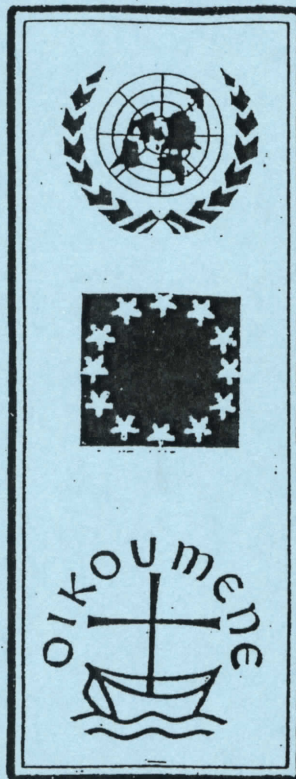


A Panorama of Prophecy



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

308 Second St. S.E. Bondurant, IA 50035
(515) 707-0071 MKober316@gmail.com

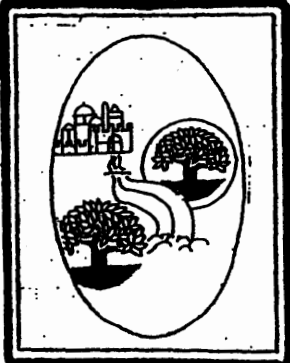


A Panorama of Prophecy

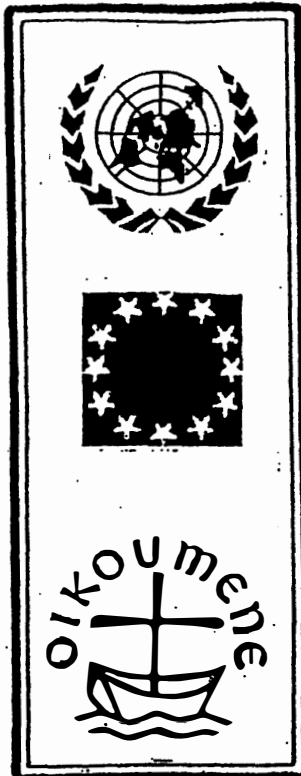


Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

308 Second St. S.E. Bondurant, IA 50035
(515) 707-0071 MKober316@gmail.com



A Panorama of Prophecy



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

308 Second St. S.E. Bondurant, IA 50035
(515) 707-0071 MKober316@gmail.com



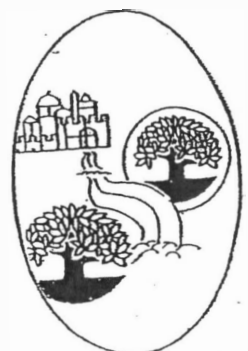
A Panorama of Prophecy



THE FUTURE OF THE BELIEVER:
The Best is Yet to Come

THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH:
The Believer's Fondest Hope

THE REWARDS AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT:
The Christian's Finest Hour



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.

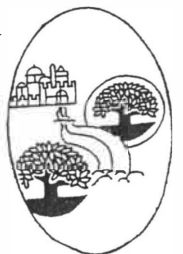
4. It **d**elights our heavenly Father who especially enjoins the study of prophecy (Rev. 1:3; 22:7).



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

Manfred E. Kober, Ph.D.

Good News

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.

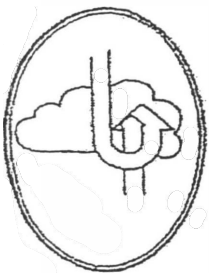


1. The Readiness of the Saints:

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!

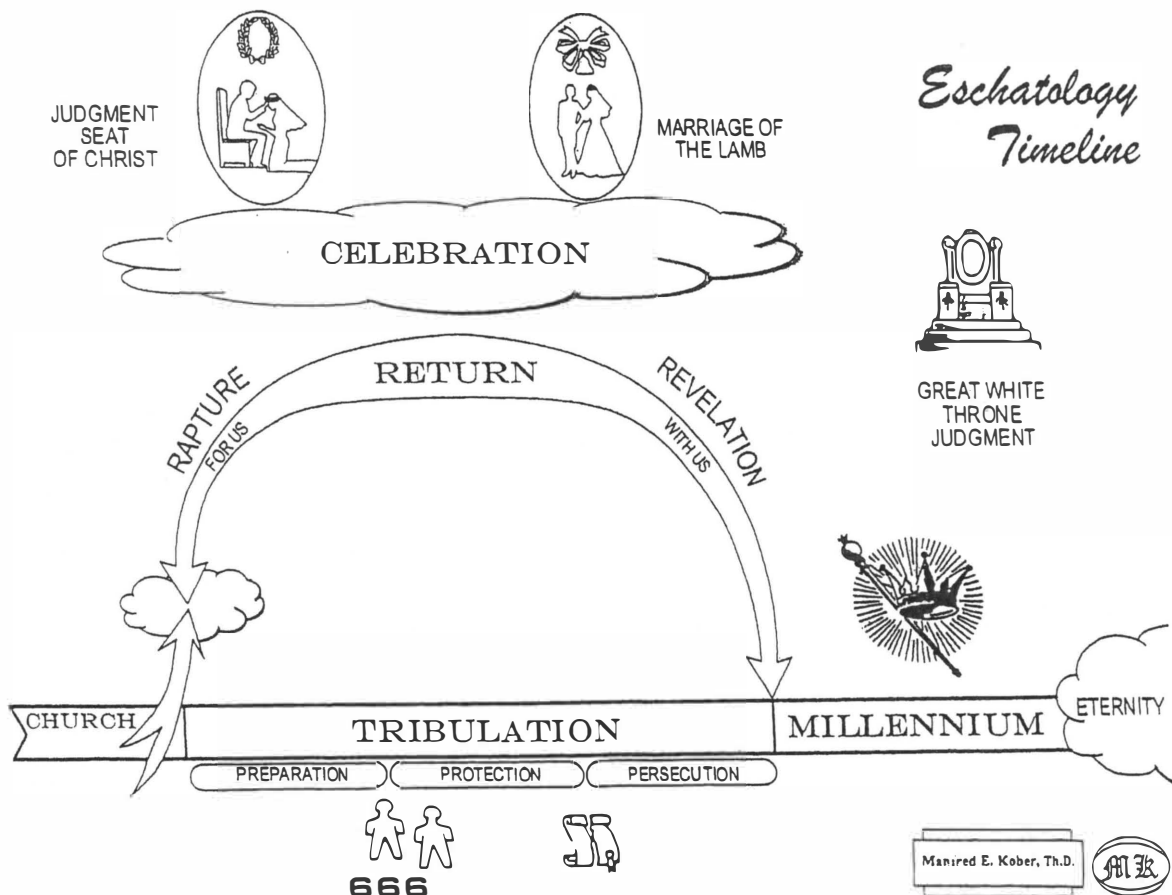


6. The Rule With Christ:

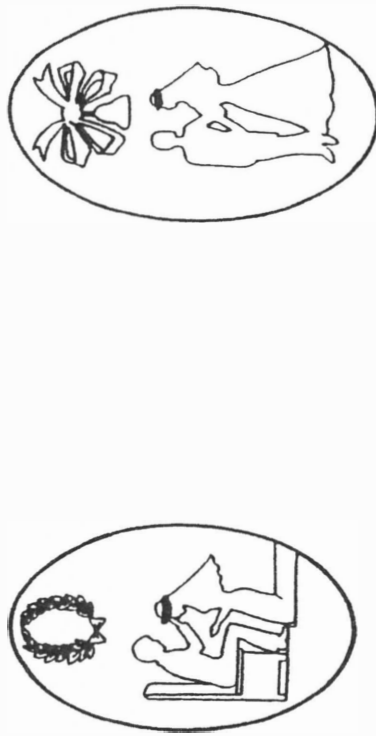
Another reason to be optimistic about his future relates to our future activity of ruling. Our rule with Christ includes, among many other activities, dining with Christ and exercising dominion with Christ. The Savior promised His disciples that He would eat and drink with them in the Kingdom. The believer's 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 be 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!



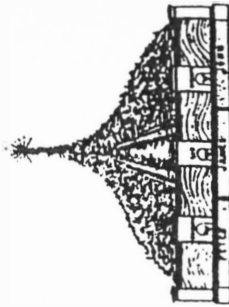
The Future and The Saint



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

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

For Us
Rapture

With Us
Revelation

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

Church

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

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.

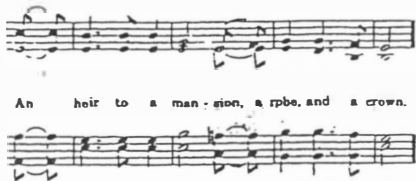


- 2c. Construction of our Future Home:
Christ is presently constructing this abode.

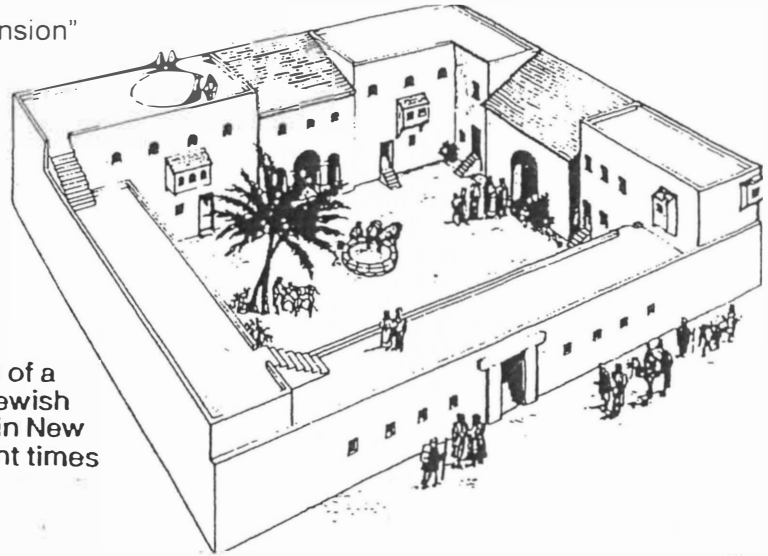
1d. The designation of "mansion"

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

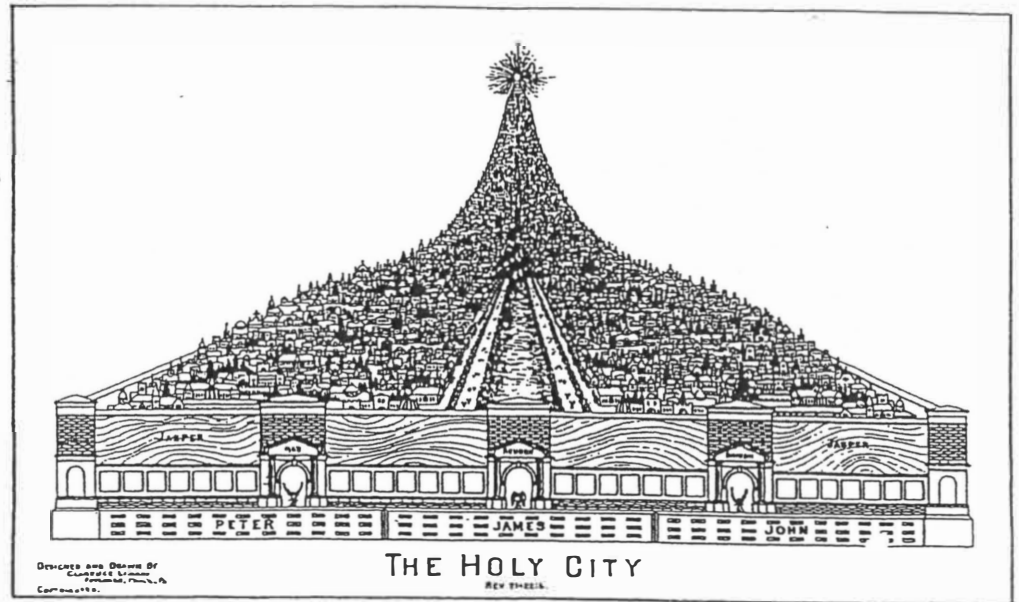


Model of a wealthy Jewish house in New Testament times



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

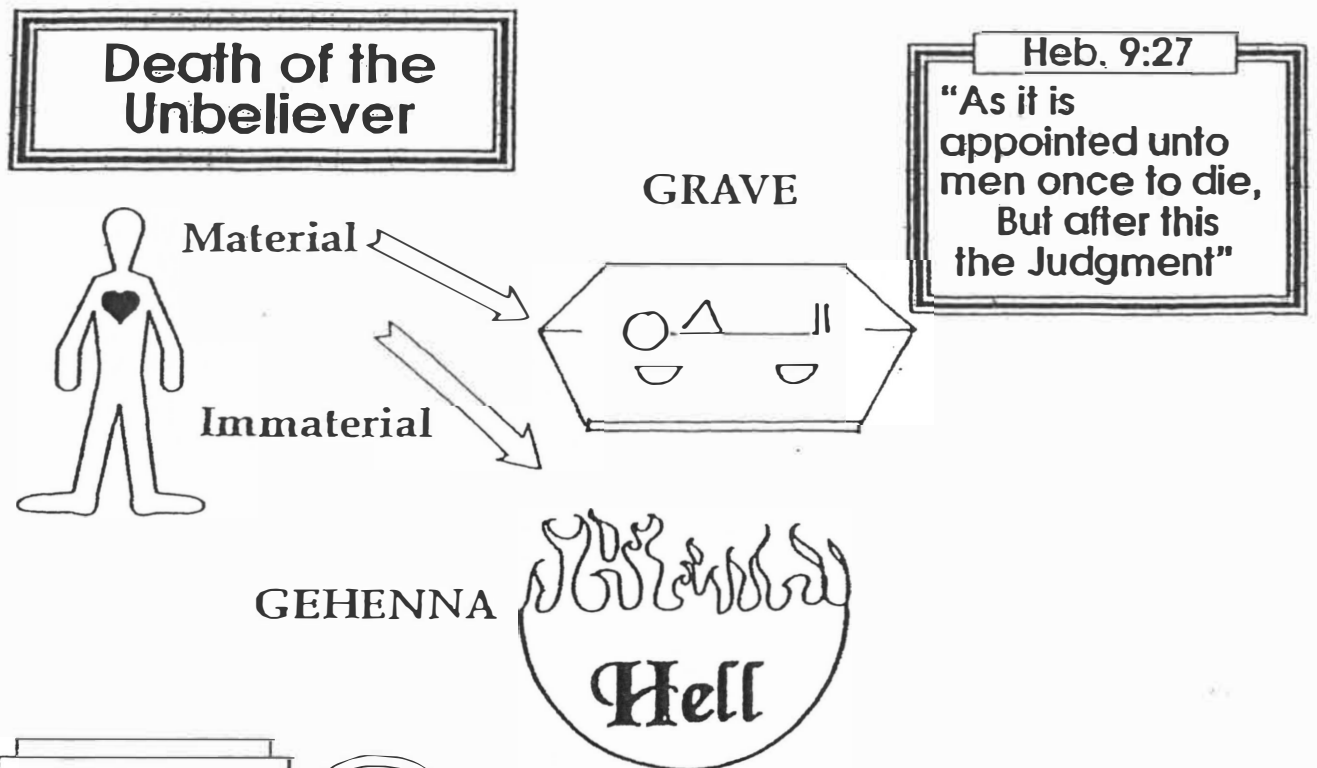
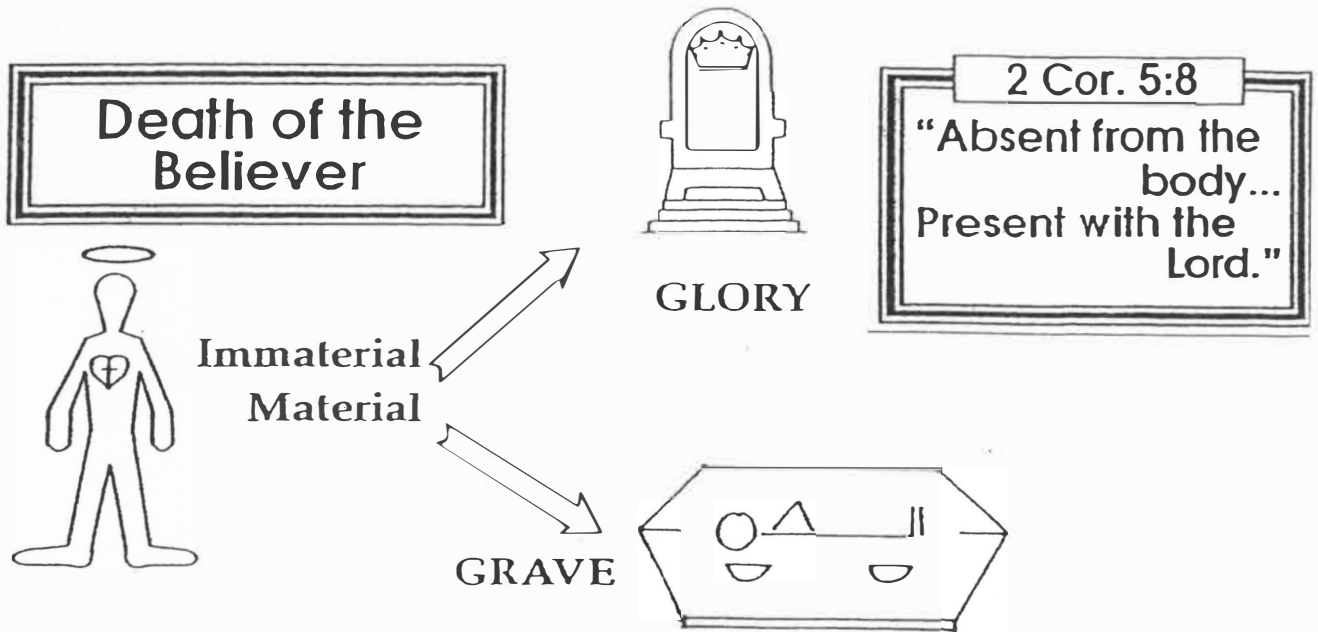
Their comforting hope was the descent of the Lord and their deliverance from the wrath of the tribulation period (1 Thess. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10; Rom 5:9). Were the believer to face the tribulation, then Paul's concluding words would not be those of comfort but of caution.

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. . ."

Death for Saints and Sinners



The Rapture



1

RETURN

5

REWARDS

6

Rev. 19:6-9

II Cor. 5:10

REJOICING

ACCOMPANIED BY
--SAINTS
--ANGELS

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

WITH THE LORD
LOVED ONES

4

REUNION



2

RESURRECTION

OF CHURCH-AGE SAINTS

3

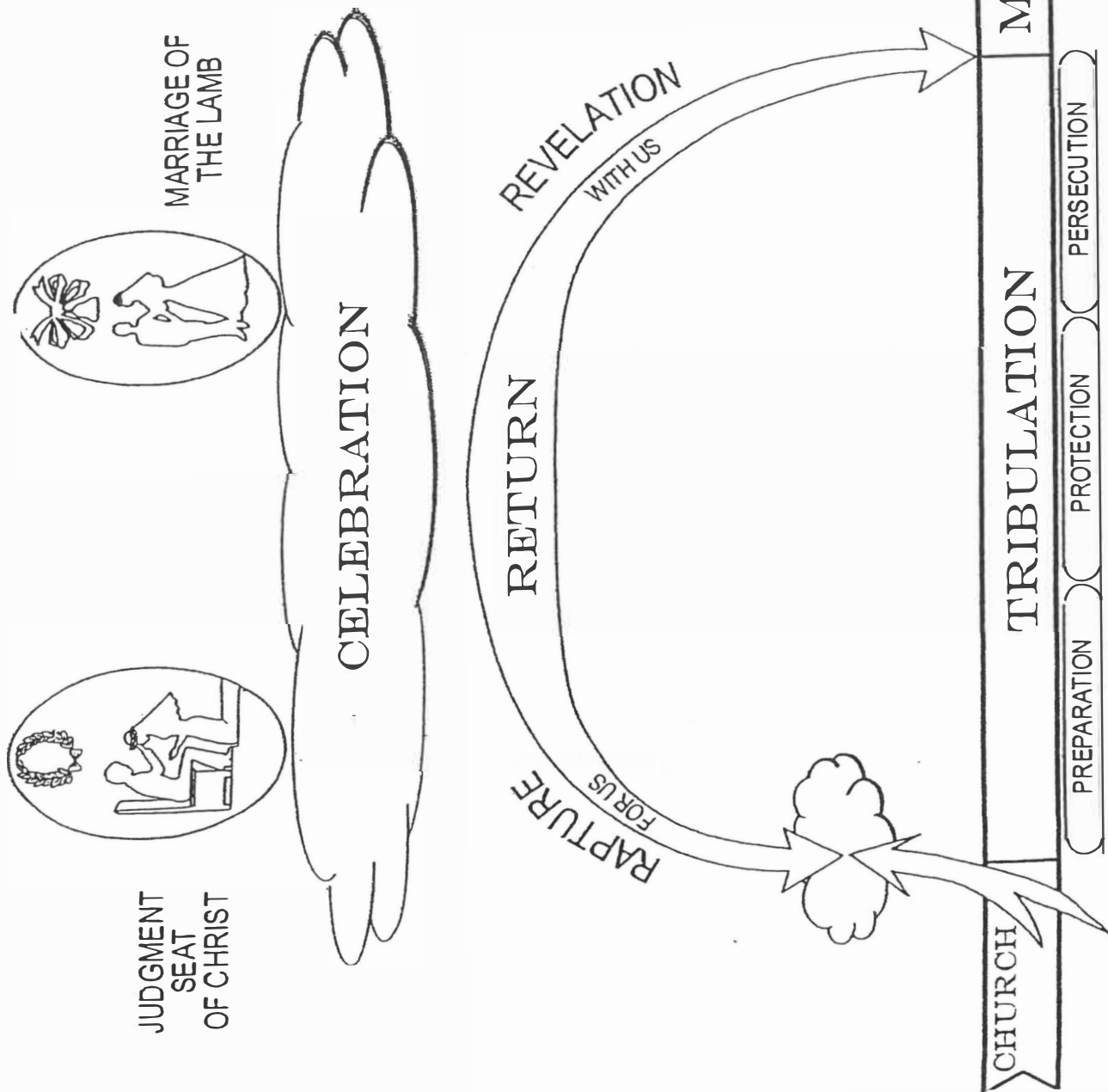
RAPTURE

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



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).



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).

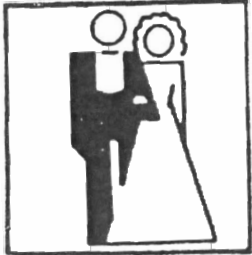
2d. Those who take a positive approach do not minimize the consequences of the believer's sins. Hoyt has well written on the subject:

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 (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).




2. The Soul-Winner's Crown to those who are faithful in witnessing for Christ (1 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 (1 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):

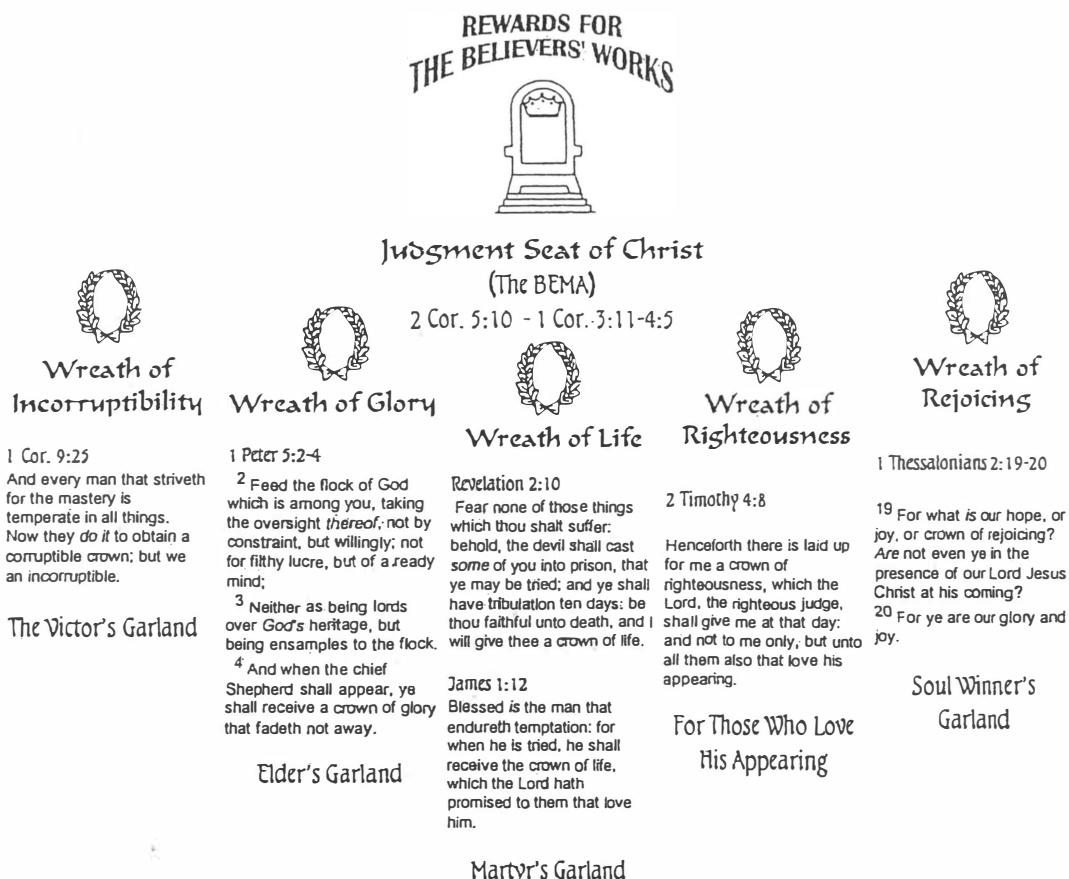
"And then shall every man have praise of God."

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.**

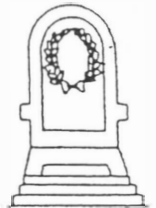
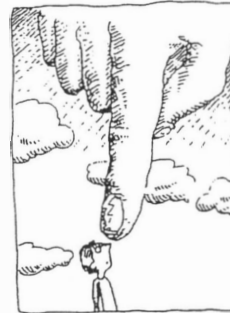
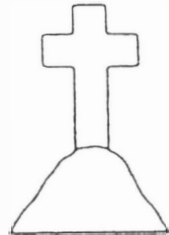
CONCLUSION:

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



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

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

The Believer Is A:

Our Life Is A:

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



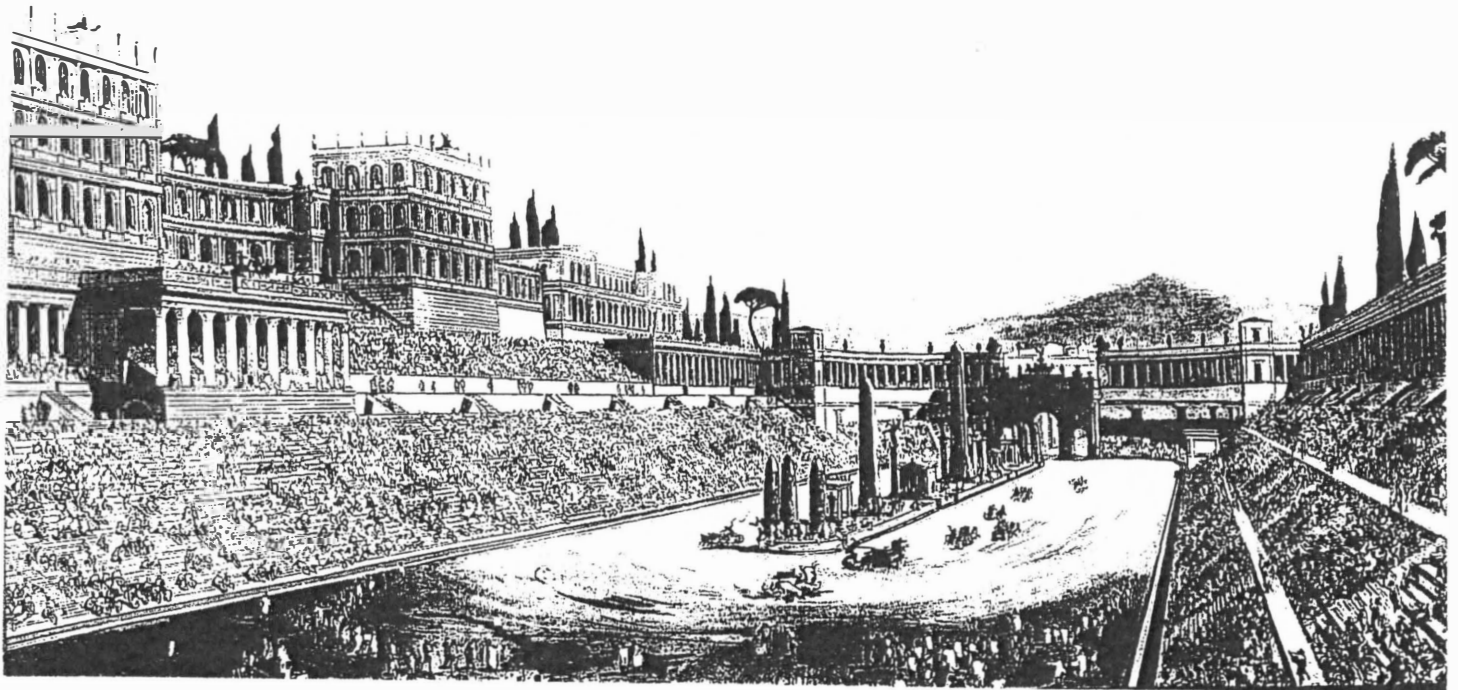
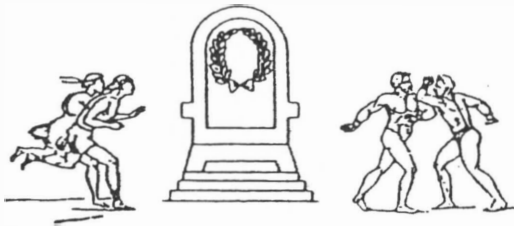
And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body; and bring it into subjection: lest that by any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

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.

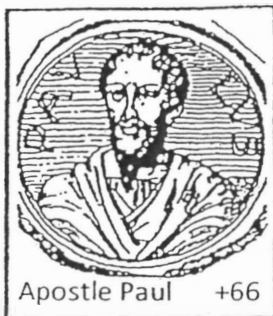
26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

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.



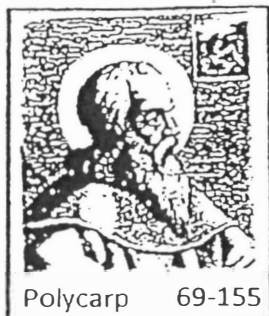
Paul's reference to the BEMA ("judgment seat") does not picture a courtroom scene but the umpire's seat at an athletic contest.

CHRISTIANS THROUGH THE CENTURIES



Apostle Paul +66

1



Polycarp 69-155

2



Tertullian 160-220

3



St Augustine 354-430

4



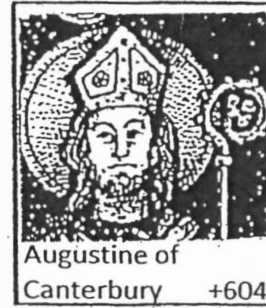
St Patrick 387-493
or 460

5



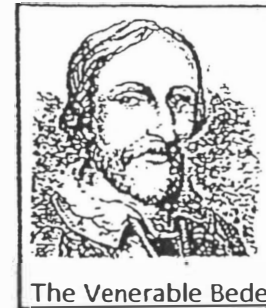
Boethius 480-524

6



Augustine of
Canterbury +604

7



The Venerable Bede
672-735

8



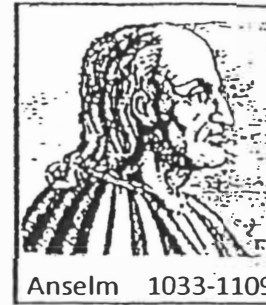
St Bernard 778-841

9



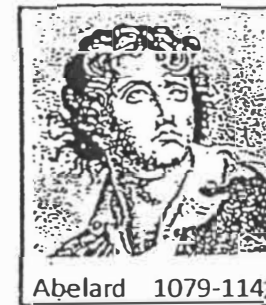
Wenceslaus
907-935

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 ha-23-
their joy abruptly end at the bema, possibly followed by weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth?