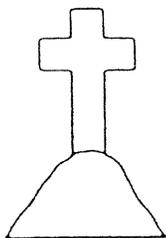
CONCLUSION:

Hoyt has well said:

The Judgment Seat of Christ might be compared to a commencement ceremony. At graduation there is some measure of disappointment and remorse that one did not do better and work harder. However, at such an event the overwhelming emotion is joy, not remorse. The graduates do not leave the auditorium weeping because they did not earn better grades. Rather, they are thankful that they have been graduated, and they are grateful for what they did achieve. To overdo the sorrow aspect of the judgment seat of Christ is to make heaven hell. To underdo the sorrow aspect is to make faithfulness inconsequential (*Bib. Sac.*, April-June 1980, 131).



The Believer's 3 Judgments



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As a Sinner at the Cross
Gal. 3:13
1 Pet. 2:29

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+

+++++

As a Son During Life
1 Cor.11:31-32
Heb. 12:5-7

+

+

+++++

As Servant at the Bema
Rom. 14:10-12
1 Cor. 4:1-5

1

2

3

THE PICTURES OF THE JUDGMENT SEAT

The Picture	The Passage	The Purpose	The Prospect
<i>The Believer Is A:</i>		<i>Our Life Is A:</i>	

1. Servant

Romans 14:10-12

LOYAL STEWARDSHIP

PROMOTION



But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall confess to God. So, then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

2. Builder

1 Corinthians 3:11-13

LASTING STRUCTURE

PRAISE



For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble - every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

3. Athlete

1 Corinthians 9:24-26

LAWFUL STRIVING

PRIZE



And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body; and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

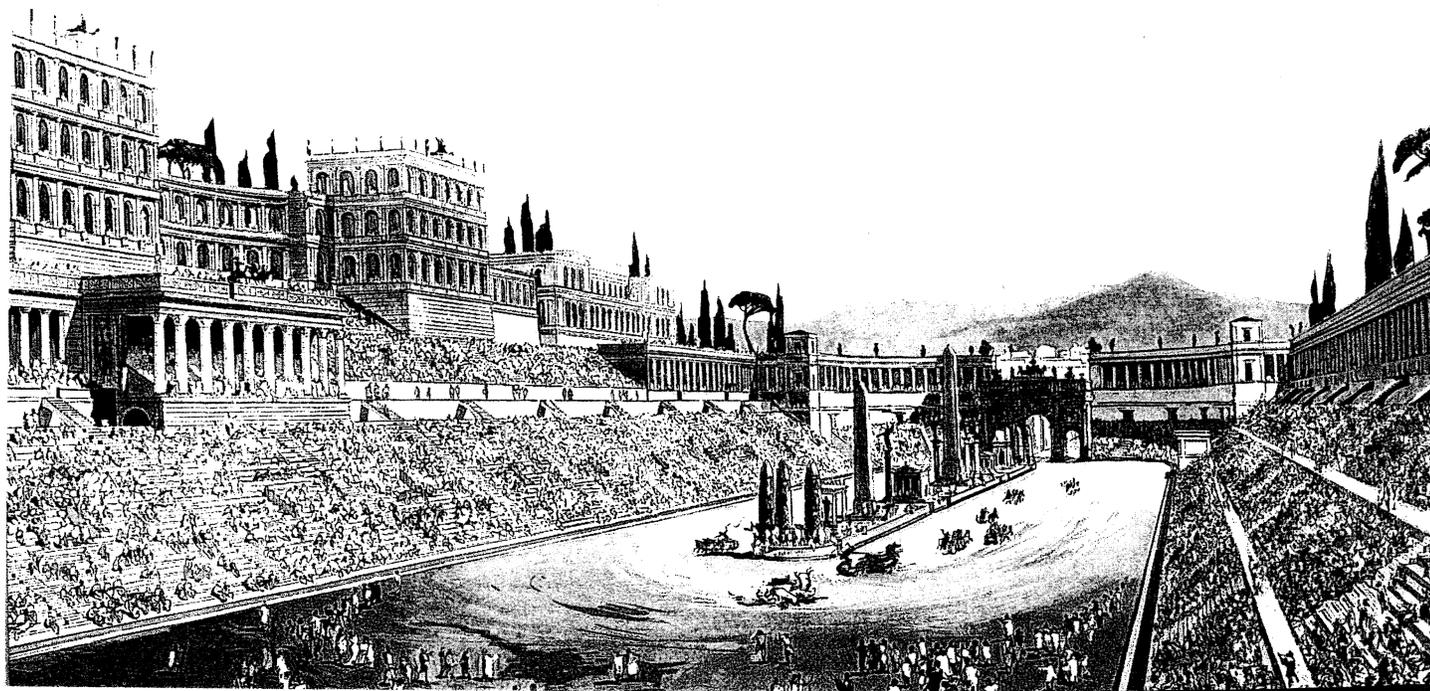
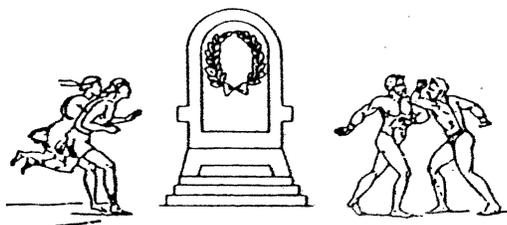
1 Cor. 9:24-27

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

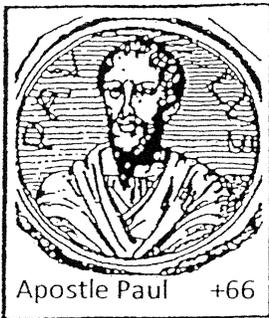
26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.



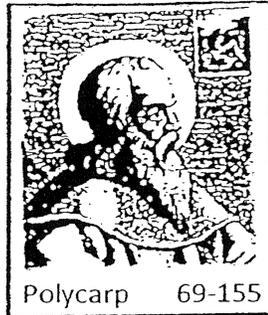
Paul's reference to the BEMA ("judgment seat") does not picture a courtroom scene but the umpire's seat at an athletic contest.

CHRISTIANS THROUGH THE CENTURIES²⁴



Apostle Paul +66

1



Polycarp 69-155

2



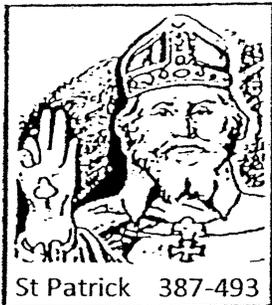
Tertullian 160-220

3



St Augustine 354-430

4



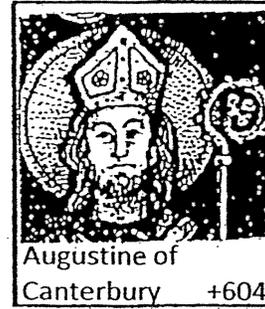
St Patrick 387-493
or 460

5



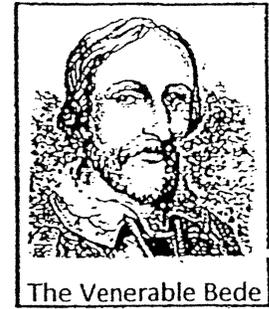
Boethius 480-524

6



Augustine of
Canterbury +604

7



The Venerable Bede
672-735

8



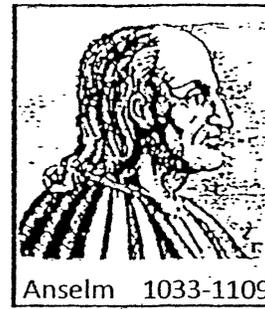
St Bernard 778-841

9



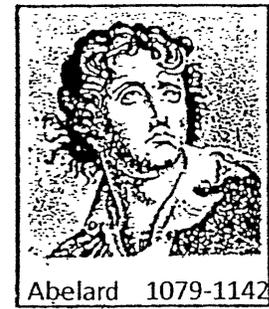
Wenceslaus
907-935

10



Anselm 1033-1109

11



Abelard 1079-1142

12



Elizabeth of Thuringer
1207-1231

13



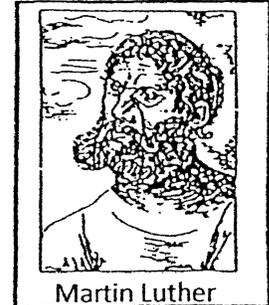
John Wycliff
1330-1384

14



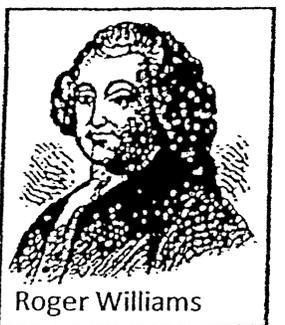
Savanarola
1452-1498

15



Martin Luther
1483-1546

16



Roger Williams
1603 ? - 1683

17



Johann S Bach
1685-1750

18



Charles H Spurgeon
1834-1892

19



Robert T Ketcham
1889-1978

20

I have attempted to select one representative saint for each century of the Christian Church. These glorified saints revel in the presence of God and the holy angels. Are we to assume that their joy is overshadowed by a gnawing fear as to what awaits them at the yet future judgment seat of Christ? Will those like St. Patrick have their joy abruptly end at the bema, possibly followed by weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth?

THE BELIEVER'S INTERMEDIATE BODY



THE TRANSPIGURATION.



LAZARUS CARRIED TO HEAVEN.

Manfred E. Kober, Ph.D.

The Nature of Man

- 1A. The Defense of the Inseparable Nature of Man:
Man has a body, soul, spirit, heart, mind, conscience and other immaterial capacities.
- 2A. The Demand for an Intermediate Body:
For man to function properly and to communicate with those around him, he needs a body.
- 3A. The Differences about an Intermediate Body:
 - 1b. Ignoring the issue:
Many theologians make no reference to the condition of an individual in the intermediate state.
 - 2b. The Roman Catholic Church espouses the unbiblical notion that all individuals suffer consciously and physically in purgatory for a period of time.
 - 3b. Many evangelicals either ignore or deny the possibility of an intermediate body.

Typical are Loraine Boettner's comments. He calls the intermediate state a state of imperfection: "This imperfection consists, first of all, in that the spirit is without a body, which for the human species is an abnormal condition. The body, with its organs of sense, is the instrument through which we make contact with the physical world. As long as the disembodied state continues the soul has, so far as we know, no instrument by which it can make contact with the physical world or communicate with the individuals here." (Loraine Boettner, *Immortality*, 1989, 95)

Boettner's view represents the position of most evangelical theologians: "The life of man thus falls not into two stages, as it is so often assumed, but into three. First, is the stage from birth until death, which is life in the present world and in the natural body; second, life between death and the resurrection, in the intermediate state, which is life without the body; and, third, life in the resurrection body, which is the final and eternal state. (*Ibid.*, 96)

Respected Southern Baptist theologian Gregg R. Allison, in an incisive article entitled "Four Theses Concerning Human Embodiment," cogently argues that human existence necessitates embodiment, but then, paradoxically, rejects the idea of a body in the intermediate state. Thus he speaks of "the strangeness of the disembodiment in the intermediate state." He further observes that "Physical death is the temporary separation of people from their body, so the intermediate state is an abnormal condition of disembodiment. At the return of Christ and its corollary event of bodily resurrection, people will be re-embodied and remain so for all eternity" (*The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 23.2 [2019], p.157, 173).



The Human Body's Three Stages

The Three Facets of Man's Existence:



This Earthly Life

The Intermediate State

The Eternal State

<p>Earthly, physical body in this life</p>	<p>Heavenly, physical, temporary body for the intermediate state</p>	<p>Resurrected and glorified old earthly body for all eternity</p>
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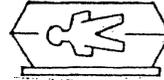
Given at Conception

Given at Death

Church Age Saints:
At the Rapture

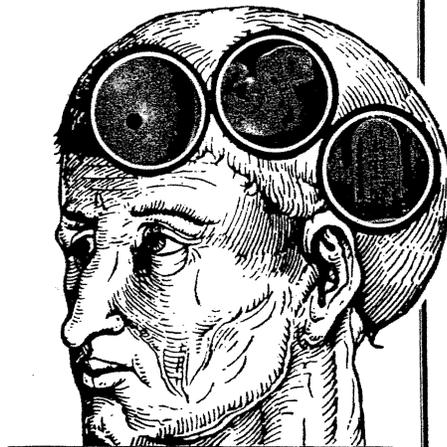
O.T. Saints and Tribulation Martyrs:
At the Second Advent

The Unsaved of All the Ages: (unglorified bodies)
At the Great White Throne



THE STAGES OF THE HUMAN BODY

1. THE FORMATION OF THE BODY
2. THE MATURATION OF THE BODY
3. THE DETERIORATION OF THE BODY
4. THE DIVESTATION OF THE BODY
5. THE DISSOLUTION OF THE BODY
6. THE SUBSTITUTION OF AN INTERMEDIATE BODY
7. THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

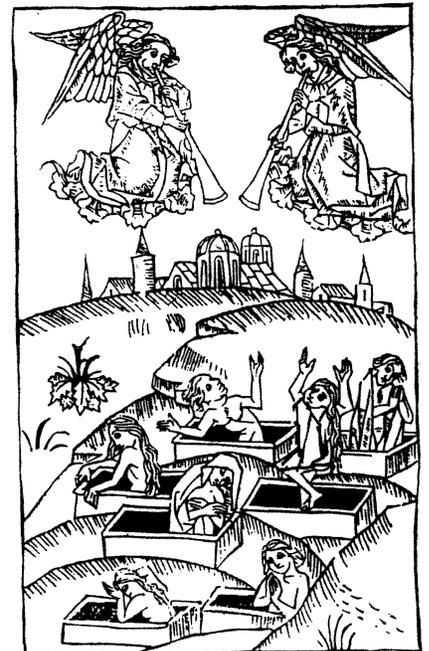


ZIGGY

MR. ZIGGY... YOUR BODY SEEMS TO BE REJECTING YOU !!



Manfred E. Haber, Th.D.



Will We Have An Intermediate Body After Death?

INTRODUCTION: What constitutes man's existence between death and the resurrection? Will he be bodiless, an unclothed spirit, or will he exist in a temporary, intermediate body? What is the nature of that body?

1A. THE EVIDENCE FOR THE INTERMEDIATE BODY FROM THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN

1b. The unity of man:

Scripture refers to man as having not just a body and mind, conscience, will, etc. Trying to classify all that constitutes man into two or three categories causes too many problems. Man must be thought of as a unit. Lacking any one element the existence is no longer man. Therefore, to exist as man in any environment or state of being, he must have a body whether it be physical, intermediate, or glorified.

2b. The function of man:

Man is composed of material and immaterial. The immaterial gives life to and directs the material. Without the material the immaterial can no longer function. The immaterial gives expression only through the material.

3b. The nature of man:

"We need to remember that the whole nature of man is redeemed and shall be up in glory. Man consists not only of spirit, but also of body and soul. He owns a personality, possesses a will, desires, capacity to love and be loved. . . There must be all the things necessary for a full and complete existence" (N. A. Woychuck, "Life in Heaven," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, October/December 1950).

2A. THE EVIDENCE FOR THE INTERMEDIATE BODY FROM SCRIPTURE:

1b. The intimation of the Old Testament concerning the intermediate body

1c. The general teaching:

The Old Testament affirms the conscious form of the intermediate state:
Gen. 37:35; 2 Sam. 12:23; Prov. 1:12, 12:28; Isa. 14:10; Ezek. 32:21;
1 Sam. 28, Eccl. 12:7

2c. The central passage: 1 Samuel 28

1 Sam 28:12, 15, 16, 19, 20. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. . . And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?... Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.



SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR.

1d. Presuppositions:

- 1e. It was Samuel who appeared, rather than a spirit:
 - The terror of the medium, who expected a spirit to come but instead saw Samuel.
 - Samuel talked directly with Saul.
 - The prophecy of Samuel was fulfilled the next day.
- 2e. Samuel appeared in the intermediate state:
 - The final resurrection had not taken place.
 - He was brought up directly from Sheol: "why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up!"
 - Samuel's physical resurrection will be with the rest of the O.T. saints at the second advent of Christ (Dan. 12:1-2).

2d. Contribution:

- 1e. The body had supernatural characteristics, for the witch said, "I see gods (elohim) ascending out of the earth," referring to Samuel.
- 2e. The body of Samuel was physical, recognizable and therefore had distinguishable similarities to his earthly condition. He was seen as an old man, clothed in accordance with his office of a prophet, features which were easily discernible by Saul.
- 3e. There was extended physical and vocal contact sustained between Saul and Samuel.
- 4e. According to 1 Samuel 28, the person in the intermediate state possesses a visible, physical (type) body, which makes possible physical, visual and vocal contact.



2b. The New Testament revelation concerning the intermediate body:

The issue on the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7, as well as Matthew 17 on the transfiguration, centers on the future kingdom period and not on the intermediate state. On the other hand, the passage in Mark 12, dealing with the question of marriage in heaven, clearly concerns the post-resurrection state. Several passages offer insight into the intermediate state; the clearest one is Luke 16:19-31 which offers concise teaching both on the intermediate body and its relationship to the intermediate state.

1c. The account of the rich man and Lazarus: Luke 16:19-31

Luke 16:19-31 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.



LAZARUS CARRIED TO HEAVEN.

1d. Presuppositions:

- 1e. Christ's parables have correspondence to historic events, factual reality and real persons.
- 2e. Sound doctrine can be illustrated by parabolic truth.
- 3e. Dives (the rich man) and Lazarus were real persons who died, and the picture painted by Christ is that of the intermediate state and the intermediate body.

2d. Support for the historicity of the incident:

The account of Dives and Lazarus appears to be of historical nature:

- 1e. It is never called a parable.
- 2e. It starts with certainty, "tis."
- 3e. It names one of the characters, "Lazarus."
- 4e. Christ referred to a historical person, "Abraham," in his conversation with Dives.
- 5e. The early church favored this view.
- 6e. The account possesses definite characters, "five brothers."
- 7e. The vividness of the account supports this.

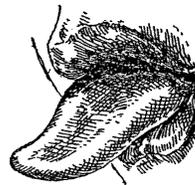
3d. Contribution:

- 1e. There is life both for the lost and saved beyond the grave.
- 2e. This after-life is lived in a conscious state as seen in the expression of the rich man.
- 3e. There is an eternal separation of the lost and saved.
- 4e. The intermediate body is vividly set forth for both saved and unsaved (Lazarus' possession of a finger implies that he also has an arm, a torso and a body. Dives' tongue implies that he has a mouth, a head and a body).

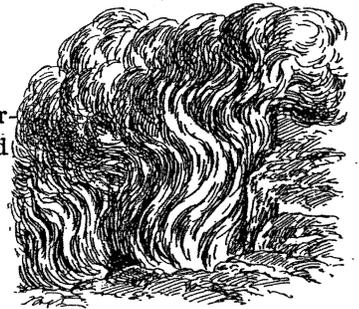
And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may



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- 5e. The lost will carry with them memories of their earthly experience.
- 6e. Between death and resurrection men see, feel, talk and remember (Lazarus, as an O.T. saint, will be resurrected at the second advent. Dives, as an unbeliever, will be resurrected with all the unbelievers of all the ages at the Great White Throne Judgment [Rev. 20]).

Das Gleichnis von dem reichen Manne und dem armen Lazarus.



4d. Conclusion:

The account of Luke 16 is the first conclusive argument in the progress of revelation from our Lord's lips regarding the existence of the nature of the intermediate body and the intermediate state. This body admits of a physical recognizable form which partakes of sight, feeling, speech and memory. This verifies the intimations of prior references such as Samuel conversing with King Saul.

3c. The appearance of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration:
Luke 9:27-36 (Mt. 17:1-8; Mk 9:2-8)

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

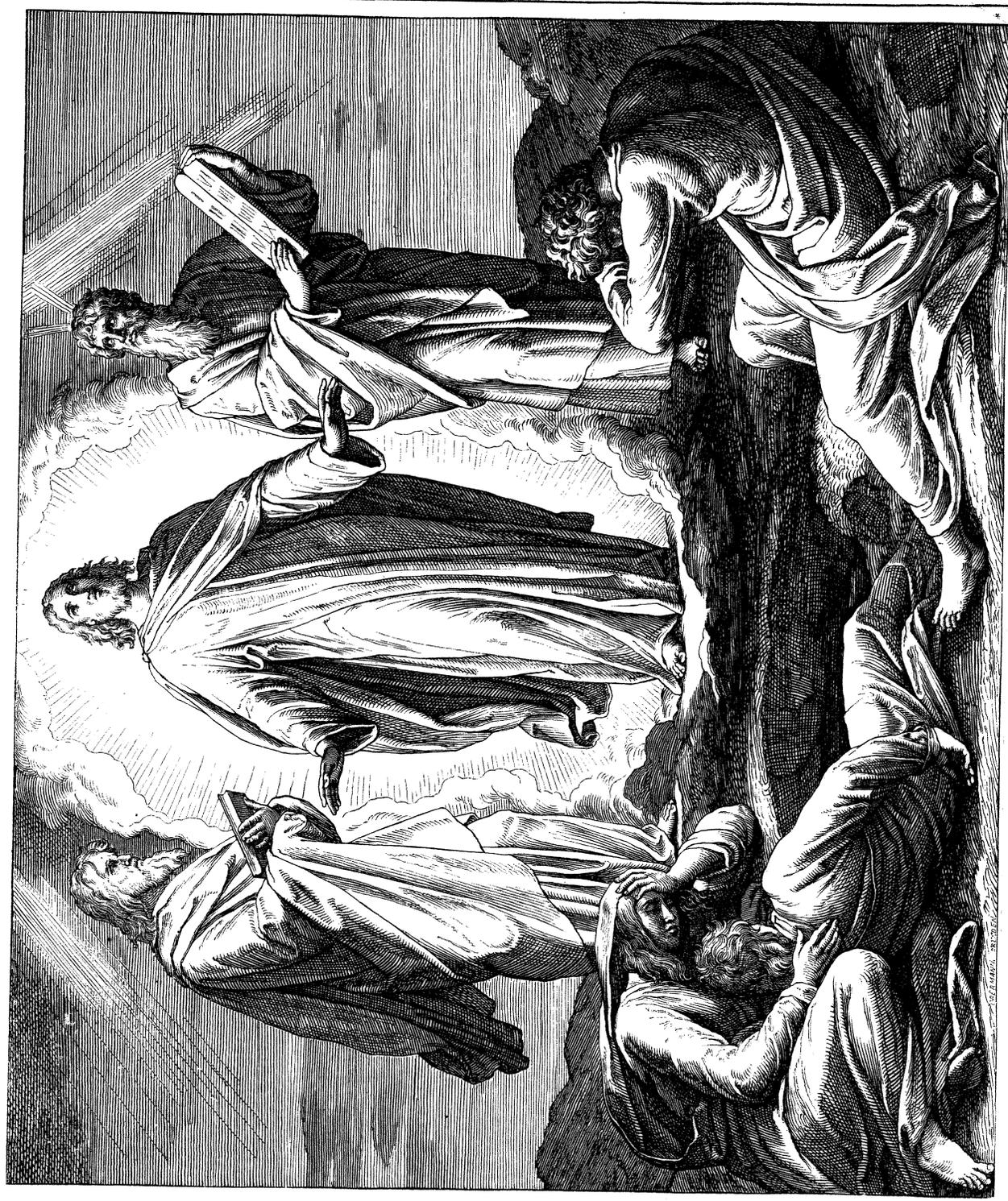
But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God. 28 And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. 29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. 30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: 31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. 32 But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. 33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. 34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. 35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. 36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

1d. Moses represented the Law, Elijah the prophets. They conversed with Jesus concerning His "Exodus," Luke 9:31. The Exodus is not just a reference to His death, burial and resurrection, but also to His ascension to heaven.

2d. The physical nature of Moses and Elijah:

Peter, James and John probably intuitively recognized the two individuals who made a sudden and startling appearance from the intermediate state. The fact that Peter suggested tabernacles be built indicates his perception of them being physical beings, in need of shelter. Mt. Hermon, where the transfiguration took place, has an elevation of 9,000 feet. Even if they were on a lower spur of the

Die Verführung Jesu.



mountain, the temperatures would still be inclement. Peter attempted to prolong the marvelous experience of witnessing this exchange between Christ and these two Old Testament saints. He gave no thought for his own comfort but was interested only in giving a safe and protected environment to those who came to encourage Christ concerning the suffering and ascension which lay ahead.

4c. The teaching of 2 Corinthians 5:1-6:

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: 3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. 5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. 6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

1d. Presuppositions:

- 1e. The passage is to be interpreted normally.
- 2e. The body spoken of is the intermediate body.

2d. Support:

- 1e. This view has ancient as well as modern supporters—Ephraem, Herveius, Aquinas, Hodge, Stanley, Tasker, Pinter.
- 2e. This passage fits the scheme of the progress of revelation.
- 3e. The force of the passage indicates this “we know. . .we have. . .”
- 4e. The account accepts Paul’s earnest groanings and desires as genuine and attainable because God has provided an intermediate body that **“we shall not be found naked.”**
- 5e. It is more consistent in its anthropology: there is a body for now, a body for the future, and a body for the intermediate state.
- 6e. Arguments made by some that this is the resurrection body, rather than the intermediate body, do not nullify the existence of and reference to an intermediate body in Scripture. The passage asserts that this body is prepared by God, it is from heaven, and has existed from past eternity.
- 7e. Even the opponents of the intermediate body acknowledge that the language argues for a body after death, (e.g. Plummer).
- 8e. Lewis Sperry Chafer remarks:
 “The thought here expressed is that the redeemed do not desire a disembodied state, which state is inevitable if there be no intermediate body. The body described in this passage is said to be ‘from heaven,’ rather than from the grave. Being of heavenly origins, it belongs to those realities which are eternal.



That it belongs to things eternal does not require that it be employed forever. Certainly, the final body of glory is secured only at the coming of Christ. And, as certainly, the body of 2 Corinthians 5:1-8 is provided that there may be no moment of disembodiment. These two facts seem to compel the conclusion that there is an intermediate body." (*Systematic Theology Vol. II*, p. 156)

5c. The dead saints in heaven in Revelation 6:9-11:

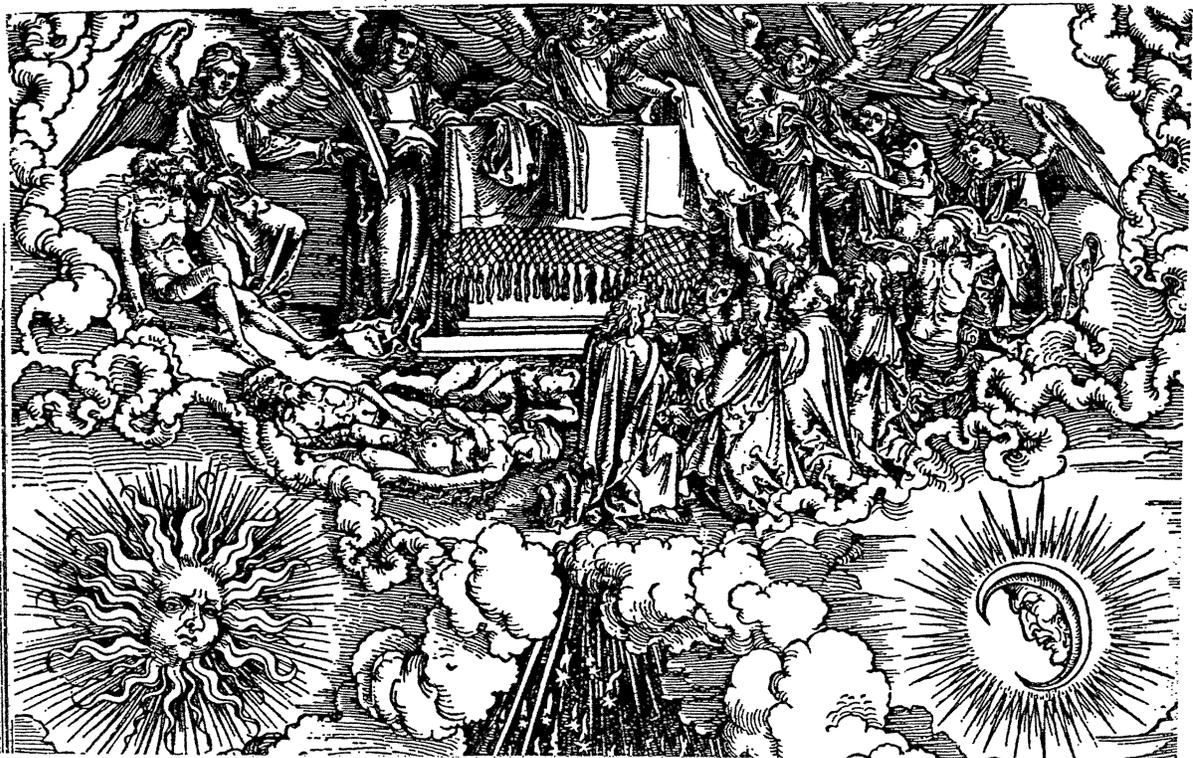
And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? 11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.



- 1d. Presuppositions:
This is not the Church in heaven, but the intermediate state for Tribulation saints.
- 2d. Support:
Many premillennial, pretribulational, dispensational commentators agree on this view.
- 3d. Conclusions:
The intermediate body is in a visible, bodily form in which the souls of the redeemed vocalize prayer and praise, remember their martyrdom, and occupy space. The fact that they wear white robes indicates the physical nature of their bodies.

Support for the Believer's Intermediate Body

The Case of Samuel	1. Samuel 28	Samuel appears to Saul in a physical, recognizable body
The Situation of Dives	Luke 16:19-31	The rich man in hell suffered physical pain, arguing for a body
The Condition of Lazarus	Luke 16:19-31	Lazarus in Paradise, long before his resurrection, has a body
Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration	Lk. 19:27-36	They appeared as recognizable, physical beings, in need of shelter
Paul's Prayer for a Body	2. Cor. 5:1-6	Paul desired a body after death rather than a disembodied state
The Tribulation Martyrs in Heaven	Rev. 6:9-11	The saints' wearing of white robes argues for a physical body



What Will We Be Doing for All Eternity?



What Will We Be Doing for All Eternity?



Our Eternal Activity

- 1. Serving the Savior*
- 2. Ruling the World*
- 3. Judging the Angels*
- 4. Enjoying Fellowship*
- 5. Offering Worship*
- 6. Singing Praise*
- 7. Entering Rest*



WHAT WILL WE BE DOING FOR ALL ETERNITY?

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

I remember vividly my naïve anticipation of heaven as a child. Somehow I believed that I would be standing before God's throne, waving for all eternity palm branches and saying, "Glory, hallelujah!" Though I desired to be with Christ, such routine activity seemed to me rather boring.

The scriptural statements are sparse concerning the believer's occupation in the eternal state. Nevertheless, several activities are stated or implied, activities which should enhance our anticipation of eternity.

1. Serving the Savior

a. The privilege of service:

John reveals that in our eternal home, the heavenly Jerusalem, "his servants shall serve him," literally, "His slaves will keep on serving Him" (Rev. 22:3). The church age believers, who have been made kings and priests unto God" (Rev. 1:6) will serve Christ in a priestly and royal function.

b. The pattern for service:

As in the present dispensation angels are God's servants to the saints (Heb. 1:14), so for all eternity it will be the saints' privilege to serve the Savior. Whatever that service might imply, one can be certain that it will be interesting and worthwhile activity.

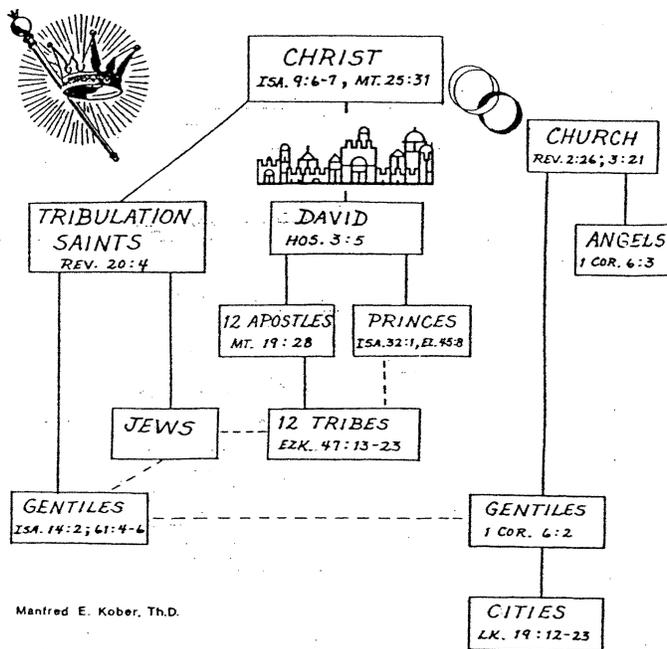
2. Ruling the World

a. Appointments to every believer:

John further suggests that the climaxing privilege of God's slaves is to share in the eternal reign of Christ, "for they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:5). Already in the millennial kingdom we will rule with Christ (Rev. 20:4, 6--and that includes carnal believers such as the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 6:2). This is the eventual fulfillment of God's command to rule over all creatures and creation (Gen. 1:26).

The diagram shows tentatively the chain of authority for the Millennium.

The Monarch And His Millennial Managers



b. Areas of responsibility:

Greater faithfulness will be rewarded with greater responsibility. In the parable of the pounds, the Savior indicated that some servants would rule over ten cities, some over five (Luke 19:17-19). As mentioned above, this rule includes royal and priestly activity, for the saints in heaven praise God, saying, [thou] "hast made us unto our God kings and priests: we shall reign over the earth" (Rev. 5:10). This authority might be expanded in the eternal state as we rule with Christ over the nations (Rev. 21:26, 22:2) and possibly the vast galaxies of the new universe.

3. Judging Angels

a. Supervision of angels in the millennium and eternal state:

According to the Apostle Paul, every believer will share in Christ's rule and in the judgment of angels: "Do ye not know that saints shall judge the world? . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1. Cor. 6:2-3). This somewhat ambiguous reference may relate to the administration of angels in their service both to the Savior and His Bride in future eons.

b. Sentencing of evil angels at the Great White Throne Judgment: Some see the reference to judgment as the believer's involvement in judging Satan and the demons at the climactic judgment immediately after the millennium (Rev. 20:12-15). After the marriage of the Lamb in heaven, the Bride apparently will accompany the Bridegroom wherever He is and will assist Him in His activities.



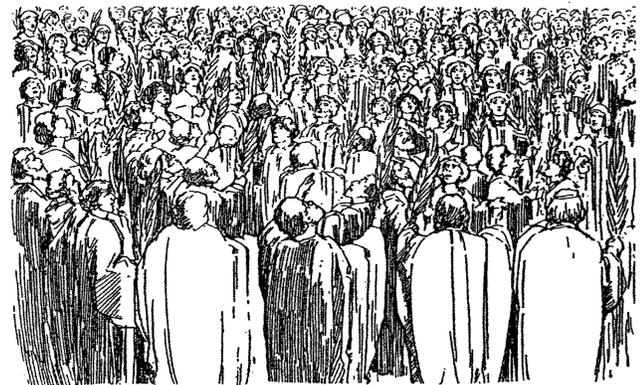
4. Enjoying Fellowship

a. Companionship of saints, angels and the triune God:

Paul intimated the unbroken and intimate fellowship the believer will enjoy with his Savior from the moment of his death (1 Thess. 4:14) and the rapture (4:17, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord"). Furthermore, that blessed fellowship includes fellowship with the triune God (Rev. 20:3-4), the holy angels and the saints of all the ages (Heb. 12:22-23). Being totally sanctified in his body, soul and spirit (1. Thess. 5:23), the believer's individual idiosyncrasies will longer affect harmonious fellowship but each one of us will be a paragon of perfection. As someone has wryly remarked, *"To dwell with saints we love above, that will be glory! To dwell below with those we know. . .well, that's another story!"*

The Lord might well grant us the opportunity to ask Him and the biblical writers about matters that always have intrigued us. The question is, will we care then who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, who were the sons of God in Genesis 6 or how Noah celebrated his 900th birthday?

It is impossible to imagine the delight of fellowship with our beloved relatives and friends who have gone before and lengthy conversations with individuals like Noah, Job and Abraham, as well as Deborah, Esther and Mary.



before and lengthy conversations with individuals like Noah, Job and Abraham, as well as Deborah, Esther and Mary.



b. Consumption of paradisiacal food:

In this life fellowship frequently involves food. Will that which enhances fellowship in this life be absent from the believer's experience in the future state? Even here the prophetic word affords a very satisfactory answer. God's provision for a variety of food on the tree of life and the pure water in the river of life (Rev. 22:1-5) will serve more than esthetic purposes. Undoubtedly, these viands are designated to be refreshment for the redeemed. The Holy Spirit made the promise that he "that overcometh I will give to eat of the tree of life" (Rev. 2:7). That includes every believer, because John defines an overcomer as one who "believes that Jesus is the Son of God" (1. John 5:5). Indeed, this future fellowship is one of the benefits of our salvation.

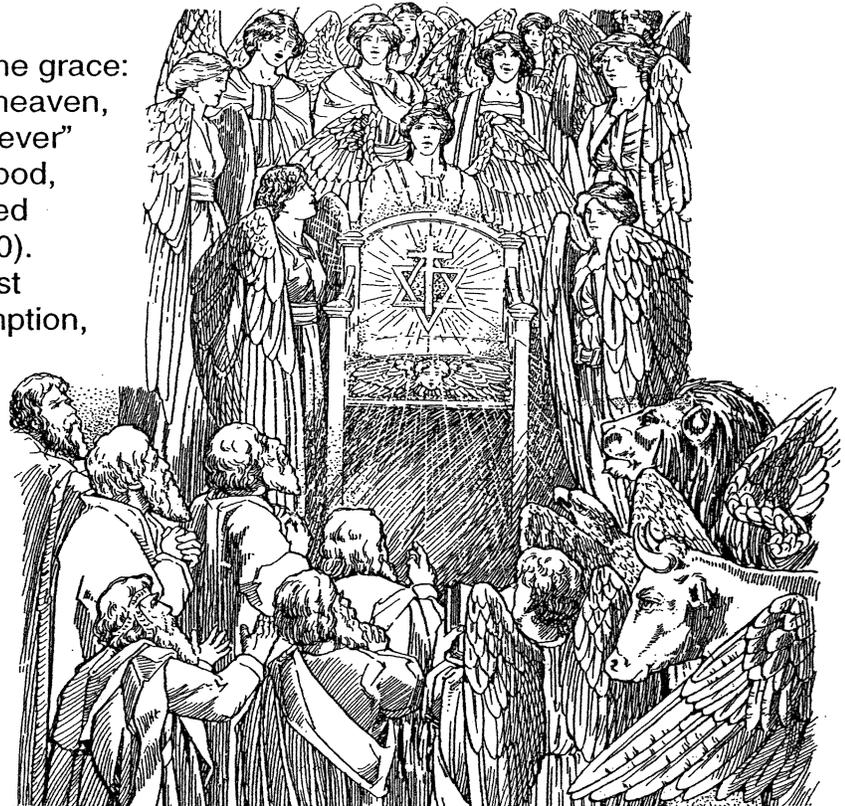


5. Offering Worship

a. The adoration of the Lamb:

In eternity to come, the saints will join the twenty-four elders who bow before the throne and the throng pictured in heaven who say, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5:12).

b. The acknowledgement of divine grace:
The theme of the worshipping saints in heaven, which will rise to "the Lamb forever and ever" (Rev. 5:13), focuses on Christ's shed blood, His gracious redemption and underserved honor bestowed on His own (Rev. 5:9-10). As the saints fully understand what Christ has done for their and the world's redemption, they will be filled with wonder and adore Him in worship.



6. Singing Praise

a. The effects of Spirit-control:

If the filling of the Spirit today is evidenced by "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Eph. 5:19), the believer in the eternal state, fully glorified (Rom 8:30) and completely

controlled by the Spirit, will join the heavenly chorus of angels and redeemed. The singing of the redeemed of the tribulation (Rev. 5:9) will undoubtedly continue in future ages.



b. The expression of adoration in song:
As the angels sang at creation (Job 38:6-7) and at the incarnation (Luke 2:13-14), they undoubtedly will sing at the consummation. The saints will join them and sing ever new songs (Isa. 42:10). The songs of heaven will be an expression of worship. Since true worship is in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), all future songs will be spiritual in nature rather than carnal in their appeal, as certain songs are today. Furthermore, all songs will be theologically sound in content (according to doctrinal truth), something one could only wish were true this side of glory.

7. Entering Rest

a. The distinctions of rest:
The biblical concept of rest involves inactivity but cessation of a certain type of activity. A final rest is promised to believers. The writer to the Hebrews speaks of **the Creator's rest** (4:4), **Canaan's rest** (3:18, 4:5), **Christ's rest** (4:3), and also of a future **Creation's or Heaven's rest**, because "there remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God" (4:9).

THE REST IN HEBREWS 3 - 4				
	CREATOR'S	CANAAN'S	CHRIST'S	CREATION'S (HEAVEN'S)
REFERENCE	4:4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.	3:18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believe not?	4:3a For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest:	4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.
TIME	PERPETUAL	PAST	PRESENT	PROSPECTIVE
SOURCE	WORK OF GOD	TYPE OF CHRIST	DEATH OF CHRIST	PRESENCE OF CHRIST
RELATIONSHIP	PREFIGURES ALL OTHER RESTS	PATTERNED AFTER CREATOR'S REST	POSSESSED BY FAITH	PERFECTED IN THE FUTURE
RELEVANCY	GOD	O.T. SAINTS	N.T. SAINTS	O.T. AND N.T. SAINTS
				



b. The delights of the eternal rest:

What glorious anticipation that after the conflicts, controversies and confusion of this life and after the satanic strategy against the Savior and the saints at the end of the millennium (Rev. 20:7-10), the believer will enjoy his unending, undisturbed rest from sin and Satan. The rest of heaven is not a passive one but an existence filled with unending delight. J. Edmonson writes about heaven as a happy place. *"Two things are found in heaven which cannot fail to make its inhabitants happy: the first is, the absence of all evil; and the second is, the presence of all good. The one prevents sorrow; and the other brings fullness of joy"* (*The Home Beyond or Views of Heaven* [1885], 366).

Indeed our gracious God has prepared a glorious future for believers. If you know Jesus Christ as personal Savior, these blessed prospects are part of your salvation experience, involving indescribable future felicity.

—◆—
THE HEAVENLY REST.

THERE is an hour of peaceful rest,
To mourning wanderers given;
There is a joy for souls distressed,
A balm for every wounded breast,
'T is found above, in heaven.

There is a soft, a downy bed,
'T is fair as breath of even;
A couch for weary mortals spread,
Where they may rest the aching head,
And find repose — in heaven.

There is a home for weary souls
By sin and sorrow driven;
When tossed on life's tempestuous shoals,
Where storms arise, and ocean rolls,
And all is drear but heaven.

There, faith lifts up her cheerful eye,
To brighter prospects given;
And views the tempest passing by,
The evening shadows quickly fly,
And all serene in heaven.

There, fragrant flowers, immortal bloom,
And joys supreme are given;
There, rays divine disperse the gloom:
Beyond the confines of the tomb
Appears the dawn of heaven.

WILLIAM BINGHAM TAPPAN.

1822, 1846.
—◆—

A Library of Religious Poetry,
Philip Schaff and Arthur Gilman, eds.
(1881), 945.

THE SAINTS' EVERLASTING REST

by Richard Baxter, 1652

(A paraphrase and abridgment by Robert E. Baxter)

"There remains therefore a **rest** to the people of God."
Hebrews 4:9



CHAP. X.

The Saint's Rest is not to be expected on Earth.

§ 1. In order to shew the sin and folly of expecting rest here, § 2. (I.) the reasonableness of present afflictions is considered; § 3. (1.) that they are the way to rest, § 4. (2.) keep us from mistaking our rest, § 5. (3.) from losing our way to it, § 6. (4.) quicken our pace towards it, § 7. (5.) chiefly incommode our flesh, § 8, 9. and (6.) under them the sweetest foretastes of rest are often enjoyed; § 10. (II.) How unreasonable to rest in present enjoyments; § 11. (1.) that 'tis idolatry; § 12. (2.) that it contradicts God's end in giving them; § 13. (3.) is the way to have them refused, withdrawn, or embittered; § 14. (4.) that to be suffered to take up our rest here is the greatest curse; § 15. (5.) that it is seeking rest where it is not. § 16 (6.) that the creatures without God, would aggravate our misery. § 17. (7.) and all this is confirmed by experience. § 18. The Author laments that this is nevertheless a most common sin. § 19-23 (III.) How unreasonable our unwillingness to die, and possess the saint's rest, is largely considered. § 24. The Author apologizes for saying so much on this last head.

§ 1. **W**E are not yet come to our resting place. Doth it remain? How great then is our sin and folly to seek and expect it here? Where shall we find the Christian that deserves not this reproof? We would all have continual prosperity, because it is easy and pleasing to the flesh; but we consider not the unreasonableness of such desires. And when we enjoy convenient houses, goods, lands, and revenues? or the necessary means God hath appointed for our spiritual good; we seek rest in these enjoyments. Whether we are in an afflicted, or prosperous state, it is apparent, we exceedingly make the creature our rest. Do we not desire creature enjoyments more violently, when we want them, than we desire God himself? Do we not delight more in the possession of them, than in the enjoyment of God? And if we lose them, doth it not trouble us more than our loss of God? Is it not enough, that they are refreshing helps in our way to heaven, but they must also be made our heaven itself? Christian reader, I would as willingly make thee sensible of this sin, as of any sin in the world, if I could tell how to do it; for the Lord's greatest quarrel with us is in this point. In order to this, I most earnestly beseech thee to consider,—the reasonableness of present afflictions,—and the unreasonableness of resting in present enjoyments;—as also of our unwillingness to die, that we may possess eternal rest. {181}

§ 2. (I.) To shew the reasonableness of present afflictions, consider,—they are the way to rest;—they keep us from mistaking our rest,—and from losing our way to it;—they quicken our pace towards it;—they chiefly incommode our flesh;—and under them God's people have often the sweetest foretastes of their rest.

§ 3. (1.) Consider, that labor and trouble are the common way to rest, both in the course of nature and grace. Can there possibly be rest without weariness? Do you not travel and toil first, and rest after? The day for labor is first, and then follows the night for rest. Why should we desire the course of grace to be perverted, any more than the course of nature? It is an established decree, *that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*^[298] And that *if we suffer, we shall also reign with Christ.*^[299] And what are we that God's statutes should be reversed for our pleasure?

[298] Acts xiv, 22.

[299] 2 Timothy ii, 12.

§ 4. (2.) Afflictions are exceeding useful to us, to keep us from mistaking our rest. A Christian's motion towards heaven is voluntary, and not constrained. Those means therefore are most profitable, which help his understanding and will. The most dangerous mistake of our souls is, to take the creature for God, and earth for heaven. What warm, affectionate, eager thoughts have we of the world, till afflictions cool and moderate them? Afflictions speak convincingly, and will be heard when preachers cannot. Many a poor Christian is sometimes bending his thoughts to wealth, or flesh pleasing, or applause; and so loses his relish of Christ, and the joy above; till God break in upon his riches, or children, or conscience, or health, and break down his mountain which he thought so strong: And then, when he lieth in Manasseh's fetters; or is fastened to his bed with pining sickness, the world is nothing, and heaven is something. If our dear Lord did not put these thorns under our head, we should sleep out our lives, and lose our glory. {182}

§ 5. (3.) Afflictions, are also God's most effectual means to keep us from losing our way to our rest. Without this hedge of thorns, on the right hand, and left, we should hardly keep the way to heaven. If there be but one gap open, how ready are we to find it, and turn out at it? When we grow wanton, or worldly, or proud, how doth sickness, or other affliction, reduce us? Every Christian, as well as Luther, may call affliction one of his best schoolmasters; and with David may say, *Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept thy word.*^[300] Many thousand recovered sinners may cry, "O healthful sickness! O comfortable sorrows! O gainful losses! O enriching poverty! O blessed day that ever I was afflicted!" Not only the *green pastures*, and *still waters*, but *the rod and staff, they comfort us*. Though the word and Spirit do the main work, yet suffering so unbolts the door of the heart, that the word hath easier entrance.

[300] Psalm cxix, 67.

§ 6. (4.) Afflictions likewise serve to quicken our pace in the way to our rest. It were well if mere love would prevail with us, and that we were rather drawn to heaven, than driven. But seeing our hearts are so bad, that mercy will not do it; it is better be put on with the sharpest scourge, than loiter, like the *foolish virgins*, till *the door is shut*. O what difference is there, betwixt our prayers in health, and in sickness; betwixt our repentings in prosperity and adversity! Alas! if we did not sometime feel the spur, what a slow pace would most of us hold towards heaven? Since our vile natures require it, why should we be unwilling that God should do us good by sharp means? Judge, Christian, whether thou dost not go more watchfully and speedily in the way to heaven, in thy sufferings, than in thy more pleasing and prosperous state. {183}

§ 7. (5.) Consider further, it is but the flesh that is chiefly troubled and grieved by affliction. In most of our sufferings the soul is free, unless we ourselves wilfully afflict it. "Why then, O my soul, dost thou side with this flesh, and complain, as it complaineth? It should be thy work to *keep it under, and bring it into subjection*, and if God do it for thee, shouldst thou be discontented? Hath not the pleasing of it been the cause of almost all thy spiritual sorrows? Why then may not the displeasing of it further thy joys? Must not *Paul and Silas sing*, because *their feet are in the stocks*? Their spirits were not imprisoned. Ah, unworthy soul! is this thy thanks to God for preferring thee so far before thy body? When it is rotting in the grave, thou shalt be a companion of the perfected spirits of the just. In the mean time, hast thou not consolation which the flesh knows not of? Murmur not then at God's dealings with thy body; if it were not for want of love to thee, he would not have dealt so by all his saints. Never expect thy flesh should truly expound the meaning of the rod. It will call love, hatred; and say, God is destroying, when he is saving. It is the suffering party, and therefore not fit to be the judge." Could we once believe God, and judge of his dealings by his word, and by their usefulness to our souls, and reference to our rest, and could we stop our ears against all the clamors of the flesh, then we should have a truer judgment of our afflictions.

§ 8. (6.) Once more consider, God seldom gives his people so sweet a foretaste of their future rest, as in their deep afflictions. He keeps his most precious cordials for the time of our greatest faintings and dangers. He gives them, when he knows they are needed, and will be valued: and when he is sure to be thanked for them, and his people rejoiced by them. Especially when our

sufferings are more directly for his cause, then he seldom fails to sweeten the bitter cup. The martyrs have possessed the highest joys. When did Christ preach such comforts to his disciples, as when *their hearts were sorrowful* at his departure? When did he appear among them, and say, *Peace be unto you*, but when they were shut up for fear of the Jews? When did Stephen *see heaven opened*, but when he was giving up his life for the testimony of Jesus? Is not that our best state, wherein we have most of God? Why else do we desire to come to heaven? If we look for a heaven of fleshly delights, we shall find ourselves mistaken. Conclude then, that affliction is not so bad a state for a saint in his way to rest. Are we wiser than God? Doth he not know what is good for us as well as we? Or is he not as careful of our good, as we are of our own? Woe to us, if he were not much more so! and if he did not love us better, than we love either him, or ourselves! {184}

§9. Say not, "I could bear any other affliction but this." If God had afflicted thee where thou canst bear it, thy idol would neither have been discovered, nor removed. Neither say, "If God would deliver me out of it, I could be content to bear it." Is it nothing that he hath promised it *shall work for thy good*? Is it not enough that thou art sure to be delivered at death? Nor let it be said, "If my affliction did not disable me for duty, I could bear it." It doth not disable thee for that duty which tendeth for thy own personal benefit, but is the greatest quickening help thou canst expect. As for thy duty to others, it is not thy duty when God disables thee. Perhaps thou wilt say, "The godly are my afflictors: if it were ungodly men, I could easily bear it." Whoever is the instrument, the affliction is from God, and the deserving cause thyself; and is it not better to look more to God and thyself? Didst thou not know that the best men are still sinful in part? Do not plead, "If I had but that consolation, which you say God reserveth for suffering times, I should suffer more contentedly; but I do not perceive any such thing." The more you suffer for righteousness' sake, the more of this blessing you may expect; and the more you suffer for your own evil doing, the longer it will be before that sweetness comes. Are not the comforts you desire, neglected or resisted? Have your afflictions wrought kindly with you, and fitted you for comfort? It is not mere suffering that prepares you for comfort, but the success and fruit of sufferings upon your hearts. {185}

§ 10. (II.) To shew the unreasonableness of resting in present enjoyments, consider,—it is idolizing them;—it contradicts God's end in giving them;—it is the way to have them refused, withdrawn, or embittered;—to be suffered to take up our rest here, is the greatest curse;—it is seeking rest where it is not to be found;—the creatures, without God, would aggravate our misery;—and to confirm all this, we may consult our own and others' experience.

§ 11. (1.) It is gross idolatry to make any creature or means our rest. To be the rest of the soul, is God's own prerogative. As it is apparent idolatry to place our rest in riches or honors; so it is but a more refined idolatry to take up our rest in excellent means of grace. How ill must our dear Lord take it, when we give him cause to complain as he did of our fellow idolaters, *My people have been lost sheep, they have forgotten their resting place?*^[301] "My people can find rest in any thing, rather than in me. They can delight in one another, but not in me. They can rejoice in my creatures and ordinances, but not in me. Yea, in their very labors and duties they seek for rest, but not in me. They had rather be any where, than be with me. Are these their gods? Have these redeemed them? Will these be better to them, than I have been, or than I would be?" If yourselves have a wife, a husband, a son, that had rather be any where than in your company, and be never so merry as when furthest from you, would you not take it ill? So must our God needs do.

[301] Jeremiah I, 6.

§ 12. (2.) You contradict the end of God in giving these enjoyments. He gave them to help thee to him, and dost thou take up with them in his stead? He gave them to be refreshments in thy journey, and wouldst thou dwell in thy inn, and go no further? It may be said of all our comforts and ordinances, as it is said of the Israelites, *The ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them, to search out a resting place for them.*^[302] So do all God's mercies here. They are not that rest; as John professed *he was not the Christ*; but they are *voices crying in this wilderness*, to bid us *prepare, for the kingdom of God*, our true rest *is at hand*. Therefore, to rest here, were to turn all mercies contrary to their own ends, and to our own advantages, and to destroy ourselves with that which should help us. {186}

[302] Numbers x, 33.

§ 13. (3.) It is the way to cause God, either to deny the mercies we ask, or take from us those we enjoy, or at least embitter them to us. God is no where so jealous as here. If you had a servant, whom your wife loved better than yourself, would you not take it ill of such a wife, and rid your house of such a servant? So, if the Lord see you begin to settle in the world, and say, "Here I will rest?" no wonder if he soon in his jealousy unsettle you. If he love you, no wonder if he take that from you with which he sees you are destroying yourselves. It hath long been my observation of many, that when they have attempted great works, and have just finished them; or have aimed at great things in the world, and have just obtained them; or have lived in much trouble, and have just overcome it; and begin to look on their condition with content, and rest in it; they are then usually near to death or ruin. When a man is once at this language, *Soul, take thy ease*; the next news usually is, *Thou fool, this night*, or this month, or this year, *thy soul shall he required, and then whose shall these things be*? What house is there where this fool dwelleth not? Let you and I consider, whether it be not our own case? Many a servant of God hath been destroyed from the earth, by being over-valued and over-loved. I am persuaded, our discontents and murmurings are not so provoking to God, nor so destructive to the sinner, as our too sweet enjoying, and resting in, a pleasing state. If God hath crossed you in wife, children, goods, friends, either by taking them away, or the comfort of them; try whether this be not the cause: For wheresoever your desires stop, and you say, "Now I am well;" that condition you make your God, and engage the jealousy of God against it. Whether you be friends to God or enemies, you can never expect that God should suffer you quietly to enjoy your idols.

{187}

§ 14. (4.) Should God suffer you to take up your rest here, it is one of the greatest curses that could befall you. It were better never to have a day of ease in the world; for then weariness might make you seek after the true rest. But if you are suffered to sit down and rest here, a restless wretch you will be through all eternity. *To have their portion in this life*, is the lot of the most miserable, perishing sinners. Doth it become Christians then to expect so much here? Our rest is our heaven; and where we take our rest, there we make our heaven. And wouldst thou have but such a heaven as this?

§ 15. (5.) It is seeking rest where it is not to be found. Your labor will be lost, and, if you proceed, your soul's eternal rest too. Our rest is only in the full obtaining of our ultimate end. But that is not to be expected in this life; neither is rest therefore to be expected here. Is God to be enjoyed in the best church here, as he is in heaven? How little of God the saints enjoy under the best means, let their own complainings testify. Poor comforters are the best ordinances, without God. Should a traveller take up his rest in the way? No, because his home is his journey's end. When you have all that creatures and means can afford, have you that which you believed, prayed, suffered for? I think you dare not say so. We are like little children strayed from home, and God is now fetching us home, and we are ready to turn into any house, stay and play with every thing in our way, and sit down on every green bank, and much ado there is to get us home. We are also in the midst of our labors and dangers; and is there any resting here? What painful work doth lie upon our hands? Look to our brethren, to our souls, and to God; and what a deal of work, in respect to each of these, doth lie before us? And can we rest in the midst of all our labors? Indeed we may rest on earth, as *the ark* is said to have *rested in the midst of Jordan*; a short and small rest. Or as Abraham desired the *Angels to turn in, and rest themselves* in his tent, where they would have been loth to have taken up their dwelling. Should Israel have fixed their rest in the wilderness, among serpents, and enemies, and weariness, and famine? Should Noah have made the ark his home, and have been loth to come forth when *the waters were assuaged*? Should the mariner choose his dwelling on the sea, and settle his rest in the midst of rocks, and sands, and raging tempests? Should a soldier rest in the thickest of his enemies? And are not Christians such travellers, such mariners, such soldiers? Have you not fears within, and troubles without? Are we not in continual dangers? We cannot eat, drink, sleep, labor, pray, hear, converse, but in the midst of snares; and shall we sit down and rest here? O Christian, follow thy work, look to thy dangers, and hold on to the end, win the field, and come off the ground, before thou think of a settled rest. Whenever thou talkest of rest on earth, it is like *Peter on the mount*, thou knowest *not what thou sayest*. If, instead of telling the converted thief, *this day shalt thou be with me in*

{188}

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE NEW JERUSALEM?

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

The believer's hope is a celestial city Christ is preparing as the eternal home for His Bride, the Church. Instead of being burdened with the cares of this life the believer would do well to focus on his glorious future home.



1. The Disclosure of the City: John 14:1-6

a. The climactic announcement by Christ:

On the night before His crucifixion Christ revealed to His troubled disciples that He would depart, prepare a place for them in heaven ("the Father's house") and return to take His own to that place. This is the first biblical reference to the rapture.

b. The current activity of Christ:

While the Bridegroom is absent from His Bride, He is preparing for her a holy habitation for her eternal enjoyment. The place being prepared by the Savior is described in Revelation 21-22 as a glorious city, the New Jerusalem. It took the Savior six days to create the universe and the world. He has been working on our eternal home for almost 2000 years. What a magnificent place that must be!

2. The Desire for the City: Heb. 11:10, 16

a. Patriarchal anticipation of a celestial city.

Abraham, living about 2000 B.C., in faith "looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." As the architect and builder, God not only designed the city but built it as well. Though Canaan was promised to Abraham, he lived in it not as owner but as resident alien. His hope was in a city with permanent foundations in contrast to the temporary abodes on earth.



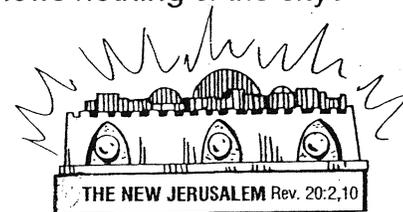
b. Personal acquaintance with the divine designer.

It is not known when this revelation of a future heavenly home was given to the Patriarchs; but in faith, they longed to leave their temporary tents for the celestial city and their endless travels to enter the city of eternal rest. Their firm faith in God was rewarded by Him "Who is not ashamed to be called their friend for He has prepared for them a city" (v. 16). The writer to the Hebrews refers to the city as the **prophetic anticipation** of the Patriarchs (11:16), the **prospective abode**

of the redeemed (12:22) and the **present aspiration** of the saint (13:14). How can the believer “seek [a permanent city] to come,” if he knows nothing of the city?

3. The Description of the City: Rev 21-22

a. The exquisite beauty of the city:



The final chapters of the Revelation provide a description of a city of exquisite beauty, “having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal” (21:11).

The following description pictures the “holy city, the New Jerusalem” (21:1) as a gigantic jewel radiating the glory of God and a beautiful setting for God’s grace to be manifest in those who have trusted in Him. There are those interpreters who would spiritualize the city, who say “there never was, is not now, and never will be such as city” (Homer Hailey, *Revelation*, 412). It is an actual city with a material existence. While there are symbolic aspects to the city and much transcends human understanding, it is best to accept the details of its description at face value. There is a city with streets of gold and gates made of giant jewels.

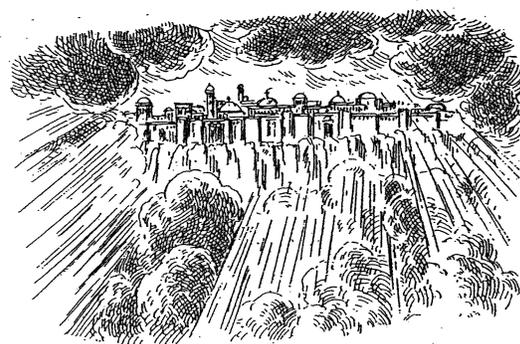
b. The extraordinary dimensions of the city:

The city is laid out as a square (literally, “four-cornered.”) “The length and the breadth and the heights of it are equal” (21:16). The dimensions, translated into modern terms, are about 1500 miles. It is perhaps best to understand the city as being in the shape of a pyramid, similar to the way Clarence Larkin has pictured it (see below). The dimensions of the city stagger the mind. The land area covered by the city would be in comparison the distance from the Pacific to the Mississippi River or from New York to Houston. Robert Thomas correctly notes, “A city 1500 miles high and 1500 miles on each side is no more unimaginable than a pearl large enough to serve as a city-gate or gold that is as transparent as glass” (*Revelation 8-22*, 467).

4. The Descent of the City: Rev. 21:1-10; Rev. 3:12

a. The foretold descend of the city: Rev. 21:1-2

The city will descend from heaven after the millennium when John sees “a new heaven and new earth” (v. 1). If the new heaven, earth and sea are literal, so must be the new city. In contrast to the harlot woman who appears in spiritual Babylon for everlasting destruction (ch. 17), the Bride, the Lamb’s wife appears in this new city for eternal blessedness.



b. The future dwelling of the Godhead: Rev. 21:3

The stupendous truth is that “the tabernacle of God is with men.” God Himself “will dwell with them” (v. 3). Five times this truth is emphasized in this verse. God makes His tabernacle with men, reminiscent of the Shekinah glory that filled the tabernacle in the wilderness. The condition of estrangement between God and man, caused by human sin, has ended. As in Paradise, God can dwell again with men. It is a blessed truth, though difficult to grasp, that the saints will not spend eternity with God in heaven, but rather, God will spend eternity with His own on the new earth. What a marvelous condescension

5. The Designations for the City: Heb. 12:22

a. The varied designations for the heavenly city:

The writer to the Hebrews speaks of the city as “Mount Zion, and . . . the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.” Paul speaks of it as the Jerusalem above (Gal. 4:26). The resurrected Lord speaks to the church at Philadelphia of “the city of my God, which is the new Jerusalem” (Rev. 3:12). Our eternal home is described with an impressive list of designations:

- (1) Mount Zion, Heb. 12:22
- (2) City of the Living God, Heb. 12:22
- (3) Heavenly Jerusalem, Heb. 12:22
- (4) Jerusalem from above, Gal. 4:26
- (5) City of my God, Rev. 3:12
- (6) The New Jerusalem, Rev. 3:12; 21:2
- (7) The Holy City, Rev. 21:2, 10 (cf. Is. 52:1)
- (8) The Bride, Rev. 21:2, 9
- (9) A Continuing City, Heb. 13:14
- (10) Father’s House, Jn. 14:2
- (11) Paradise of God, Rev. 2:7



ירושלם

b. The vital denotation of the term “Jerusalem”

The oldest known form, Uru-sa-lim, has been commonly regarded as meaning “city of peace.” At the time of Abraham apparently the name was shortened to Salem = peace (Gen. 14:18, cf. Ps. 76:2). The name yerushalem, in the N.T. as Hierousalem or Hierosolyma, appears to point to the peace which someday will spread from the millennial city to the whole earth. The name Jerusalem further witnesses to the presence of God (Mic. 4:1-3), to authority (Throne of David) and Worship (Temple of Solomon). Someone has well observed, “It is one of the ironies of history that a city which in its long history has seen so little peace and for whose possession rivers of blood have been shed should have such a possible meaning for its name” (ISBE, III, 1960, 1596.)

The earthly Jerusalem will live up to its name in the Millennium, with the presence of the Prince of Peace. Thus it will become a type of the heavenly Jerusalem.





6. The Dwellers of the City: Heb. 12: 22-24

a. The primary design of the city:

In fashioning the heavenly Jerusalem, the Savior is primarily fulfilling His promise to the church in John 14:3, "I go to prepare a place for you." This is why the city is described as a bride adorned for her husband . . . the Lamb's wife" (Rev. 21:2, 9). The term bride therefore refers to both the church and her abode. The city as the bride expresses God's intimate relationship with it as well as His fellowship with the redeemed in the city.

Dear Friend, if you have accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, the new city will be your eternal home!

b. The principal denizens of the city: Heb. 12:22-24

The inhabitants of the city are listed as "an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the firstborn. . . and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." The various companies can be listed thusly:

- 1) The holy angels—"myriads of angels"
- 2) The church—"the assembly and church of the firstborn"
- 3) The redeemed of all the ages—"the spirits of just men made perfect"
- 4) God the Father—"God the Judge of all"
- 5) Christ the Son—"Jesus the mediator of the new covenant"
- 6) The Holy Spirit

While the Holy Spirit is not mentioned separately, He indwells church age believers permanently. Christ promised them that the Spirit would abide with them forever (Jn. 14:16). Since the Church will be there, so will be the Holy Spirit.

The New Jerusalem will thus be the eternal home of the holy angels, church age saints, the triune God and the redeemed of all the ages.



7. The Delights of the New City: Rev. 22:1-5

a. Abundant provisions for human enjoyment:

Our eternal home will be a place of paradisiacal perfection, free of the curse (v. 3) and all darkness (v. 5). Jesus will be there, abundantly providing light and life. We will be refreshed by water from the river of life, "clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1). We will have access to the "tree of life which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month" (v. 2)

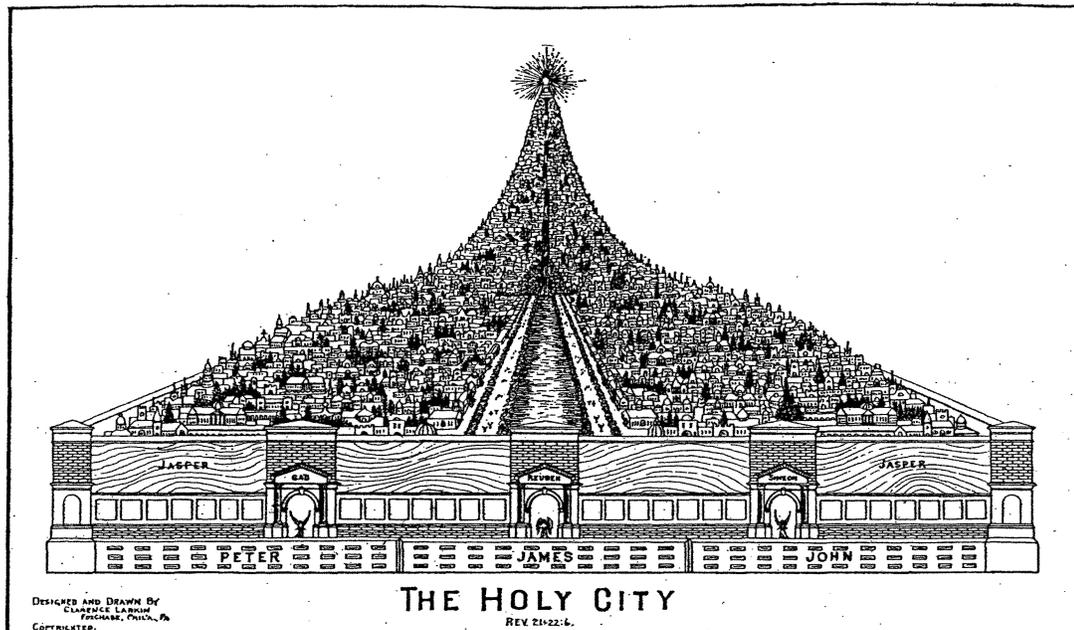
b. Absolute perfection of a holy environment:

The believer, far from pursuing a pedantic eternal routine, will be engaged in rewarding spiritual activity. Two words summarize this activity: service and sovereignty. Our ministry is described thus, "his servants shall serve him . . . and they shall reign for ever and ever" (v. 3, 5). As glorified beings, we will have the privilege of assisting a holy Savior in a perfect environment, free of the encumbrances of sin and enticements of Satan.

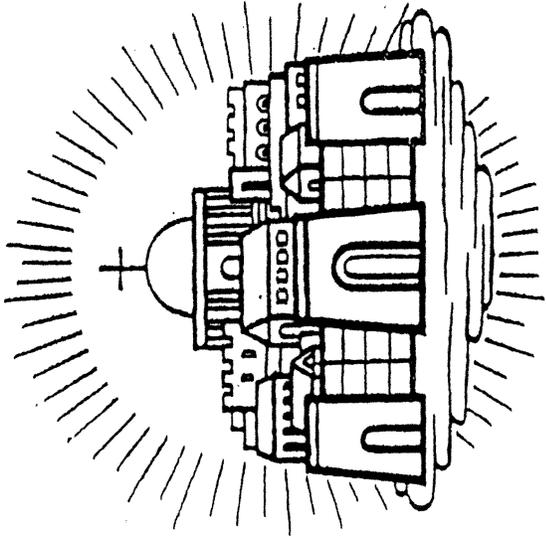
The grateful believer concurs with Dr. Ryrie's fitting remarks, "This is complete exaltation and perfect exultation" (Ryrie, *Revelation* [1996], 67).

In anticipation of such a glorious future, one blessing stands out far above any other. **We shall see His face** (v. 4). Eternally we will be in the presence of the One who calls us His Bride. He who redeemed us and resurrected us, regards as His is prized and privileged possession as we cherish His closeness and companionship. Well has the songwriter expressed the believer's blessedness:

*Just to be near the dear Lord I adore,
Will through the ages be glory for me.
Oh that will be, glory for me.
When by His grace I shall look on His face,
That will be glory for me!*



The New Jerusalem in the Epistle to the Hebrews



The Perfect Architect	The Prophetic Anticipation	The Prospective Abode	The Present Aspirations
of the City	of the City	in the City	for the City
Heb. 11:10	Heb. 11:16	Heb. 12:22-23	Heb. 13:14



The Faith of Abraham

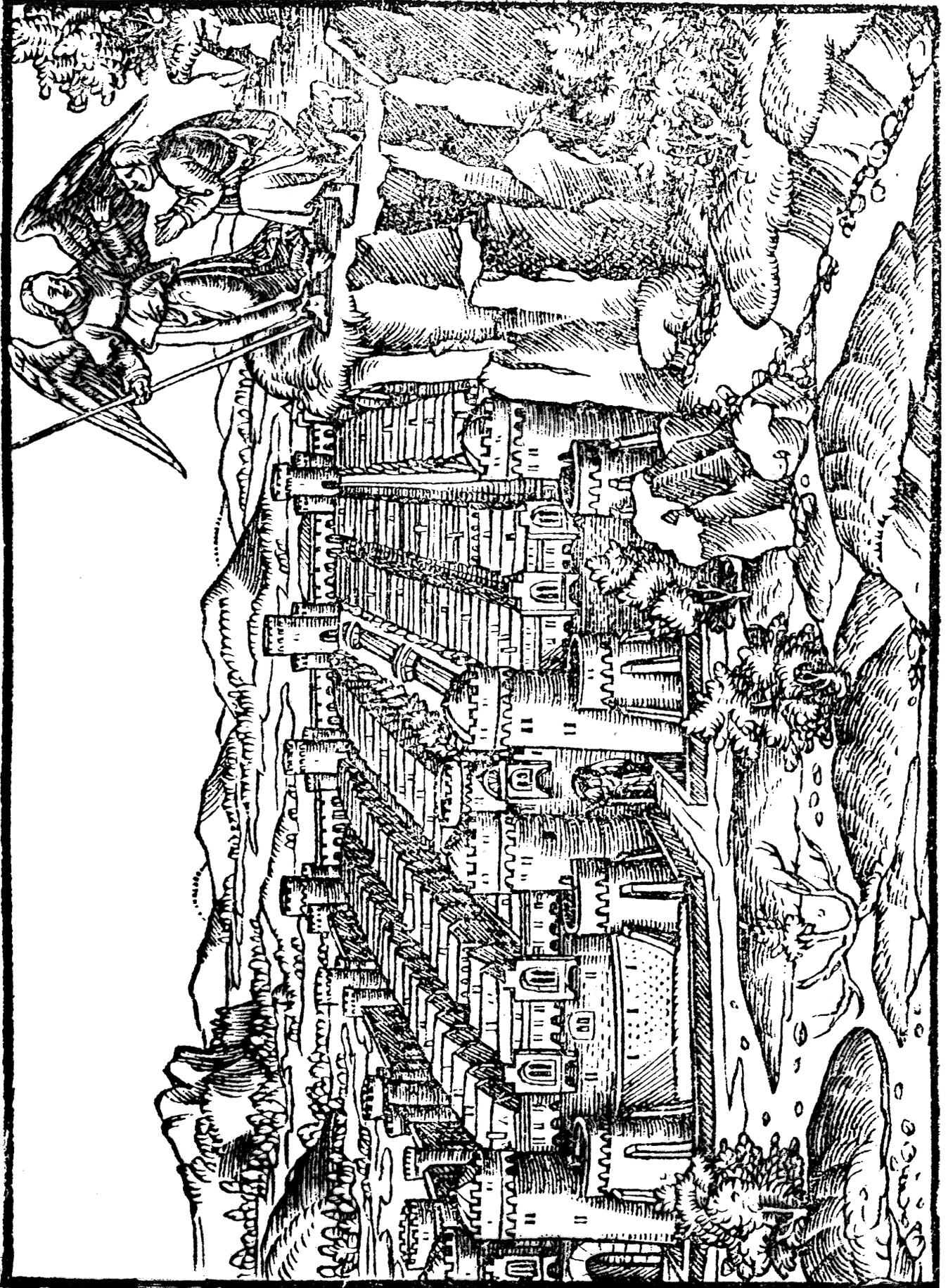
“He looked for a city which hath foundations,
whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10)



THE PATRIARCHS:

**Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their
God: for he hath prepared for them a city.**

Hebrews 11:16



Sohannes erblickt das neue Jerusalem.



John is shown the descending heavenly Jerusalem, the eternal home of the church, adorned as a beautiful bride.

Why Study Prophecy Now?



1. THE CONVERGENCE OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Never before have Israel, a Western Europe union, Russia, China, the one world church and the United Nations all emerged and moved toward their position during the tribulation.

2. THE CONFLICT IN THE ARAB WORLD.

Arab dictators unexpectedly and inexplicably are losing their stranglehold over their populations. Old alliances are dissolved, new alliances emerge, almost overnight.

3. THE CONSPIRACY AGAINST ISRAEL.

Antisemitism is sweeping the world, spearheaded by Iran, which is frantically completing a nuclear bomb to be used against Israel. Meanwhile Reformed theologians deny Israel a future

4. THE COLLAPSE OF THE EUROPEAN FINANCIAL STRUCTURE.

The so-called "PIGS Nations" (Portugal, Italy, Greece, Spain) are dragging the rest of the countries in the Eurozone into ever deeper depression. Europe is virtually begging for a strong leader to rescue the situation.

5. THE CULMINATION OF THE PROPHETIC STUDIES IN THE END TIMES.

By studying prophecy, the believer of the 21st century, with the benefit of great prophecy teachers gone before, is actually fulfilling the prediction of Daniel 12:4.

6. THE CONTENT OF SCRIPTURE WITH 17 PROPHETIC BOOKS.

The biblical emphasis on prophecy makes the study of end-time events unavoidable. One-fourth of the Bible at the time of its writing was prophetic. To declare the whole counsel of God means to speak out on major prophetic themes.

7. THE COMMAND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The Holy Sprit enabled the biblical writers to reveal "things to come" (John 16:13), which truths believers are to use for mutual instruction and comfort (1. Thess. 4:13, 18). Knowledge of the future allows the believer to live in the calm of eternity now.

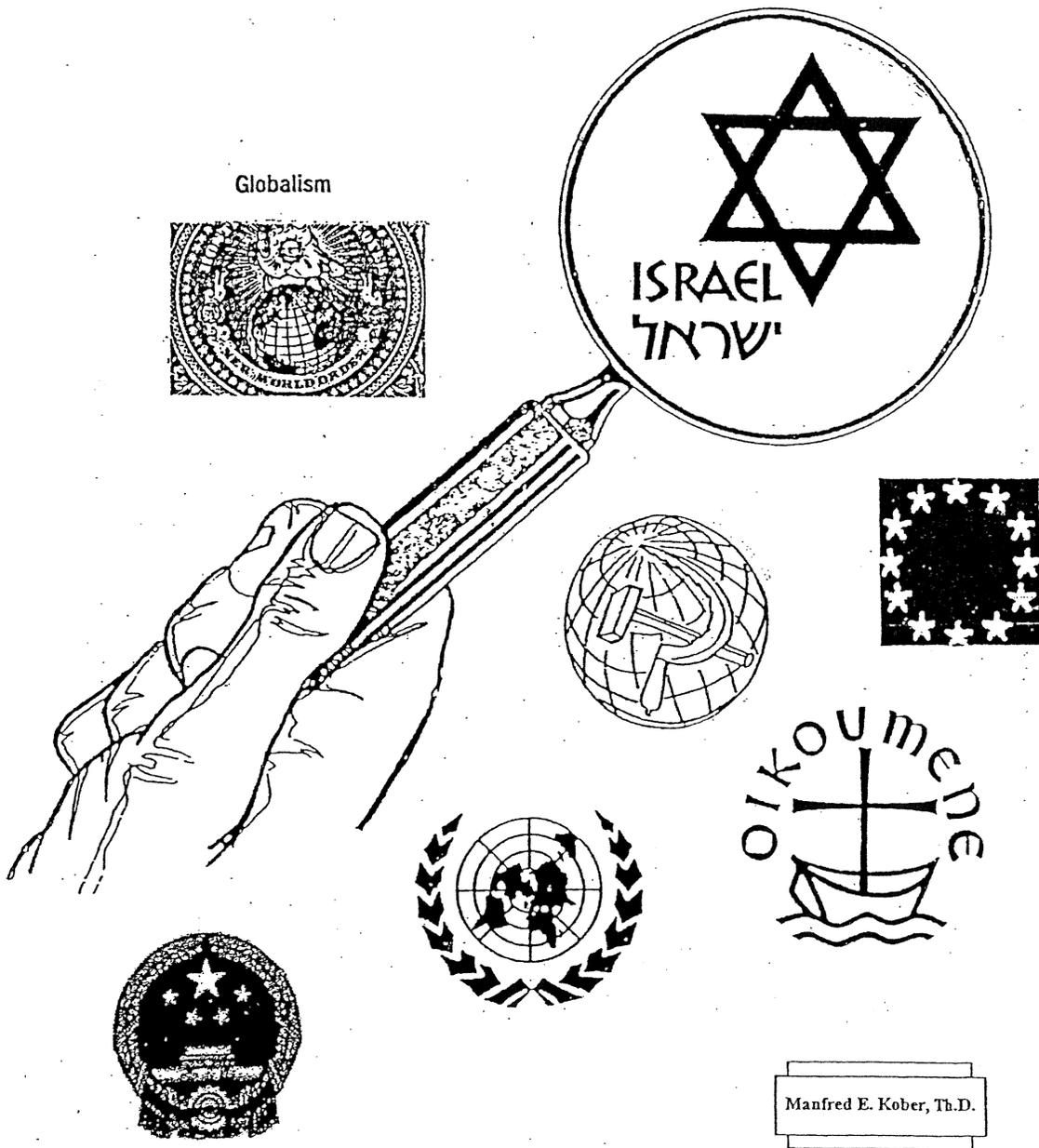


Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Is This the Year of Christ's Return?

We are surrounded by the signs of the times which point to a soon fulfilment!



Globalism

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



Will Christ Return in Our Lifetime?

Perhaps so! Let us consider the

SIGNS OF THE TIMES



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

1. The Establishment of the State of Israel

A. Prophetic significance

Prophetically there does not need to be a nation of Israel until the Tribulation.

B. The present situation

Since 1948, the modern the modern state of Israel exists in the ancient Jewish homeland. Israel just celebrated 70 years of nationhood. Despite five wars by neighboring nations who sought to totally destroy Israel, God providentially and miraculously gave Israel the victory each time. One can be assured that this nation will soon begin to fulfill its many prophecies.



ישראל

America's original unilateral support of the establishment of the state of Israel is well known. Our country's diplomatic, military and economic support (in excess of \$3.8 billion per year) would be pleasing to the Lord (Gen. 12:3).

2. The Emergence of a One-World Church

A. Prophetic significance

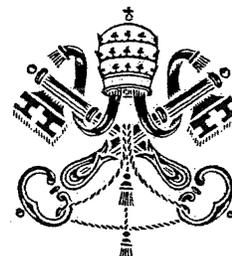
During the first half of the tribulation, a world religion will exist with HQ in Rome.

B. The present situation

In 1948, the WCC was founded in Amsterdam with the avowed purpose of uniting all denominations. Most of the mainline denominations have merged into an organization known as COCU (Consultation of Church Union). Furthermore, in recent years overtures have been made by Protestants to find common ground with Rome. Rome is clearly portrayed as the center of the apostate church of the tribulation (Rev. 17:9). It is most interesting that the Pope has made numerous overtures to non-Christian religions.



**World Council
of Churches**



3. The Existence of the European Union

A. Prophetic significance

Daniel predicts the revival of the Roman Empire early in the tribulation.

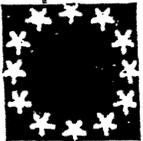
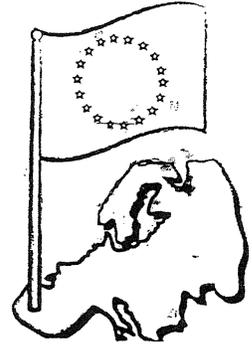
B. The present situation

Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister, was one of the first to call for a "United States of Europe." In his "Speech to the Academic Youth" at the University of Zürich in 1946 he called for a "remedy which . . . would in a few years make all of Europe . . . free and . . . happy . . . We must build a kind of United States of Europe."

In western Europe an economic union has evolved into a political trans-national entity known as the European Union. In 1957, the Treaty of Paris formed an economic union of six European nations, which has since evolved into a political and economic union of 28 members, involving an estimated population of 513 million.

A monetary union of nineteen EU member states came in force on January 1, 2002, considered by many to be the most important step toward a complete political union of the United States of Europe.

On November 21, 2018, German chancellor Angela Merkel stated that nation-states must "give up their sovereignty" and added that national leaders must not listen to the rule of their citizens "on important matters." Merkel's words presage a domineering European super-governor.



4. The Efforts of Russia

A. Prophetic significance

At the midpoint of the tribulation, Russia will invade Israel and be destroyed.

B. The present situation

Russia has had a design on the Near East for many years, especially in recent decades. After the fall of the Soviet Union on December 26, 1991, and after a short democratic interlude, Russia is flexing its military muscle and threatening its neighbors. The dictator Putin makes efforts to expand Russia's influence. The invasion of Georgia and usurpation of the Krim Peninsula and the eastern Ukraine are but forerunners of Russia's future territorial expansion intimated in Ezekiel 38 and 39. For the first time ever, Russia has established two military bases in close proximity of Israel: the Hmeimin Air Base southeast of the city of Latakia and the naval facility of Tarus on the Mediterranean. The Russian Bear is moving into strategic position foretold by the prophet Ezekiel.



5. The Endeavors of the UNO

A. Prophetic significance

Antichrist will rule as tyrant over the entire world during the last half of the Tribulation.

B. The present situation

The UNO, founded in 1945, purports to be a one-world government. Since its founding on April 25, 1945, in San Francisco, with a membership of 51 states, this inter-governmental organization has grown to a membership of 193. Whereas the UNO was established to promote peace and harmony among nations, its actual peace-keeping efforts can claim little success. Alger Hiss, an American State Department official and convicted Communist spy, was the driving force of the establishment of the organization.



Of the United Nations budget, 7.8 billion dollars, the United States contributes 22 percent or 2.2 billion dollars; and yet, the UNO member states vote generally and habitually against American and Israeli interests. Rather than acting as a peace-keeping force, it aspires to be a global government. On September 25, 2018, President Donald Trump, in his speech at the UN, rightly blasted the organization's "ideology of globalism." Sadly, almost half of the UNO's resolutions are directed against Israel.

6. The Expansion of China

A. Prophetic significance

An army of 200 million Asiatics will participate in the campaign of Armageddon (Dan. 11:44; Rev. 9:16). The army might be comprised of various Asiatic nations, but the likelihood is that they are an invading force from China.

B. The present situation

Since 1949, Communists have controlled the world's most populous country. The world fears China's recent efforts to expand globally. China boasts 618 million (!) males and females fit for military service (CIA estimate).



In recent years China has expanded its military presence in the international waters of the Pacific, usurping islands belonging to other Asiatic nations. China's efforts to be a world power, indeed, to take over the United States, has been chronicled by arguably America's most astute China expert, Michael Pillsbury in 2015. In *The 100-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as a Global Power* he outlines China's long-range plans, which brought nothing but trouble to the United States. President Trump considers Dr. Pillsbury to be his most important advisor on the China situation. The President rightly declares the fact that China inflicts losses of \$50 million yearly on American companies, primarily by stealing intellectual property.

7. The Explosion of Globalization

A. Prophetic significance

For the final three years of the Tribulation Antichrist will exercise absolute world-wide control in the political and economic area.

B. The present situation

Since the 1940's, computers have led to a problematic globalization of the world's communications, finances and commerce. Many people today view the globalization, especially in the financial area, if not an evil, at least a problem. Globalism with its world-wide integration makes it possible for a few major institutions such as the World Monetary Fund, major banks, or global companies, to influence and even control the economic situation in distant countries. One thinks of the 2008 global financial crisis, which had repercussions worldwide. It is not difficult to see how globalism limits the engendering of local loyalties. The instituting of international guidelines could set the stage for the time when the Roman dictator foretold in Revelation 13:16, 17 can control the economy world-wide, forbidding anyone without the mark of the beast from buying or selling.

Globalism



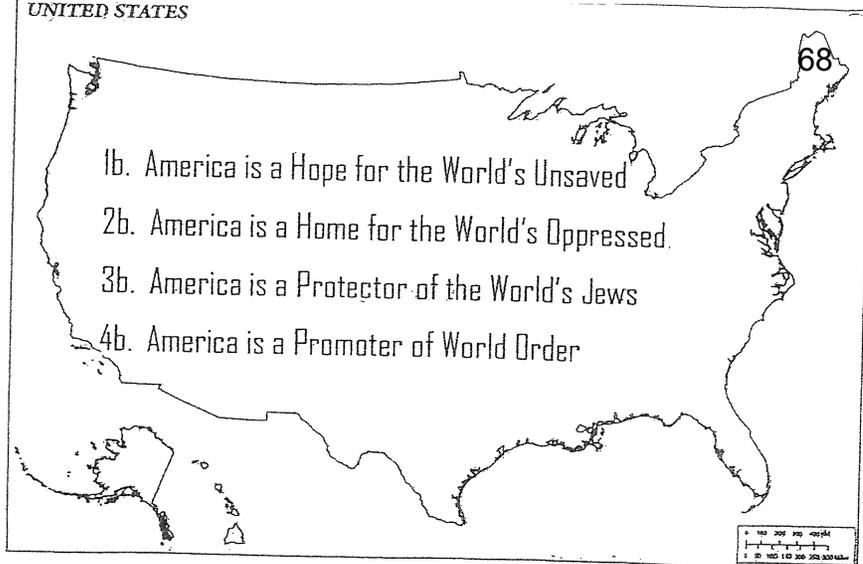
CONCLUSION:

1. This year we are one year closer to the rapture than we were last year.
2. No prophecies need to be fulfilled before that glorious event.
3. Never before has there been such a convergence of the signs of the times than now.
4. Christ promised to come quickly. He will not delay His coming one moment longer than necessary (Rev. 22:12).
5. The believer joins the Holy Spirit in eager expectation of our translation.
Rev. 22:17 "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come!"
6. We are enjoined to look forward to that climactic event.
Titus 2:13 "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing . . ."
7. We take comfort and are able to comfort one another with the blessed thought of the Bridegroom's return for His Bride (1 Thess. 4:18).

Addendum



UNITED STATES



THE RECOGNITION OF AMERICA'S DESTINY:



Paul, speaking to the Athenians on Mars Hill, told them a profound truth about God and His relationship to nations:

Acts 17:26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;



God has appointed concerning each nation its times and bounds or its chronological and geographical boundaries. This passage argues forcefully for the fact that God has a purpose for each nation. God brings a nation about at a specific point in time and at a particular location on earth because of a divine design for that nation.

While our nation is not mentioned specifically in prophecy, we can nevertheless infer God's destiny for the USA by contemplating the course of our country. There appear to be three discernible reasons why God has raised our country.



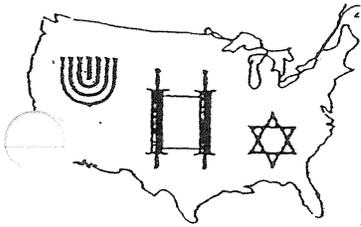
1b. The United States promotes missionary activity.

The very first settlers testified that they came here as the Mayflower Compact states, "for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith." In the New England confederation of 1943, the uniform testimony is "whereas we all came into these parts of America with one and the same end, namely, to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and enjoy the liberties of the gospel in purity with peace."

God has honored America for its missionary efforts. Of the world's 50,000 evangelical missionaries, 45,000 come from the USA. God needs a lighthouse for the world's unsaved right until the rapture, after which the 144,000 witnesses will be ministering.

2b. America protects the chosen people.

Ever since Roger Williams encouraged the persecuted Jews of Europe to settle in his colony, America has been a refuge for Jews. Of the world's 17 million Jewish people, 7 million live in the USA. With our national efforts the modern state of Israel was established.



Its continuation has been assured by the consistent support by the USA. God promises to bless those who would bless Israel (Gen. 12:3). God is blessing us and will bless us because of our special relationship to His special people. After the rapture, when our country becomes antisemitic, Antichrist will sign a treaty of protection with Israel. Until then it seems to be God's design for America to help Israel.

- 3b. America provides a home for the politically and religiously persecuted all around the world.



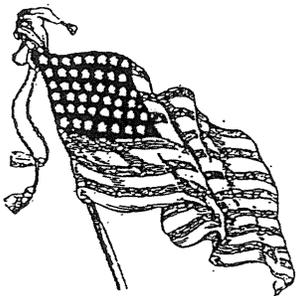
The Statue of Liberty best represents one aspect of America which appears to point toward our destiny as a house for the world's oppressed. It may well be that God has raised the USA in part to be a "Mother of Exiles." Such a refugee nation appears to be needed until the rapture.

God will not let America's sins go unpunished. But the well-deserved and long-delayed judgment will not come until the righteous have been removed. As He removed Noah and his family before He brought the flood and as He removed righteous Lot before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, so God will remove the believers through the rapture before He sends His judgment upon the earth, including our beloved nation.

- 4b. America projects global stability.

It seems to be God's providential design for America to serve as a steadying force in the world, both economically and militarily. Even the *New York Times* admits that "the American economy is acting as a steadying force in volatile world" (1/7/16). While our Founding Fathers argued for an isolationism, the two world wars imposed on the USA a role of intervention which it did not seek, to save Europe from a calamitous, indeed catastrophic condition. America's unique role in the world can be easily demonstrated.

As Dennis Prager observes in *National Review* (9/17/13), in an article entitled "Yes, We are the World's Policeman" "U.S. troops around the world are the greatest preserver of liberty and peace . . . America's strength and willingness to use it has been the greatest force in history to liberty and world stability."



Prager correctly stresses that the world needs a policeman to curtail economic disruption, social chaos and the violent death of innocent people. If the USA were not functioning in this role the only possible alternative at the present moment would be a) No one b) Russia c) China d) Iran e) the United Nations. Dinesh D'Souza, in his superb volume, *America – Imagine the World Without Her*, comes to a similar conclusion.

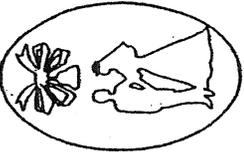
In God's providence the USA plays that role, however imperfectly. We have the most vibrant economy and the most formidable military. It is impossible to imagine what the world situation would be like without America's protective presence. And one can only surmise that after the rapture, with the sudden disappearance of all believers, chaos and consternation will reign until Antichrist consolidates his empire. He, in turn, will be replaced by the Davidic Messiah whose world-wide kingdom of peace and righteousness has no end.

Eschatology Timeline

JUDGMENT
SEAT
OF CHRIST



MARRIAGE OF
THE LAMB



RAPTURE
FOR US

RETURN

REVELATION
WITH US

GREAT WHITE
THRONE
JUDGMENT

CHURCH

THE RETURN OF THE JEWS
THE REVELATION OF ANTICHRIST

Covenant by
Antichrist
Dan. 9:27

3 1/2 Years

Chastisement of
Russia
Ez. 38, 39

3 1/2 Years

TRIBULATION

PREPARATION

Confusion Among
Nations
Mt. 24:5, 11, 24

PROTECTION

Conquest by
Antichrist
Dan. 7:19-27

PERSECUTION

Campaign of
Armageddon
Dan. 11:40-45

MILLENNIUM

ETERNITY

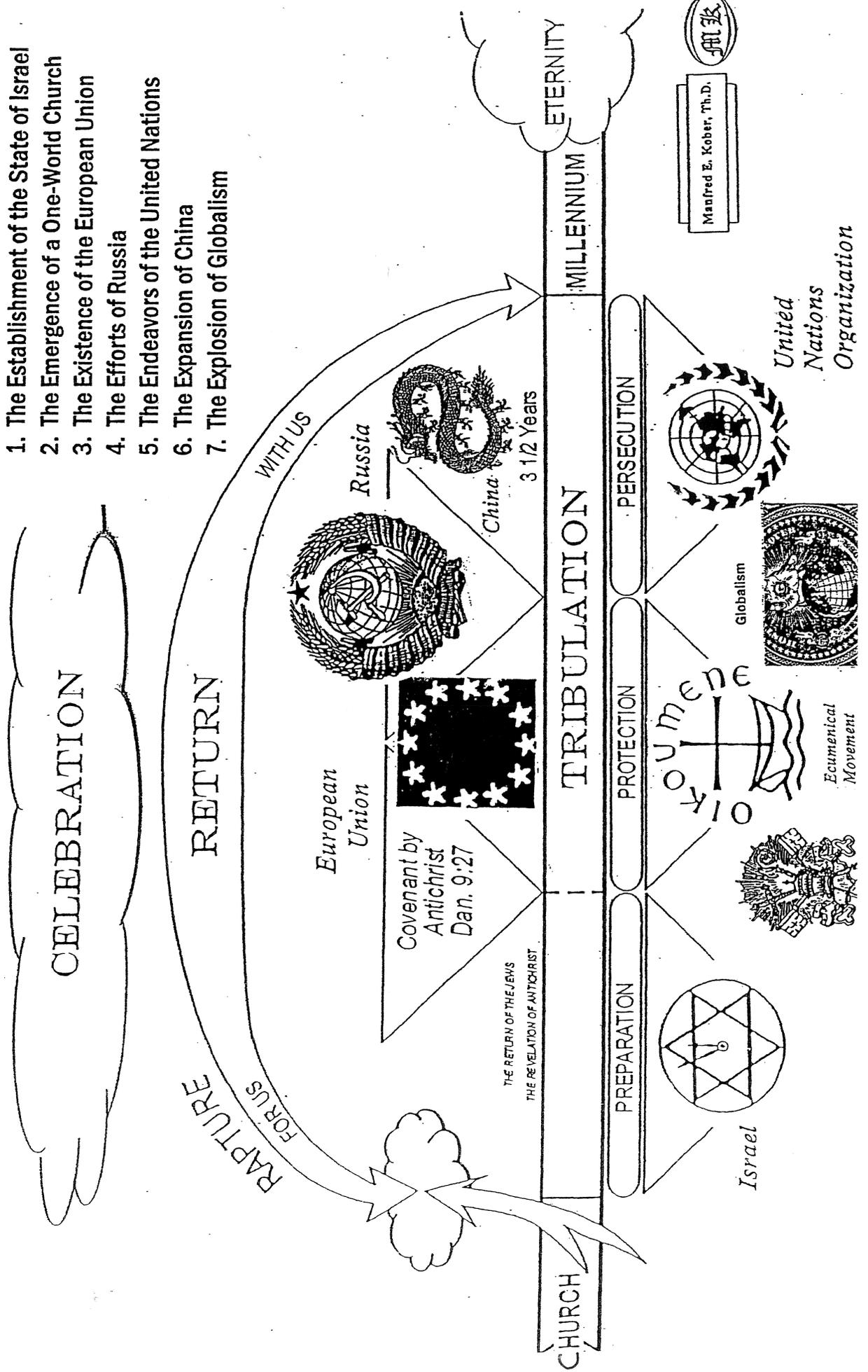


Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

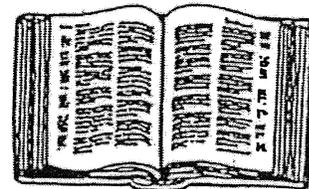
Major Movements as Prophetic Portents

SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

1. The Establishment of the State of Israel
2. The Emergence of a One-World Church
3. The Existence of the European Union
4. The Efforts of Russia
5. The Endeavors of the United Nations
6. The Expansion of China
7. The Explosion of Globalism



The Certainty of Scriptural Statements



ALL SCRIPTURE IS TRUE BUT NOT ALL SCRIPTURE
IS CLEAR OR PLAIN

2. PET. 3:15-16

The Meaning is

Indicated dogmatic

At death the believer is immediately in the presence of the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23)

Inferred definite

At death the believer is carried by an angel into the presence of God (Lk. 16:22)

Implied debatable

Angels protect the bodies of dead believers, as they did with the body of Moses (Jude 9)

Indefinite doubtful

Dead individuals return to life and tell of out-of-body experiences or visits to heaven (cf. Paul, 2 Cor. 12:2-4)

Invented dreadful

The idea of purgatory: The dead must be purged of their sins before entering heaven or paradise. The truth: The Savior is our purgatory, seeing that on the cross "He had by himself purged our sins" (Heb. 1:3b)

15 And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.