



# ISAIAH

## Week 4: Isaiah, Chapter 2

Trusted. Obedient. Prophetic.

Winter 2023 w/Wednesday Night Crew

1/25 – Ch.1

2/1 – Ch. 2 Mill.Reign

2/8

2/15 – Gone PR ROBIN

2/22 – Home Tues. Gone?

3/1

3/8 – Gone

3/15

3/22

3/29

4/5

4/12 – Gone

4/19

4/26

5/3 – Gone

5/10 – Home night prior

5/17

5/24

5/31

### RECAP: Isaiah 1

### Which Covenant do I really live by? (2 Cor. 3:3-11)

SL#3

## ISAIAH RECAP

Week 3: Chapter 1  
Wednesday Night Crew

### Applying Isaiah to My Today

#### Which Covenant do I really live by? (2 Cor. 3:3-11)

- O.T. Measuring how God's holiness reveals itself through me by what I DO and what I DO NOT DO.
- N.T. Measuring God's holiness through how He reflects through me (no more veil)?

#### SIGNS OF:

Am I attempting to hide sin.

Because if others cannot see my "DO NOT DO" but only see my "DO" I am good.

Trusting in substitutes for God.

is one way to show we have departed from God.  
IF time = Worship: What am I busy with?

WHO or WHAT defines spiritual growth in my life?

My likes and desires? My schedule? My...or do I let scripture lead me, challenge me, convict me?

LEARN TO DO WHAT IS GOOD. (Is.1:17)

What am I currently learning from the LORD?

## Isaiah 2:1-4:6

Considered one section of Isaiah's prophecies. His earliest.  
[Two Fold? Fulfilled in Isaiah's time and in the future? Thinking NO.]

### SL#4

#### Isaiah 2:1-4

*2 This is what Isaiah, Amoz's son, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.*

*<sup>2</sup> In the days to come the mountain of the Lord's house will be the highest of the mountains. It will be lifted above the hills; peoples will stream to it.*

Conversation of us Gentiles:

This expectation of the conversion of Gentiles is an important part of Old Testament prophecy (Isa. 40; 45; Jer. 3:17; Amos 9:12; Hag. 2:6-7; Zech. 8:20-22; 14:16-17; cf. Acts 9:15). It is also a fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham of blessing for all peoples on earth (Gen. 12:3; 22:18). Horton, S. M. (2000). [Isaiah: A Logion Press Commentary](#) (pp. 405-490). Logion Press.

*<sup>3</sup> Many nations will go and say,*

*"Come, let's go up to the Lord's mountain, to the house of Jacob's God  
so that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in God's paths."*

*Instruction will come from Zion; the Lord's word from Jerusalem.*

- Recapturing those HIGH PLACES where the people worshipped their "local" gods:  
Replacing humans worshipping: Human Achievement. Conquest. Education. Wealth.  
Control. Power. HUMANITY elevated to the role of God.

#### QUESTIONS:

Once again, "Jerusalem" being the place and the people where we EXPERIENCE the LORD.

Where does this happen now?

Who is "Jerusalem" until this day?

[Christians. So what do others experience of Jesus in me?]

*<sup>4</sup> God will judge between the nations, and settle disputes of mighty nations.*

*Then they will beat their swords into iron plows and their spears into pruning tools.*

*Nation will not take up sword against nation; they will no longer learn how to make war.*

[Quoted in Micah 4:1-4]

**Isaiah 2:5** *<sup>5</sup> Come, house of Jacob, let's walk by the Lord's light.*

*"Come with me, Orleen, and walk with me in my light."*

#### QUESTIONS:

Back to last week's trusting in substitutes... What lights my way? Guides me. Helps me to make decisions on what I do and what I value? WHAT AM I TRUSTING IN? WHOM AM I TRUSTING IN?  
[Really difficult to know the honest answer to that question without hard in our life. Pain is refining whether we like that process or not. Pain = the pulling away of what we trust in?]

## Isaiah 2:6-10

### Everyone is brought low

<sup>6</sup> *You have abandoned your people, house of Jacob.*

*They are full of sorcerers from the east and fortune-tellers like the Philistines; they hold hands with foreigners' children.*

<sup>7</sup> *Their land is full of silver and gold; they have countless treasures. Their land is filled with horses; they have countless chariots.*

<sup>8</sup> *Their land is filled with idols; they worship their handiwork, what their own fingers have made.*

<sup>9</sup> *Humanity will be brought down; each person laid low—don't lift them up!*

(do not forgive them...why should you...Isaiah's frustration coming thru)

<sup>10</sup> *Go into the rocks, and hide yourself in the dust from the terror of the Lord, from the splendor of God's majesty!*

Criminals and fugitives would often hide in caves in the limestone rock cliffs of the land of Israel. David did this when King Saul was seeking to kill him (e.g., 1 Sam. 22:1). In other lands people often sought underground refuges. Isaiah now gives an ironic command to those who bowed down to idols. In the future Day of Judgment, let them try to escape in those refuges. But they will not be able to (cf. Rev. 6:15). They trusted in earthly things, but the earth and the rocks will not be able to hide them. They who mocked the "majesty" of the LORD will flee before His glory "when he rises to shake the earth" (Isa. 2:19, 21) during the judgments that precede the Millennium. Horton, S. M. (2000). [Isaiah: A Logion Press Commentary](#) (pp. 405–490). Logion Press.

**Revelation 6:15** Then the kings of the earth, the officials and the generals, the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in caves and in the rocks of the mountains.

## Isaiah 2:11-21

<sup>11</sup> *People's proud gazing will be stopped and humanity's arrogance brought down; the Lord alone will be exalted on that day.*

<sup>12</sup> ***The Lord of heavenly forces has planned a day:*** [LORD of Hosts]  
***against all that is prideful and haughty;***  
***against all that is lofty, and it will be laid low;***

For the day of the Lord of hosts *shall come* upon everything proud and lofty,  
Upon everything lifted up— And it shall be brought low— NKJV

<sup>13</sup> *against all the cedars of Lebanon, high and lofty;*

*against all the oaks of Bashan;*

<sup>14</sup> *against all the high mountains;*

*against all the lofty hills;*

<sup>15</sup> *against every tall tower;*

*against every fortified wall;*

<sup>16</sup> *against all the ships of Tarshish;*

*against all the wonderful boats.*

Luxury + Pleasure will be judged.

God would bring judgment also on great merchant ships which were outfitted for long voyages and could go as far as Tarshish (probably Tartessus in Spain at the mouth of the Guadalquivir River). These were like the ships that were the pride of Solomon (1 Kings 9:26; 10:22) and of the Phoenicians. **Luxurious**, stately **pleasure** ships would come under God's judgment too. Horton, S. M. (2000). [Isaiah: A Logion Press Commentary](#) (pp. 405–490). Logion Press.

*17 People's pride will be brought down and human arrogance humiliated.  
The Lord alone will be exalted on that day;  
18 the idols will completely pass away.*

Isaiah concludes this section by essentially repeating verse 11. Human pride will be humbled. In verse 18, the singular verb (*halaph*) with the plural "idols" indicates not one idol will remain. The same verb is used in Isaiah 9:10 to mean "replace" or "supplant." In other words, the Lord alone will be exalted in that day and will wholly supplant the idols. Horton, S. M. (2000). [Isaiah: A Logion Press Commentary](#) (pp. 405–490). Logion Press.

*19 Go into caves in the rocks and holes in the dust before the terror of the Lord and the splendor of God's majesty, when he arises to terrify the earth.*

*20 On that day, people will toss to the rodents and to the bats their idols of silver and idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship.*

*21 They will hide in fissures of rocks and in crevices of cliffs before the terror of the Lord and the splendor of God's majesty when he arises to terrify the earth.*

**QUESTIONS:** *Terror + Splendor?*

How can the embodiment of holiness "terrify" the earth?

### **1 Thessalonians 5:1-4**

We don't need to write to you about the timing and dates, brothers and sisters. <sup>2</sup>You know very well that **the day of the Lord** is going to come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup>When they are saying, "There is peace and security," at that time sudden destruction will attack them, like labor pains start with a pregnant woman, and they definitely won't escape. <sup>4</sup>But you aren't in darkness, brothers and sisters, so the day won't catch you by surprise like a thief.

### **2 Peter 3:10**

<sup>10</sup>But **the day of the Lord** will come like a thief. On that day the heavens will pass away with a dreadful noise, the elements will be consumed by fire, and the earth and all the works done on it will be exposed.

## **WHAT IS THE DAY OF THE LORD?**

**Is 2:12** For the day of the Lord of hosts shall come upon everything proud and lofty, upon everything lifted up and it shall be brought low

### **Is 13:6-9**

Wail, for the day of the Lord is near.

Like destruction from the Almighty<sup>[b]</sup> it will come.

<sup>7</sup>Then all hands will fall limp; every human heart will melt,

<sup>8</sup> and they will be terrified.

Like a woman writhing in labor, they will be seized by spasms and agony.

They will look at each other aghast, their faces blazing.

<sup>9</sup>Look, the day of the Lord is coming with cruel rage and burning anger, making the earth a ruin, and wiping out its sinners.

**Is 58:13; Jer 46:10; Ezek 13:5, 30:3; Joel 1:15, 2:1, 2:11, 2:31, 3:14; Amos 5:18-20; Obad 15; Zeph 1:7-14; Zech 14:1; Mal 4:5; Acts 2:20; 1Cor 5:5; 2Cor 1:14; 1Th 5:2; 2Pet 3:10.**

## **Day of the LORD:**

Time is linear not cyclical

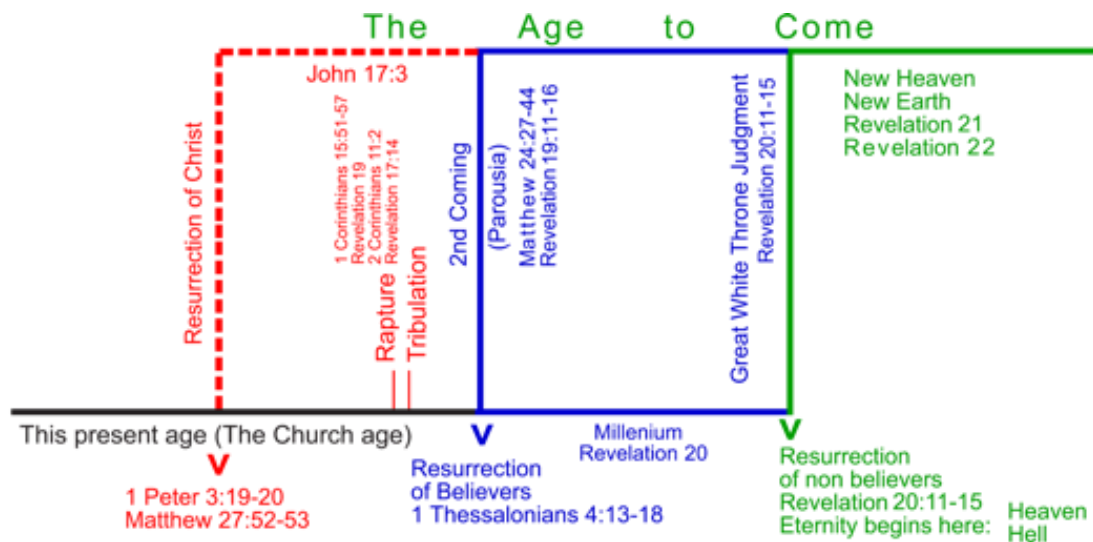
### **Genesis 1:1-5**

*When God began to create*<sup>[a]</sup>[IN THE BEGINNING, GOD CREATED]

the heavens and the earth—<sup>2</sup> the earth was without shape or form, it was dark over the deep sea, and God’s wind swept over the waters—<sup>3</sup> God said, “Let there be light.” And so light appeared. <sup>4</sup> God saw how good the light was. God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God named the light Day and the darkness Night.

There was evening and there was morning: the first day.

[Hinduism = reincarnation. Time repeats the same cycle over and over]



Adapted from "The Gospel Of The Kingdom", George Eldon Ladd

Day of the LORD: The Time between Jesus’ 1<sup>st</sup> Coming and His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming

**Phase One:** Will be the rapture, that moment just before the seven-year Great Tribulation when the believers of all time – dead and alive- will be caught up to be with Jesus.

**Phase Two:** Will be when Jesus literally sets His feet on earth again and reclaims it as His kingdom.

Ushered in the Church Age:

### Section A of the Day of the LORD: DBR of Christ

#### 1 Peter 3:18-22

<sup>18</sup> Christ himself suffered on account of sins, once for all, the righteous one on behalf of the unrighteous. He did this in order to bring you into the presence of God. Christ was put to death as a human, but made alive by the Spirit. <sup>19</sup> And it was by the Spirit that he went to preach to the spirits in prison. <sup>20</sup> In the past, these spirits were disobedient—when God patiently waited during the time of Noah. Noah built an ark in which a few (that is, eight) lives were rescued through water. <sup>21</sup> Baptism is like that. It saves you now—not because it removes dirt from your body but because it is the mark of a good conscience toward God. Your salvation comes through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who is at God’s right side. Now that he has gone into heaven, he rules over all angels, authorities, and powers.

Three major interpretations:

- 1.) **Jesus descended into hell and preached to the spirits of those who perished in the flood in the time of Noah.** Some who hold this view also think that what Jesus proclaimed to the dead was the gospel, offering them a further opportunity to repent. Others would have Christ preaching to the

**righteous dead**, proclaiming their release from the prison where they awaited his coming. Still others would understand his preaching to be the heralding of the doom of the wicked dead.

2.) Presented by **Augustine**, who objected to the first view as presented by Origen and others. Augustine held that Christ's preaching was done in the Spirit through Noah. Peter says that it was the Spirit of Christ who preached through the Old Testament prophets (1:11); Christ's preaching through Noah would be a case in point. Those to whom Noah preached were not in prison literally, but they could be described as in prison spiritually. (Or, it might be said that those to whom Noah once preached are *now* spirits in prison. NOAH AS A TYPE OF CHRIST? [DID HE MOVE THOSE FROM HADES TO THE HEAVENLY REALM?])

3.) *Spirits in prison* to refer to fallen angels rather than to human beings. Jesus proclaims to them his victory and their doom. This is seen by some as taking place after his resurrection. As he ascends into heaven, Jesus confronts the principalities and powers, showing his victory and power over them. **ANNOUNCING JUDGMENT OVER THE DISOBEDIENT ANGELS. PREACHED = HERALDED.**

#### **Matthew 27:50-54**

<sup>50</sup> Again Jesus cried out with a loud shout. Then he died.

<sup>51</sup> Look, the curtain of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split, <sup>52</sup> and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised. <sup>53</sup> After Jesus' resurrection they came out of their graves and went into the holy city where they appeared to many people. <sup>54</sup> When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and what had just happened, they were filled with awe and said, "This was certainly God's Son."

#### **John 17:1-5**

When Jesus finished saying these things, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, so that the Son can glorify you. <sup>2</sup> You gave him authority over everyone so that he could give eternal life to everyone you gave him. <sup>3</sup> This is eternal life: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you sent. <sup>4</sup> I have glorified you on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> Now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I shared with you before the world was created.

#### **Hebrews 1:1-4**

In the past, God spoke through the prophets to our ancestors in many times and many ways. <sup>2</sup> In these final days, though, he spoke to us through a Son. God made his Son the heir of everything and created the world through him. <sup>3</sup> The Son is the light of God's glory and the imprint of God's being. He maintains everything with his powerful message. After he carried out the cleansing of people from their sins, he sat down at the right side of the highest majesty. <sup>4</sup> And the Son became so much greater than the other messengers, such as angels, that he received a more important title than theirs.

### **Section B of the Day of the LORD:**

Rapture, Tribulation, Judgment Seat of Christ, Bride of Christ, Marriage Supper of the Lamb

#### **Rapture:**

#### **1 Corinthians 15:51-57**

*<sup>51</sup> Listen, I'm telling you a secret: All of us won't die, but we will all be changed—<sup>52</sup> in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the final trumpet. The trumpet will blast, and the dead will be raised with bodies that won't decay, and we will be changed. <sup>53</sup> It's necessary for this rotting body to be clothed with what can't decay, and for the body that is dying to be clothed in what can't die. <sup>54</sup> And when the rotting body has been clothed in what can't decay, and the dying body has been clothed in what can't die, then this statement in scripture will happen: Death has been swallowed up by a victory.*

*<sup>55</sup> Where is your victory, Death?  
Where is your sting, Death?*

(<sup>56</sup> Death's sting is sin, and the power of sin is the Law.)<sup>57</sup> Thanks be to God, who gives us this victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

### **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** - Resurrection of Believers - Rapture

*<sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, we want you to know about people who have died so that you won't mourn like others who don't have any hope. <sup>14</sup> Since we believe that Jesus died and rose, so we also believe that God will bring with him those who have died in Jesus.*

*<sup>15</sup> What we are saying is a message from the Lord: we who are alive and still around at the Lord's coming definitely won't go ahead of those who have died. <sup>16</sup> This is because the Lord himself will come down from heaven with the signal of a shout by the head angel and a blast on God's trumpet. First, those who are dead in Christ will rise. <sup>17</sup> Then, we who are living and still around will be taken up together with them in the clouds to meet with the Lord in the air. That way we will always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> So encourage each other with these words.*

### **Tribulation:**

**TRIBULATION, THE GREAT**—a short but intense period of distress and suffering at the end of time. The exact phrase, *the great tribulation*, is found only once in the Bible (Rev. 7:14). The great tribulation is to be distinguished from the general tribulation a believer faces in the world (Matt. 13:21; John 16:33; Acts 14:22) or the age-long difficulties Jesus forecast (Mark 13:7-8, et al). It refers to God's specific wrath upon the unbelieving world at the end of the age (Matt. 24:29-30; Mark 13:24). Those references clearly separate the age-long "tribulation," which increases in intensity throughout, from the final calamities described here and in Revelation 6:12-17 and 16:1-21. The great tribulation fulfills Daniel's prophecies (Daniel 7-12). It appears to describe a time of evil from false christs and false prophets (Mark 13:22) when natural disasters will occur throughout the world. (Hayford, J. W., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Hayford's Bible handbook*. Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.)

### **Matthew 24:21-22**

*<sup>21</sup> There will be great suffering such as the world has never before seen and will never again see. <sup>22</sup> If that time weren't shortened, nobody would be rescued. But for the sake of the ones whom God chose, that time will be cut short.*

### **Revelation 7:14**

*Then he said to me, "These people have come out of great hardship. They have washed their robes and made them white in the Lamb's blood."*

### **Judgement Seat of Christ:**

#### **2 Corinthians 5:10**

*<sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. NKJV*

<sup>10</sup> We all must appear before Christ in court so that each person can be paid back for the things that were done while in the body, whether they were good or bad. CEB

#### **Luke 14:14**

*<sup>14</sup> And you will be blessed because they can't repay you. Instead, you will be repaid when the just are resurrected."*

#### **1 Corinthians 3:10-15**

*<sup>10</sup> I laid a foundation like a wise master builder according to God's grace that was given to me, but someone else is building on top of it. Each person needs to pay attention to the way they build on it. <sup>11</sup> No one can lay any other foundation besides the one that is already laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> So, whether someone builds on top of the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, or hay, <sup>13</sup> each one's work will be clearly shown. **The day will make it clear, because it will be revealed with fire—the fire will test the quality of each one's work.** <sup>14</sup> If anyone's work survives, they'll get a reward. <sup>15</sup> But if anyone's work goes up in flames, they'll lose it. However, they themselves will be saved as if they had gone through a fire.*

#### **Bride of Christ**

#### **2 Corinthians 11:2**

*<sup>2</sup> For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. NKJV*

<sup>2</sup> I'm deeply concerned about you with the same concern that God has. As your father, I promised you in marriage to one husband. I promised to present you as an innocent virgin to Christ himself.

#### **Marriage Supper of the Lamb**

#### **Revelation 19:6-9**

*<sup>6</sup> And I heard something that sounded like a huge crowd, like rushing water and powerful thunder. They said,*

*"Hallelujah! The Lord our God, the Almighty, exercised his royal power!*

*<sup>7</sup> Let us rejoice and celebrate, and give him the glory, for the wedding day of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.*

*<sup>8</sup> She was given fine, pure white linen to wear, for the fine linen is the saints' acts of justice."*

*<sup>9</sup> Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Favored are those who have been invited to the wedding banquet of the Lamb." He said to me, "These are the true words of God."*

- What is the Marriage Supper of the Lamb?  
{An actual meal in Heaven, is the final manifestation of the marriage of Christ and His wife. This culminates their initial relationship, likened to an engagement which was a legal arrangement in Jewish culture. This follows the coming of Christ as Bridegroom in the Rapture of the church before the Great Tribulation and precedes His return seven years later to establish His millennial kingdom.}
- When does it happen? {Follows the Rapture and before His Triumphant Coming.}
- What are we really doing? {What we doing during the Tribulation.}  
{Passover as foreshadowing the marriage supper of the Lamb: **Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:7-20.**  
Verse in whole at the end of this section.}

#### **Section C: The End of the Day of the LORD**

#### **Revelation 16:16** – Armageddon

*And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon (Mt. Megiddo).*



**Revelation 19:19** And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

### **Rev 17:14**

*14 They will make war on the Lamb, but the Lamb will emerge victorious, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings. Those with him are called, chosen, and faithful.”*

### **Revelation 19:11-21 – White Horse**

#### **Christ Defeats the Beast**

*11 Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider was called Faithful and True, and he judges and makes war justly. 12 His eyes were like a fiery flame, and on his head were many royal crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. 13 He wore a robe dyed<sup>l</sup> with blood, and his name was called the Word of God. 14 Heaven’s armies, wearing fine linen that was white and pure, were following him on white horses. 15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword that he will use to strike down the nations. He is the one who will rule them with an iron rod. And he is the one who will trample the winepress of the Almighty God’s passionate anger. 16 He has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: King of kings and Lord of lords.*

*17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he called out with a loud voice and said to all the birds flying high overhead, “Come and gather for God’s great supper. 18 Come and eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of generals, the flesh of the powerful, and the flesh of horses and their riders. Come and eat the flesh of all, both free and slave, both small and great.” 19 **Then I saw that the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies had gathered to make war against the rider on the horse and his army.** 20 But the beast was seized, along with the false prophet who had done signs in the beast’s presence. (He had used the signs to deceive people into receiving the beast’s mark and into worshipping the beast’s image.) The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake that burns with sulfur. 21 The rest were killed by the sword that comes from the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds ate their fill of their flesh.*

### **Isaiah 14:12-20 Fall of Lucifer**

*How you’ve fallen from heaven,  
morning star, son of dawn!  
You are cut down to earth,  
helpless on your back!*

*13 You said to yourself, I will climb up to heaven;  
above God’s stars, I will raise my throne.*

*I’ll sit on the mount of assembly,  
on the heights of Zaphon.*

*14 I’ll go up to the cloud tops;  
I’ll be like the Most High!*

*15 But down to the underworld<sup>[a]</sup> you are  
brought,  
to the depths of the pit.*

*16 Those who see you will stare at you;  
they will examine you closely:  
“Is this the man who rattled the earth,  
who shook kingdoms,*

*17 who made the world a wasteland  
and tore down its cities,  
and wouldn’t let his prisoners go home?”*

*18 All the kings of the nations lie down honored,  
all of them, each in his own tomb.*

*19 But you are cast away from your own grave  
like a rejected branch,  
covered by the dead  
and those pierced by the sword—  
who go down to the stony pit—  
like a trampled corpse.*

*20 You won’t join them in burial,  
for you destroyed your own land;  
you killed your own people.  
Such evil offspring will never be mentioned  
again!*

### **Section D: The Millennial Reign**

### **Rev 20 – Millennial Reign**

- Resurrection of non believers
- Eternity begins here: Heaven - Hell

### **Revelation 20:11-15** – Great White Throne Judgment

*<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and the one who is seated on it. Before his face both earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. <sup>12</sup> I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. Another scroll was opened too; this is the scroll of life. And the dead were judged on the basis of what was written in the scrolls about what they had done. <sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and Death and the Grave gave up the dead that were in them, and people were judged by what they had done. <sup>14</sup> Then Death and the Grave were thrown into the fiery lake. This, the fiery lake, is the second death. <sup>15</sup> Then anyone whose name wasn't found written in the scroll of life was thrown into the fiery lake.*

### **New Heaven/New Earth**

Revelation 21 & Revelation 22

## **APPLYING ISAIAH TO MY TODAY:**

### **QUESTION: HOW do we LIVE IN WAIT for the Day of the LORD?**

**#1.) We Anticipate...**Expect, Predict, Count on, Look for, Regard as probable,

### **2 Corinthians 1:12-14**

*<sup>12</sup> We have conducted ourselves with godly sincerity and pure motives in the world, and especially toward you. This is why we are confident, and our conscience confirms this. We didn't act with human wisdom but we relied on the grace of God. <sup>13</sup> We don't write anything to you except what you can read and also understand. I hope that you will understand totally <sup>14</sup> since you have already understood us partly. Understand **that in the day of our Lord Jesus**, we will make you proud as you will also make us proud.*

### **Titus 2:11-15**

*<sup>11</sup> The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people. <sup>12</sup> It educates us so that we can live sensible, ethical, and godly lives right now by rejecting ungodly lives and the desires of this world. <sup>13</sup> At the same time **we wait for the blessed hope** and the glorious appearance of our great God and savior Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup> He gave himself for us in order to rescue us from every kind of lawless behavior, and cleanse a special people for himself who are eager to do good actions.*

*<sup>15</sup> Talk about these things. Encourage and correct with complete authority. Don't let anyone disrespect you.*

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, <sup>12</sup> teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup> looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

<sup>15</sup> Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you. NKJV

**#2.) We Learn**

### **Isaiah 2:22**

<sup>22</sup> *Quit admiring the human race, who breathe through their nostrils.  
Why should they be admired?*

### **A.) THE UNFIT HEIRESS**

Chpt 3 “Remaking the World”

“In 1883, English intellectual Francis Galton coined the term eugenics (meaning “wellborn”) to advocate a selective breeding program among humans. Galton had long been bothered that his country was becoming overrun by wretched people who depended upon the charity of affluent families like his. After reading his cousin Charles Darwin’s book *On the Origin of the Species*, Galton determined to influence the evolution of human beings. The Englishman argued that it was imperative for members of the upper class to pass down the characteristics associated with it, such as superior intelligence. If wellborn women had more children, then many social evils, such as poverty, could be eliminated. Though he revered science and had little time for religion, Galton imagined that eugenics would be taken like a religious creed—on faith and without scientific proof. He often compared eugenical marriage (the marriage of two high-class individuals) to other religious duties and cited instances of selective breeding in Jewish and Christian texts.”

“In 1910, Davenport founded the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory on Long Island. He intended to identify—and then eliminate—traits associated with poverty, intellectual disability, criminality, promiscuity, and other perceived genetic conditions. Like Galton, he believed that social conditions like poverty were biologically inherited, just like blue eyes or brown hair. But whereas Galton had emphasized increased breeding among elites (what would become known as positive eugenics), Davenport desired to give equal attention to the other side of the eugenic coin: negative eugenics. He wanted to take measures to prevent those deemed “unfit” from becoming parents. He claimed that Austrian monk Gregor Mendel’s recently rediscovered work on the reproductive patterns of peas provided the know-how to implement such a program.”

— *The Unfit Heiress: The Tragic Life and Scandalous Sterilization of Ann Cooper Hewitt* by Audrey Clare Farley  
<https://a.co/6Cozwge>

“The Germans had first encountered the idea in a translation of Popenoe’s 1916 college textbook, *Applied Eugenics*, co-authored by Roswell Johnson. In addition to advocating for selective breeding, this text encouraged the segregation of “waste humanity” in manual labor camps.”

— *The Unfit Heiress: The Tragic Life and Scandalous Sterilization of Ann Cooper Hewitt* by Audrey Clare Farley  
<https://a.co/h9PluQa>

### **B.) MN – Protect Reproductive Options**

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2023/01/28/minnesota-senate-votes-to-guarantee-abortion-rights-sends-bill-to-governor>

A measure guaranteeing the right to an abortion — and other reproductive health care — is on its way to the governor’s desk for a signature after the Minnesota Senate voted 34-33 to pass it on early Saturday morning.

During a long and at times contentious debate that started around noon on Friday, the Senate rejected multiple Republican efforts to amend the bill. In the end, all Democrats in the chamber voted for the bill while all Republicans voted against it. The debate lasted for 15 hours.

The proposal, known as the [Protect Reproductive Options](#) or PRO Act, has been a top priority for Democrats at the Capitol. It would cement in state law the right to access reproductive health

care options including abortion, birth control, family planning help and sterilization. And it has spurred strong support as well as harsh criticism on its path through the Legislature. Opponents raised concerns about enshrining abortion access in state law, since it is already guaranteed by a 1995 state Supreme Court ruling. Republicans repeatedly called the bill “extreme” as they tried to attach restrictions and limits to the reproductive rights outlined in the bill. And they worried that the proposal would result in adverse situations for patients. “Today we are not just codifying Roe v. Wade or Doe v. Gomez as the author has indicated,” Senate Minority Leader Mark Johnson, R-East Grand Forks, said. “We are enacting the most extreme bill in the country regarding youth sterilization, late term abortions and public viability for a vast array of new reproductive rights.” Abortions are extremely rare in the late stages of pregnancy, and doctors say if they do happen it's because of serious medical problems. Supporters of the bill argued that it keeps politicians out of decisions that should be made by families in consultation with physicians.

### C.) Yuval Noah Harari

“My first book, **Sapiens**, surveyed the human past, examining how an insignificant ape became the ruler of planet Earth.

**Homo Deus**, my second book, explored the long-term future of life, contemplating how humans might eventually become gods, and what the ultimate destiny of intelligence and consciousness might be.

In this book I want to zoom in on the here and now, but without losing the long-term perspective. How can insights about the distant past and distant future help us make sense of current affairs and of the immediate dilemmas of human societies?”

— **21 Lessons for the 21st Century** by Yuval Noah Harari  
<https://a.co/iIXU2i0>

## Ask

**NOW WHAT?** (Leave 5 minutes for this to be answered by the Crew)

### Respond:

- Invite others into my life so they may taste the Jesus in me.  
[No to “getting them saved” and Yes to doing life with.](invite into my home..PT&K)
- Stand for biblical principles.
- Share the knowledge of the Day of the LORD. [No to fire&brimstone]

## NOtes: REV 19

After this I heard what sounded like a huge crowd in heaven. They said,  
“Hallelujah! The salvation and glory and power of our God!

<sup>2</sup>His judgments are true and just, because he judged the great prostitute,

who ruined the earth by her whoring, and he exacted the penalty for the blood of his servants from her hand.”

<sup>3</sup> Then they said a second time,  
“Hallelujah! Smoke goes up from her forever and always.”

<sup>4</sup> The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God, who is seated on the throne, and they said, “Amen. Hallelujah!”

<sup>5</sup> Then a voice went out from the throne and said,  
“Praise our God, all you his servants,  
and you who fear him, both small and great.”

<sup>6</sup> And I heard something that sounded like a huge crowd, like rushing water and powerful thunder. They said,

“Hallelujah! The Lord our God, the Almighty, exercised his royal power!

<sup>7</sup> Let us rejoice and celebrate, and give him the glory, for the wedding day of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.<sup>8</sup> She was given fine, pure white linen to wear, for the fine linen is the saints’ acts of justice.”

<sup>9</sup> Then the angel said to me, “Write this: Favored are those who have been invited to the wedding banquet of the Lamb.” He said to me, “These are the true words of God.”<sup>10</sup> Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said, “Don’t do that! I’m a servant just like you and your brothers and sisters who hold firmly to the witness of Jesus. Worship God! The witness of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy!”

### **Christ defeats the beast**

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider was called Faithful and True, and he judges and makes war justly.<sup>12</sup> His eyes were like a fiery flame, and on his head were many royal crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.<sup>13</sup> He wore a robe dyed<sup>[a]</sup> with blood, and his name was called the Word of God.<sup>14</sup> Heaven’s armies, wearing fine linen that was white and pure, were following him on white horses.<sup>15</sup> From his mouth comes a sharp sword that he will use to strike down the nations. He is the one who will rule them with an iron rod. And he is the one who will trample the winepress of the Almighty God’s passionate anger.<sup>16</sup> He has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: King of kings and Lord of lords.

<sup>17</sup> Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he called out with a loud voice and said to all the birds flying high overhead, “Come and gather for God’s great supper.<sup>18</sup> Come and eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of generals, the flesh of the powerful, and the flesh of horses and their riders. Come and eat the flesh of all, both free and slave, both small and great.”<sup>19</sup> Then I saw that the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies had gathered to make war against the rider on the horse and his army.<sup>20</sup> But the beast was seized, along with the false prophet who had done signs in the beast’s presence. (He had used the signs to deceive people into receiving the beast’s mark and into worshipping the beast’s image.) The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake that burns with sulfur.<sup>21</sup> The rest were killed by the sword that comes from the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds ate their fill of their flesh.

## **REV 20**

### **Satan confined**

*20 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the abyss and a huge chain. <sup>2</sup> He seized the dragon, the old snake, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. <sup>3</sup> He threw him into the abyss, then locked and sealed it over him. This was to keep him from continuing to deceive the nations until the thousand years were over. After this he must be released for a little while.*

#### **The saints rule with Christ**

*<sup>4</sup> Then I saw thrones, and people took their seats on them, and judgment was given in their favor. They were the ones who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and God's word, and those who hadn't worshipped the beast or its image, who hadn't received the mark on their forehead or hand. They came to life and ruled with Christ for one thousand years. <sup>5</sup> The rest of the dead didn't come to life until the thousand years were over. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Favored and holy are those who have a share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will rule with him for one thousand years.*

#### **Satan's defeat**

*<sup>7</sup> When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison. <sup>8</sup> He will go out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog. He will gather them for battle. Their number is like the sand of the sea. <sup>9</sup> They came up across the whole earth and surrounded the saints' camp, the city that God loves. But fire came down from heaven and consumed them. <sup>10</sup> Then the devil, who had deceived them, was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet also were. There painful suffering will be inflicted upon them day and night, forever and always.*

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## **2. The blessed witness of suffering for righteousness (3:13–22)**

### *a. The opportunity for witness in word (3:13–15)*

Peter has moved to the issue that is central for the rest of the letter: the issue of Christian suffering. He has shown how the love of God turns the problem upside down. Christians are free from the need of vindication, and filled with humility as heirs of grace. Suffering has become an

opportunity to meet evil with good and cursing with blessing. Peter describes the triumphant witness of this response.

'Who, then, will *harm you if you are eager to do good?*' This question could be taken to mean that, on the whole, Christians who heed the counsel of Psalm 34 need not expect any harm. Governments are instituted to commend those who do right, masters do not usually punish servants who do what they are told, spouses of pagans may win their grudging respect. No doubt there is truth in this observation. God's blessing may give many 'good days' in this sense to those who are zealous for doing good.

But it is likely that Peter is saying much more than this. The 'and' at the beginning of the sentence (omitted in the NIV) has the force of 'then'. It ties the statement to what has just been said, that the eyes and ears of the Lord are fixed on the righteous, while his face is against those who do evil. Further, the word 'evil' at the conclusion of the psalm quotation is picked up again in the verb for *harm* (3:13). 'Who, then [in the light of the Lord's care, and his control of evil], will do you evil ...?' Peter is not encouraging Christians to suppose that their chances are better than average for escaping persecution. He is assuring them that, under God's care and blessing, no evil can befall them. Peter's words express Paul's affirmation: 'If God is for us, who can be against us?' The psalmist had the same conviction: 'In God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?'<sup>2</sup>

'But if, indeed, *you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed.*' No harm, to be sure, can come to us at last. God's vindication and protection will preserve the heirs of his blessing. Christ prayed that the Father would protect his own from the evil one. But he did not pray that they be taken out of the world. Jesus warned his disciples, 'In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.'<sup>4</sup> Peter writes to those who feel the mounting pressure of opposition in their society. 'Indeed, the spectacle of moral beauty does not disarm all the wicked; they are often even irritated by the radiance of a virtue that condemns them.'

Christians should therefore not think it strange that they are called to endure persecution (4:12). Yet they must understand that suffering is not the opposite of blessing. Jesus had declared those to be blessed who suffer for righteousness. He promised them a reward in heaven: 'Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven.' That word of Jesus is more than a promise. It pronounces blessing. Those who will receive a heavenly reward are already blessed by the Lord. Peter emphasizes this. Those who suffer receive the benediction of Christ as a present possession. Their time of suffering has been made a time of blessing.

Paul knew the blessing of Christ's grace given in the midst of suffering. 'That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.' Tertullian, an African church father at the beginning of the third century, said that 'Prison does for the Christian what the desert did for the prophet. Call it not prison but the place of retirement. The body is shut in, but all is open to the spirit: it may roam abroad on the way to God ... The leg does not feel the chain if the mind is in heaven.' It was Tertullian who said that the blood of martyrs is indeed the seed of the church. Peter writes at the outset of centuries of persecution that the church of Christ has endured, a chronicle that is still being written today in the labour camps and prisons of a world that rejects the gospel.

*If you should suffer ...*, he writes. The imperial persecutions that would sweep across the Roman world had not yet come. Christians were not yet being compelled to affirm the deity of

Caesar. No doubt there were already those who had given their witness as martyrs (see 4:6), but much more was to come. Yet it was already time to prepare. Churches today that experience little persecution need Peter's instruction; in a future nearer than they suppose they may find themselves suffering with the rest of Christ's afflicted church in the world.

Peter would prepare the church, not simply to endure persecution, but to find in persecution an opportunity for witness. Both the boldness and the humility needed for witness come about through a fundamental exchange. Christians must exchange the *fear* of men for the fear of the Lord. Peter gives the secret of boldness as one who had found it after failure. Waiting in the courtyard of the high priest's house while Christ was being examined, Peter had failed miserably. Rembrandt's painting captures the scene: Peter has just denied Christ for the third time, swearing with fearful oaths that he was no disciple of Christ, was not with him, did not know him. In the background shadow stands Jesus. He has just turned to look at Peter.

Contrast Peter, filled with the Spirit as the apostle of the risen Lord. He is no longer huddled by the fire in the outer courtyard. Now he is the accused. He stands before the same tribunal that had examined Jesus. He who had feared to confront a maidservant now confronts the high court. He accuses them of crucifying Jesus, and refuses their order to be silent. 'We must obey God rather than men!'

Peter had lost the fear of men by gaining the fear of the risen Lord. He had set apart *Christ as Lord* in his heart. Yes, Peter knew the meaning of fear. He remembered the panic that unmanned him when, by the fire in the courtyard, he was recognized as a Galilean. His accent had given him away! Peter also knew the secret of a boldness that conquers fear. That secret was announced long ago in the prophecy of Isaiah:

'Do not fear what they fear,  
and do not dread it.  
The Lord Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy,  
he is the one you are to fear,  
he is the one you are to dread.'

Peter quotes from that passage to share his secret of boldness. No doubt the Lord's words through Isaiah had strengthened his own heart. He had already quoted from this section of Isaiah concerning the stone of stumbling (2:8). *Do not fear what they fear*, writes Peter. (His statement could also be read, 'Do not be afraid with fear of them.')

In Isaiah's prophecy the Lord calls his true disciples not to share the fears of the people: they see only the armed power of the enemy. The antidote to the fear of men is awareness of the glory of the Lord himself. Peter's words *But in your hearts set apart*—literally, 'sanctify'—*Christ as Lord* echo Isaiah's words 'The Lord Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy', literally 'Sanctify the Lord' (AV). When the Lord sanctifies us, he makes us holy (1:2; 2:9); when we sanctify the Lord, we set him apart as the Holy One. We recognize his lordship and confess his transcendent deity. Jesus taught his disciples to pray to the Father, 'Hallowed be your name.' That petition asks God to set apart his own name, to be the God that he is in all his glory.

To break the throttling grip of fear we must confess God's lordship with more than mental assent. We must confess it with our heart's devotion. Setting him apart as Lord means bowing before him in the adoration of praise. A praising heart is immune to the fear of other people. Fear



of another sort takes possession of our hearts and minds: a fear that does not flee in terror, but draws near in awe and worship.

We are amazed, then, at the force of the addition Peter makes. He says, literally, *Do not fear what they fear, ... But in your hearts sanctify the Lord, the Christ*. He repeats the words of Isaiah, 'Sanctify the Lord', but adds, 'the Christ'. He does not hesitate to identify the Lord of hosts with Jesus Christ. More than that, he does so in a passage that calls for our total devotion to the Lord in his transcendent deity. Peter is not making a merely verbal connection between two meanings of 'Lord', as applied to God and men. He is explicitly identifying the One who slept in the stern of his fishing-boat with the almighty Creator of heaven and earth. Nor is Peter simply stating the orthodox theology of the earliest period of the church. He speaks from his own experience. The Father in heaven had enabled him to confess the deity of Christ as the Son of the living God. The reality of the resurrection had confirmed his conviction: Jesus who could command the storm and the demons had conquered death and ascended to the right hand of his Father. The Spirit of Christ, given from the throne of glory, worked in Peter awe and reverence for his Lord and Saviour. Filled with that awe, he scorned all that men might do to him. In prison he could sleep securely; on trial he could accuse his accusers. His secret was not simply that he had been with Jesus, but that the Lord Jesus was with him.

Peter had heard Jesus say, 'Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both body and soul in hell.' Jesus had followed that solemn warning with words of supreme assurance to his disciples. Their Father in heaven has numbered every hair in their heads; nothing can happen to them outside of his care.

For the Christian, the fear of death has been removed by Christ's resurrection. He no longer shares the dread that shadows mortal life: fear of atomic holocaust, of terrorist attack or wasting cancer. Certainly he does not fear those who may persecute him for Christ's sake. Indeed, he can understand that their very persecution is fear-driven, the fear of the light on the part of those who live in darkness.

Yet the conquest of fear does not yield pride or smugness. The Christian must not taunt his enemies, but bear witness to them. This, too, will be the fruit of sanctifying the Lord in his heart. The fear of the Lord in the heart of the Christian is not the terror of the guilty under judgment. It is awe before the love of God as well as before his holiness. Awareness of the Lord's presence means tasting afresh that the Lord is good (2:3). We adore the Lord Jesus Christ who redeemed us at the cost of his life's blood (1:19). Peter has already joined our fear of God with our knowledge of his redeeming love (1:17–19). The Lord whom we sanctify in our hearts is the Lord who died for us.

Our courage before those who persecute us is born of *hope* in the Lord as well as fear of the Lord. In our response to those who may interrogate us we give a reason for our hope. Peter's letter is of hope. Hope is not substituted for faith; it *is* faith as it looks to the future of the Lord's salvation. As we have seen, it is a sure hope, not wishful thinking, and it is firmly grounded in the redemption that Jesus Christ has established for us. Hope is the form that faith takes under the threat of death. Stephen's hope lifted his eyes to Christ in glory as he finished his defence before his accusers. They viewed his hope as blasphemy, and stoned him in their fury.

Peter shows us that our hope provides both the courage for our witness and the content of our witness. Our hope is in our risen Lord. We sanctify the Lord Christ in our hearts; there is the end of fear. We sanctify Christ in our words; there is the start of witness. In the Greek, Peter does

not begin a new sentence when he tells us to be always ready to give a reason for our hope. Rather, he says, 'Set apart the Lord, the Christ, ready always for answer.' Our devotion to Christ the Lord makes us ready, not only in attitude but in rationale. The word that Peter uses for *answer* is our word 'apology'. We use the word exclusively in the sense of 'excuse', to express regret for a wrong. In the New Testament, however, the word is used to describe a 'defence', usually in a formal or courtroom context. (That meaning survives when we speak of an 'apologist' for the Christian faith.) Paul, for example, speaks of his right, under Roman law, to meet his accusers face to face and to make his 'defence' against their charges.<sup>2</sup> Jesus had promised the presence of the Holy Spirit to enable his disciples to state their case before authorities. Peter well knew what it meant to stand accused in court and give answer.

As Peter speaks of Christian readiness to defend their hope, he is certainly allowing for situations in which they might be haled before Roman magistrates. His encouragement is not limited to Christians in court, however. He speaks of readiness to make a defence to all who might ask a reason for their hope. Persecution was not as intense as it would become; Peter could still speak of *if* rather than 'when' times of trial and suffering would come (3:14). Yet Christians must be ever ready, not only because they would be called to face Roman courts one day, but because they might be accused or challenged by suspicious or malicious pagans any day. It is true, of course, that the witness of a godly life can evoke questions of another sort. Unbelievers may become inquirers, asking with more than curiosity about the distinctive Christian hope. But Peter is here speaking of suffering for Christ's sake. He is arming Christians against attacks, showing them how such confrontations can be turned into occasions for witness.

How, then, does setting apart Christ as Lord prepare Christians to make defence of their hope? The formal speeches of defence in the book of Acts provide the answer; so, indeed, does the whole New Testament. For the Christian faith, a strong offence is the best defence; indeed, it is the only defence. Christians defend their faith by proclaiming the gospel, declaring the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the plan and power of God. That which is foolishness to the Greeks and an offence to the Jews is the saving wisdom of God.

Paul's defence before Agrippa shows us why Peter speaks of giving a reason for the *hope* that we have. Paul declares, 'And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers.'<sup>2</sup> 'Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?' he asks. Peter and Paul both centre on the reality of the resurrection, and they both proclaim the resurrection as the fulfilment of Scripture. Paul summarizes his defence: 'I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen—that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles.' In this letter, Peter has proclaimed the same gospel to those who have been given 'new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' (1:3). Peter, too, presents this salvation as the fulfilment of what the prophets have spoken (1:10–12, 25). The apostolic gospel bears witness to the historical fact of Christ's death and resurrection, and proclaims the meaning of that fact from the word of God. The reality of the resurrection and the rationale of the resurrection are joined under the authority of God. Apart from the testimony of God's word, the fact of the resurrection could be discounted as a strange and unexplained fact of history. The chief priests who bribed the soldiers to lie about the empty tomb were in full possession of the evidence, yet they did not submit to the word of God.<sup>5</sup> Conversely, there is no lack of

contemporary theologians who display their skill in reconstructing apostolic Christianity so that an empty tomb is no longer necessary.

When Paul gave the reason for the Christian hope, Festus, who with King Agrippa heard Paul's defence, declared that he had lost his reason. (Festus, indeed, shouted his charge, betraying by his emotion the offence that the gospel aroused!) Yet, in spite of hatred or scorn, the Christian presents his hope, humbly proclaiming God's work and word. As we acknowledge the deity of the risen Lord in our hearts, we bear witness to our hope in doxology; we declare the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his light (2:9). Worshipping the Lord, we set our hope fully on the grace to be given us when Jesus Christ is revealed (1:13).

Peter has made it clear that Christians are to be bold in their witness. Hallowing the Lord in their hearts, they are ready at all times to confess his name before others. But now Peter returns to his major theme, the other side of the coin. Humility of life is as important as boldness in word. This is the other result of glorifying Christ as Lord. We are unafraid to press his claims, but we do so as his servants. It has been said that the corruption of the best is the worst; certainly no pride is more offensive than pride in being trophies of grace. The *gentleness* or humility that we are to show is far more than politeness of manner. It reflects the fear of the Lord in which the gospel is presented. *Respect* seems to be the wrong translation here. It suggests a proper attitude toward those who question us. Peter may have used the Greek word *phobos* in that sense when he described the attitude of servants to their masters (2:18), but he has just used it to speak of our fear of God rather than of man (3:14). It seems unlikely that he is now reversing this to ask that we fear man, even in a lesser degree. Rather, Peter is teaching us that it is our fear of the Lord that enables us to bear witness in humility.

*b. The opportunity for witness in life (3:16–17)*

Bold words will not honour the Lord if they are not supported by a consistent life. Consider the bitterness of a wealthy old man: he was orphaned as a boy, but his father had made provision for him by entrusting funds for his support to the minister of his church. The minister made off with the money. Through a long life the victim of that injustice saw Christianity as financial exploitation of the gullible. The lives of Christians must reflect the gospel message to those outside the church. That consistency is not less needed in the church and in the heart of the believer. The witness of a good *conscience* is crucial for the witness of a good word. Again, Paul's defence illuminates Peter's words. Standing trial after his arrest on false charges of desecrating the temple, Paul could say, 'So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.'

*Conscience* has been defined as a person's 'inner awareness of the moral quality of his actions'. Pagan moralists recognized this inner awareness of behaviour, but apostolic teaching transformed its meaning. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer brings his conscience before God, with radical results. On the one hand, the Christian conscience is informed and reshaped by the light of God's righteousness. No longer is it insensitive to sin, like scar-tissue seared by a hot iron.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, because God is Lord of the conscience, the Christian is delivered from false guilt, and from the condemnation of sin that God has forgiven. Robert Leighton, with Puritan wisdom, traces the care and nurture of the Christian conscience, growing in the light of the Lord's presence and cleansed by his blood.

In this passage Peter is speaking of our clear conscience as obedient saints rather than simply as forgiven sinners. The clear conscience of a justified sinner indeed frees him for witness, but the impact of his witness will require the outward evidence of a consistent life. By maintaining a clear conscience before God we will be able to show a godly life to others. The Walt Disney version of Pinocchio has given us the cartoon image of conscience as a friendly cricket, an effort, perhaps, to reduce the hostility with which people are inclined to view the promptings of conscience. Christians are called to do much better: to cultivate conscience rather than to stifle its occasional chirps. Suspicious observers are quick to detect hypocrisy in a Christian's life; if we are to avoid self-deception we need a conscience that is both informed and clear.

A clear conscience gives stamina and faithfulness to a Christian's witness. He knows that the malicious slander that he hears is untrue; he can therefore wait patiently for the truth to win out. His detractors may be ashamed sooner than he thinks. It may be, however, that their shame will be evident only when Christ returns to judge. In any case, even if persecution and suffering do not end, he knows that he is in God's will and that to suffer for doing good brings blessing. To invite the scorn and hostility of others by doing evil would be quite another matter (3:17).

Christians with tender consciences may be dismayed by Peter's words. Aware of their sins and shortcomings, they may despair of having a clear conscience. They may find the suspicions of others confirmed by their suspicions of themselves. Peter shows that he knows our need of forgiveness and cleansing, for he goes on to describe again Christ's atonement (3:18). He also shows the source of power for holy living and a clear conscience. He expresses it in the telling phrase *your good behaviour in Christ* (3:16). Peter uses the phrase *in Christ* that is a keystone of Paul's teaching. Like Paul, Peter glories in the fact that Christ represented us in his death and resurrection. He suffered, the righteous for the unrighteous (3:18), bearing our sins in his body on the tree (2:24). We are given new birth because we are joined to Christ in his resurrection (1:3). We are therefore 'in Christ' as our representative: he died and rose for us. But our union with Christ does not stop there. We are 'in Christ' also because he gives us life. The Spirit of Christ joins us to our Lord as we hallow him in our hearts. We are in no sense alone as we seek to show by our lives that the gospel is true. Without the assurance of sins forgiven, we could not bear witness to those around us. Christians may rightly plead on bumper-stickers, 'Christians are not perfect: just forgiven.' Yet, because the Lord who forgives us also makes us new creations, we are able by grace to show in our lives the reality of his salvation. The God of all grace has called us to his eternal glory in Christ, and will restore and strengthen us (5:10).

Peter again summarizes by saying that *it is better ... to suffer for doing good than for doing evil* (3:17). We are reminded of his word to servants in a section that parallels this (2:20). In both passages this statement leads into a declaration about the sufferings of Christ, who did only good. One commentator suggests that Peter may also be warning those who might seek martyrdom through mistaken zeal in opposing the pagan government. 'It is unworthy of Christian believers to court martyrdom through deeds of violence, as for instance, the Jewish zealots did.' Peter, however, seems concerned to encourage Christians to endure suffering; he does not speak of their seeking it. In any case, the application of Peter's teaching does have importance for some forms of Christian protest today. Suffering for provocative acts in the name of Christ is not to be commended, but rather suffering that follows our Lord's example in doing good.

c. *The victory of Christ's suffering (3:18–22)*

Again Peter returns to the cross. Our willingness to suffer for the sake of Christ is grounded in the wonder of Christ's willingness to suffer death for our sake. This passage stands in close relation to 2:21–24. There, too, we read of Christ's atoning death as our substitute. There, too, the merciful purpose of Christ's suffering is declared (that we might die to sins, live for righteousness, and be healed, 2:24). Yet Peter now presents the suffering Christ as the Victor. He adds to his teaching about the saving power of Christ's *death* a fresh emphasis on the saving power of his *resurrection*. In the earlier passage, Peter points us to the example of Christ's meekness in suffering. We are called to imitate him as we suffer for his sake. In this second passage, Peter tells us that Christ who suffered and died was made alive again, has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand. He is the Conqueror; we share his triumph.

Persecuted and suffering Christians need to remember both the humiliation and the exaltation of Christ. His patient suffering will show them meekness when they are interrogated. His glorious triumph will give them courage to face their accusers. Undergirding both the meekness and the boldness of the Christian is the saving work of Christ.

*Christ died for sins once for all.* Christ's saving victory flows from the fact that his sacrifice was perfect, final, and therefore not to be repeated in history or in symbol. If Christ's sacrifice were not complete, it would have to be offered again, as the Old Testament sacrifices were. But, as the author of Hebrews teaches us, Christ's sacrifice was of a different order. If he had offered no better sacrifice than the priests, and had entered no better sanctuary than they, then he would have had to 'suffer many times since the creation of the world'. But he is the Son of God, his royal priesthood is heavenly, his sacrifice is his offering of his own blood. 'But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.' When the Protestant Reformers understood this, they could no longer participate in the mass, for the mass is celebrated as a bloodless sacrifice in which Christ is again offered for sin.<sup>2</sup>

Christ suffered and died to pay the price *for sins*, fully and finally. The phrase 'for sin' appears in the phrase for the sin-offering in the Greek Old Testament.<sup>2</sup> He who was righteous and without sin took the place of unrighteous sinners. His purpose, Peter tells the Christian 'pilgrims and strangers', was *to bring you to God*. Apart from Christ's saving work they were without hope and without God. The judgment of God against their sins separated them from fellowship with him. But now those who were far off are brought near. They may approach God in worship and fellowship, for he has claimed them as his own. On earth they are journeying pilgrims; Christ, their shepherd, is leading them home.

By his death Christ won life for his own. His resurrection brings triumph after suffering, a triumph that is the hope of suffering Christians. Notice the credal or confessional content of this section (a form that resembles the credal hymn of 1 Timothy 3:16): *For Christ died for sins once for all ... He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit ... has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.*

That Peter is describing Christ's triumph is clear. His death was not defeat, but the once-for-all sacrifice that atoned for sin. It was followed by the resurrection and the ascension. In that context, Peter writes about Christ's preaching to *spirits in prison*. His words were no doubt clear to those who first heard them, but they have been hard for later generations to understand. Martin Luther writes in his commentary: 'A wonderful text is this, and a more obscure passage perhaps than any other in the New Testament, so that I do not know for a certainty just what

Peter means.’ Study of the passage may have progressed since Luther’s day, but his confession still warns us against over-confidence!

Three major interpretations have been given to Peter’s words, each with various modifications. According to the first, Jesus descended into hell and preached to the spirits of those who perished in the flood in the time of Noah. Some who hold this view also think that what Jesus proclaimed to the dead was the gospel, offering them a further opportunity to repent. Others would have Christ preaching to the righteous dead, proclaiming their release from the prison where they awaited his coming. Still others would understand his preaching to be the heralding of the doom of the wicked dead.

The second major interpretation was presented by Augustine, who objected to the first view as presented by Origen and others. Augustine held that Christ’s preaching was done in the Spirit through Noah. Peter says that it was the Spirit of Christ who preached through the Old Testament prophets (1:11); Christ’s preaching through Noah would be a case in point. Those to whom Noah preached were not in prison literally, but they could be described as in prison spiritually. (Or, it might be said that those to whom Noah once preached are *now* spirits in prison.)

A third interpretation would understand *spirits in prison* to refer to fallen angels rather than to human beings. Jesus proclaims to them his victory and their doom. This is seen by some as taking place after his resurrection. As he ascends into heaven, Jesus confronts the principalities and powers, showing his victory and power over them.

None of these explanations is free of difficulty; to weigh them we must answer several key questions. First, when did Christ preach to the spirits in prison? Was it long before the incarnation, in the time of Noah? Was it after his death, but before his resurrection? Or was it after his resurrection (either before he appeared to the disciples, or in the course of his ascension)?

To answer the question we must understand the words, ‘having been *put to death* with respect to the flesh, *but made alive* with respect to the spirit’ (3:18). Martin Luther explains these words as expressing the same distinction that Paul makes in 1 Corinthians 15:45, 49. Paul contrasts our present ‘natural’ bodies with the ‘spiritual’ bodies that we shall receive at the resurrection. It is Christ’s resurrection that is the source of the spiritual: ‘The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit’.<sup>2</sup>

Peter is not saying that Christ’s body died but that his spirit continued to live. He is saying that Christ died as to the natural, physical sphere of existence, and that Christ was given life as to the spiritual sphere of existence. If Peter were distinguishing between the death of the body and the continuing life of the soul, he would not have said that Christ was *made* alive. ‘Thus the second phrase does not refer to Christ *disembodied*, but to Christ *risen* to life on a new plane.’

This explanation would also help us understand somewhat similar language in 1 Peter 4:6. There Peter speaks of those to whom the gospel was preached so that they might indeed have been judged ‘according to men with respect to the flesh’, but might live ‘according to God with respect to the spirit’ (my translation). If those spoken of are the Christian dead, then the life that they receive through the gospel should not be thought of as the continued existence of the soul, but as the resurrection life of Christ they receive.

The phrase ‘he was raised as to the spirit’ rules out the thought of an underworld descent by the disembodied soul of Christ in the time between his death and resurrection. It does not settle the question, however, as to the time of Christ’s preaching. Christ’s death was physical, but his

resurrection was in the realm of the spiritual, that is, in the power of the Holy Spirit. The NIV translation, *made alive by the Spirit*, may well capture Peter's meaning. It allows for Augustine's interpretation: Christ who rose 'spiritually' also preached 'spiritually' through Noah.

What, then, is the connection between Christ's death and resurrection and his proclamation to the spirits in prison? There are two possibilities. The Greek phrase which the NIV renders *through whom* (3:19) means 'in which'. It may refer directly to the word 'spirit' or it may be more indefinite, 'in which time'. If it is the latter, the preaching spoken of must have taken place after the resurrection. It could then have been before Christ appeared to the women, as Luther and other interpreters have held. It could also have been during the forty days, or in the course of Christ's ascension. If, however, 'in which' refers to 'spirit', then the preaching of the Spirit of Christ through Noah remains a possibility.<sup>3</sup>

The next key question is: To whom did Christ make proclamation? Who are *the spirits in prison*? The phrase 'spirits in prison', taken by itself, could refer to fallen angels. In 2 Peter 2:4–5 fallen angels are described as imprisoned; the passage then goes on to speak of Noah and the judgment of the flood:

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell [literally, 'Tartarus'], putting them into gloomy dungeons [literally, 'pits of darkness'] to be held for judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others ...

In the letter of Jude similar language is found:

And the angels who did not keep their domain, but abandoned their own dwelling, he has kept in everlasting chains, under darkness, for judgment on the great Day.

Both the term *spirits* and the reference to *prison* fit well with these passages that describe the doom of fallen angels. But could angels be described as spirits *who disobeyed long ago ... in the days of Noah*? A case can be made for this by taking account of Jewish traditions and writings that were current when Peter wrote, especially the book of *Enoch*. (A prophecy of Enoch contained in this book is quoted in Jude 14–15.) In Genesis 5:24 are the striking words, 'Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.' These words contrast with the concluding formula of the Genesis genealogies, 'and then he died'. Enoch's walk with God links with the righteousness of his descendant Noah, and contrasts with the wickedness that abounded on earth before the flood.

What happened to Enoch when the Lord took him? Where did he go? Jewish traditions and writings speculated about this. In the version now designated as *1 Enoch*, we are told of Enoch's travels as he was shown the secrets of the universe. In particular, he went to the place where the fallen angels were kept under judgment. In *1 Enoch* and in some other Jewish traditions, it is assumed that the 'sons of God' in Genesis 6:2 were angels who took wives as they pleased from the 'daughters of men'. Their progeny, the 'Nephilim', were thought to be demons. The angels who had disobeyed and had left their place were imprisoned in a 'burning valley'. Enoch describes the place:

‘Beyond that abyss I saw a place which had no firmament of the heaven above, and no firmly founded earth beneath it; there was no water upon it, and no birds, but it was a waste and horrible place.’

This is supplemented by a further description of ‘another place, which was still more horrible than the former’, a place cleft as far as the abyss, having descending columns of fire. ‘This place is the prison of the angels, and here they will be imprisoned forever.’ In *1 Enoch* this prison for fallen angels is distinguished from the places where the souls of men await judgment. Another writing, *2 Enoch*, locates the place of detention for the fallen angels in the second heaven.

It would be a great mistake to read into 1 Peter the fanciful descriptions of *1 Enoch*. But the use of *1 Enoch* in Jude 14–15 and the passage about the doom of fallen angels in 2 Peter 2:4 show us that the language of the ‘Enoch’ literature could help us to understand the terms used in 1 Peter. Since the disobedient angels and their offspring were viewed as instigators of lawlessness in the antediluvian world, it might be possible to speak of them as those *who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah* (3:20). On this understanding, Peter is claiming for Christ a mission that far transcends the journey that tradition ascribed to Enoch. Enoch was sent by God to pronounce doom upon the rebellious angels. They asked Enoch to present a petition to God to cancel their sentence. Enoch did so, but God sent him back with the same message.<sup>5</sup> Peter’s word for *preached* (3:19) means ‘heralded’ or ‘proclaimed’. It could carry the meaning of announcing judgment rather than offering salvation. In view of the description of Christ’s victory in 3:22, that meaning is possible here. Christ’s ‘preaching’ to the spirits in prison would then be his proclamation to the ‘angels, authorities and powers’ of his resurrection victory and their doom. Christ is the true Enoch: he walks with God and is taken up to be with his heavenly Father. Not Enoch, but Christ, is the one who confronts the angelic and demonic forces of evil.

Yet, attractive as this explanation may be, it is not completely satisfying. To speak of those *who disobeyed long ago ... in the days of Noah* recalls at once the generation that perished in the flood. In *1 Enoch* the disobedient angels are said to have sinned, not in the days of Noah, but in the days of Jared, the father of Noah. Even if angelic disobedience were thought of as continuing in the days before the flood, why would it be described as taking place while God was waiting patiently during the building of the ark? God’s patience during the time before the flood is obviously like the patience he now shows in postponing judgment: ‘The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance’ (2 Pet. 3:9).

While the ark was being built, the possibility of escape from judgment existed for human beings, not for fallen angels. The patience of God was directed to the sinners of Noah’s generation, those to whom Noah preached righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5). This refers so clearly to human beings, not angels, that some who favour the reference to angels have concluded that human beings must also be included. Further, if angels were in view, it would seem strange that Peter should use the word that he does for *disobeyed*. It is a term that describes the disobedience of unbelief.

Yet another consideration supports the view that the ‘spirits in prison’ are the sinners of Noah’s generation. A recent commentator has pointed to a better translation of 1 Peter 3:19–20: ‘He went and preached to those who are now spirits in prison when they disobeyed formerly



when God's patience was waiting in the days of Noah.' This preferred translation shows that the disobedience was going on along with the preaching. It is a perfectly natural expression if Peter is thinking of Christ's preaching through Noah, and does much to relieve the usual objection to referring the preaching to the days of Noah. In the time that the ark was being built, it is true, the people of that generation were not in prison. (Augustine's explanation that they were spiritually imprisoned is unconvincing.) But the shift in translation underscores the fact that we are to understand that the spirits are *now* in prison. These sinners, now under condemnation, were those who were disobedient when the Spirit of Christ preached to them *long ago* through Noah (3:20; 1:11). This understanding gives the same interpretation to *in prison* that is given to 'dead' in 1 Peter 4:6. In both cases Peter is referring to people in terms of their present state. (The NIV translates 1 Peter 4:5 'to those who are *now* dead', adding the word to convey the meaning.)

An objection to this understanding of the text appeals to the word *went* in verse 19. The same verb is used in verse 22 (*has gone*) to describe Christ's going to heaven in the ascension. 'How,' it is asked, 'can Christ's preaching through Noah be described as his "going" in the Spirit?' This is not a compelling objection. God's interventions in Old Testament revelation are often described in terms of his going or coming.<sup>2</sup> The verb *went* may also be used with little or no emphasis, as in colloquial English speech: 'He went and told him.'

The strong case for regarding the 'spirits in prison' as the spirits of those who were disobedient to the preaching of Noah can settle the question as to what was preached. On this assumption, what was preached is identified in 2 Peter 2:5, where the same word-stem is used in the phrase 'Noah, a preacher of righteousness'. It is the proclamation of God's righteousness, and therefore of the need for repentance. That message was addressed through Noah to those disobedient sinners during their lifetime. The passage describes no second chance for repentance after death. Even less does it promise universal salvation.

In this whole passage Peter continues to give reassurance to Christians who must endure suffering and persecution. Christ has conquered by the power of his resurrection. He has prevailed to bring them to God. The devil may still be on the prowl like a roaring lion (5:7), but he cannot destroy those whose refuge is the Lord. Peter reminds suffering Christians of the period before the flood. The power of evil might then have been greater, the number of the elect even fewer. But God was in control. He withheld judgment, then as now, only to display his longsuffering grace. But his judgment did come: Noah and his family were delivered from that evil age by the judgment, the waters of the flood. Yet the judgment of the flood was only provisional, and the deliverance of Noah but a prefiguring, or 'type', of the final and full salvation of Jesus Christ. The doom of death in the flood pictures the doom that Christ suffered for us. He was put to death in the flesh. But he was made alive in the power of the Spirit. It was in that power that he preached through Noah to those whose disobedience brought eternal condemnation. It is in that same power that he now saves us. Those who reject the gospel put themselves under the judgment that will come when Christ comes. But those who are united to Christ are saved by the same promise that delivered Noah and his family.

Peter continues to relate the time of Noah to that of the church by appealing to typology. The inspired authors of the New Testament find in the Old Testament history not merely instances of God's saving power, but also anticipations of his final salvation in Christ. By providing the ark, God saved Noah and his family from the judgment of the flood. That deliverance, however, did not in itself give eternal life to the eight persons that were spared. Like the exodus liberation, it

was a symbol of God's final salvation from all sin and death. Peter uses the term 'antitype' to describe the relation of the new to the old (3:21; *NIV's* verb *symbolises* translates the Greek noun *antitypos*). This use of 'type' and 'antitype' is itself figurative, drawn from the striking of coins or the impression of seals. 'Type' describes either a matrix from which an impression is made, or the image created. In the letter to the Hebrews, the typology is vertical. That is, the heavenly realities are called the 'type' and the earthly symbols the 'antitype'. The tabernacle in the wilderness was therefore the antitype of the heavenly sanctuary.<sup>2</sup> In Paul's letters and here in 1 Peter, the typology is horizontal in history: the Old Testament symbol is the type, and therefore Christ's fulfilment is the antitype.

What is the 'antitype' to which Peter refers? Apparently it is *baptism*, although the construction of the passage is difficult. (The antitype could be *you*: that is, Noah and his family were types of Christians: they were saved through water, and Christians are also saved through the water of baptism.) In any case, Peter would have us understand that the God who delivered Noah will also deliver us, and that ours is the final salvation.

That full and final salvation is sealed to us in Christian baptism. It may seem strange that Peter finds the fulfilment of Old Testament symbolism in New Testament symbolism. The symbol of the type points us to the symbol of the sacrament. Indeed, to prevent misunderstanding, Peter at once adds that he is not speaking of the outward application of *water, the removal of dirt from the body*. Rather, he is speaking of the new existence that we have through *the resurrection of Jesus Christ*. Baptism as an outward sign marks the putting off of the pollution of sin, and the beginning of new life in Christ.

Yet Peter also calls our attention to an analogy between the type and the sacrament. Both involve water in the context of gaining life out of death. The *eight* persons in the ark *were saved* 'by' or *through* water. 'By' would be the more usual translation of the preposition. We might think of the water of the flood as the means by which Noah's family was delivered from the threatening wickedness of their generation. But the verb for *saved* has the same preposition attached to it; there it must mean 'through'. Noah and his family, then, were saved 'through' water. Why does Peter not say 'saved *from* water'? Perhaps because the water that destroyed the wicked also bore up the ark. But more probably Peter is already pointing forward to the analogy that he has in mind. Meredith Kline has pointed out that covenants in the ancient Middle East, and in the Scriptures, are sealed by an oath. A powerful example is the oath that God himself takes in Genesis 15. There the divided parts of the animals symbolize the malediction that God calls down upon himself if he should not be faithful to his pledge. So, too, the blood shed in circumcision implies not only cleansing, but an oath involving one's descendants. In baptism, Kline reasons, the same element remains. When baptism is compared to the waters of the flood or to the waters of the Red Sea, the threatening symbolism of water is brought into view.<sup>4</sup> Israel was brought through the waters of the sea and of the Jordan; Noah was brought through the waters of the flood. Christians are brought through the waters of death, the flood of destruction, in order that they might be established upon the rock, secure in the resurrection life of Christ.

It is significant that Peter goes on to speak of the pledge made in baptism, *the pledge of a good conscience towards God*. The word for *pledge* implies an undertaking made in response to formal questions. Peter underscores the solemnity of the commitment made by these new Christians. They pledge the life of a good conscience. (Or, they make the pledge of baptism sincerely, out of a good conscience.) In that pledge Christians agree with God's judgment on sin,

and on their own sinful past (4:3). They acknowledge that to turn from their commitment would be to bring upon themselves God's just judgment. Yet Peter's words stress the wonder of the sacrament even more than its solemnity. As Noah was delivered by the grace of God, although only in symbol, so have they been delivered in fact. Christ has saved them, for he died for their sins and gave them life through his resurrection (3:18, 21).

Like circumcision, baptism does symbolize cleansing. Indeed, when Peter says that we are not saved by the 'putting off' (NIV *removal*) of impurity, he uses language that seems even more appropriate to circumcision than to baptism. But baptism means much more. It means union with Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection.<sup>3</sup> Christians have set apart Jesus Christ as Lord; they have been participants in his victory over death and all the powers of darkness. Christians need never fear their enemies; their concern must rather be to live in good conscience toward God.

Christ's conclusive death for our sins was accomplished *to bring us to God* (3:18). The victory of his atoning death is seen in his resurrection, and in his triumphant ascension to the right hand of God. He died to bring us where he now is. Peter has called Christians to lives of submission for Christ's sake, following the example of his humiliation (2:21). Yet the submission of Christians is not that of defeated captives, brought into hopeless slavery. It is the willing and joyful service of those who know that they are victors with Christ. Once he submitted himself, but now all the *angels are in submission to him* (3:22). So, too, Christians are called to submit themselves, but in the sign of baptism they are already participants in Christ's resurrection victory. Peter had witnessed the ascension of Christ; he had proclaimed from Psalm 110 the seating of Christ at the Father's right hand. Here in his letter he stresses the authority that Jesus has over all the powers of creation. Christians need not fear the sword of Roman magistrates or the fury of Satan. They belong to the Lord in glory.<sup>1</sup>

## Essential Doctrines Week #7

### The Blessed Hope · The Millennial Reign of Christ · The Final Judgment · The New Heavens and The New Earth

(This session can be started or combined w/#12. This session contains #13-#16 so plan accordingly.)

#### Doctrine #13

#### **THE BLESSED HOPE (2<sup>ND</sup> COMING)**

{student manual pages 30-34}

One of the four cardinal doctrines {*Salvation, Baptism in Holy Spirit, Divine Healing*}

[Ask students to pull out Kingdom of God Chart. Use the large Chart Poster and as you teach an End Time Principle, place it on the Timeline.]

- What is the blessed hope? {*Jesus' imminent return. Aka the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming*}

#### **Titus 2:11-15**

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. <sup>12</sup> It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, <sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus

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<sup>1</sup> Clowney, E. P. (1988). [\*The message of 1 Peter: the way of the cross\*](#) (pp. 143–168). InterVarsity Press.

Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. <sup>15</sup> These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

- Why would we call it blessed? {Be with Him. The big payoff: enemies judged, rewards for obedience.}
- When is He coming back? {No one knows - **Matthew 24**}
- What is the important thing to know about His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming? {That we are ready for it.}

{Student workbook has all the answers from this point on so can be taught interactively w/o them taking notes per say. They can still note their timeline. }

### **1 Thessalonians 4:15-18**

<sup>15</sup> According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup> Therefore encourage one another with these words.

The three basic truths of our church's doctrine of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming:

- 1.) There will be a resurrection of the dead.
- 2.) Not everyone will die a physical death.
- 3.) The return of the Lord is imminent.

Rapture means: *To Catch up*

- What does pre-trib, mid-trib, post-trib refer to? [Highlight Trib handout]  
{Pre: Raptured before the seven year tribulation begins.  
Mid: Raptured 3.5 years into the tribulation.  
Post: Raptured after the seven year tribulation.}

[ASK: Where would you put Rapture on your chart?]

**Tribulation:** (Used in two places Mt. 24:21 & Rev 7:14)

*thlipsis*. Pressure, oppression, stress, anguish, tribulation, adversity, affliction, crushing, squashing, squeezing, distress. Imagine placing your hand on a stack of loose items and manually compressing them. That is *thlipsis*, putting a lot of pressure on that which is free and unfettered. *Thlipsis* is like spiritual bench-pressing. The word is used of crushing grapes or olives in a press.

<sup>1</sup>Hayford, J. W., & Hayford, J. W., III. (1994). *Focusing On the Future: Key Prophecies and Practical Living*. Spirit-Filled Life Kingdom Dynamics Study Guide. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.)

### **Matthew 24:21 ESV**

<sup>21</sup> For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. **Cross references:** a. [Matthew 24:21](#) : [ver. 29](#); [Dan. 12:1](#); [[Rev. 7:14](#)] b. [Matthew 24:21](#) : [Rev. 16:18](#)

### **Matthew 24:29 ESV**

<sup>29</sup> “Immediately after <sup>(A)</sup>the tribulation of those days <sup>(B)</sup>the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and <sup>(C)</sup>the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

**Cross references:** a. [Matthew 24:29](#) : [ver. 21](#) b. [Matthew 24:29](#) : [Isa. 13:10; 24:23; Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Acts 2:20; \[Amos 5:20; 8:9; Zeph. 1:15; Rev. 6:12; 8:12\]](#) c. [Matthew 24:29](#) : [Rev. 6:13; \[Isa. 14:12; 34:4\]](#)

### Daniel 12:1 ESV

“At that time shall arise <sup>(A)</sup>Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And <sup>(B)</sup>there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, <sup>(C)</sup>everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.

**Cross references:** a. [Daniel 12:1](#) : [See ch. 10:13](#) b. [Daniel 12:1](#) : [Jer. 30:7; Matt. 24:21; Mark 13:19; \[Rev. 16:18\]](#) c. [Daniel 12:1](#) : [Ex. 32:32, 33; \[Ezek. 13:9; Luke 10:20; Rev. 20:12\]](#)

### Revelation 7:14 ESV

<sup>14</sup>I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of <sup>(A)</sup>the great tribulation. <sup>(B)</sup>They have washed their robes and <sup>(C)</sup>made them white <sup>(D)</sup>in the blood of the Lamb. **Cross references:** a. [Revelation 7:14](#) : [See Matt. 24:21](#) b. [Revelation 7:14](#) : [ch. 22:14; \[Isa. 1:18; Zech. 3:3-5\]](#) c. [Revelation 7:14](#) : [\[Dan. 12:10; 1 John 1:7\]](#) d. [Revelation 7:14](#) : [ch. 1:5](#)

**TRIBULATION, THE GREAT**—a short but intense period of distress and suffering at the end of time. The exact phrase, *the great tribulation*, is found only once in the Bible (Rev. 7:14). The great tribulation is to be distinguished from the general tribulation a believer faces in the world (Matt. 13:21; John 16:33; Acts 14:22) or the age-long difficulties Jesus forecast (Mark 13:7-8, et al). It refers to God’s specific wrath upon the unbelieving world at the end of the age (Matt. 24:29-30; Mark 13:24). Those references clearly separate the age-long “tribulation,” which increases in intensity throughout, from the final calamities described here and in Revelation 6:12-17 and 16:1-21. The great tribulation fulfills Daniel’s prophecies (Daniel 7-12). It appears to describe a time of evil from false christs and false prophets (Mark 13:22) when natural disasters will occur throughout the world. (Hayford, J. W., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Hayford’s Bible handbook*. Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.)

- What do we believe will be the two phases of the Second Coming?

**Phase One:** Will be the rapture, that moment just before the seven-year Great Tribulation when the believers of all time – dead and alive- will be caught up to be with Jesus.

**Phase Two:** Will be when Jesus literally sets His feet on earth again and reclaims it as His kingdom.

### Death and Eschatology:

- What end-time significance does the following scripture have:

**1 Corinthians 15:20-28** <sup>20</sup> But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a human being. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But in this order: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. <sup>24</sup> Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death. <sup>27</sup> For he “has put everything under his feet.” <sup>[c]</sup> Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. <sup>28</sup> When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

{We know Christ has been raised from the dead. With the same conviction we can know He is returning for those who belong to Him. Then, the end will come.}

- Where does your body go when it dies? {In the ground to await its resurrection}

## 1Corinthians 15:53-55

<sup>53</sup> For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. <sup>54</sup> When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

<sup>55</sup> "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

- Where does your soul go when your body dies? (Christian = Paradise)

### ➤ Christian/Believer = 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

<sup>1</sup> For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. <sup>2</sup> Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, <sup>3</sup> because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. <sup>4</sup> For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. <sup>5</sup> Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

<sup>6</sup> Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. <sup>7</sup> We live by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup> We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup> So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. <sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive what is due them for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

**Luke 23:42-43** <sup>42</sup> Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

<sup>43</sup> Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in **paradise**."

### A Parable Christ Told: Luke 16:19-31

<sup>19</sup> "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. <sup>20</sup> At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores <sup>21</sup> and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. <sup>22</sup> "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup> In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. <sup>24</sup> So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

<sup>25</sup> "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. <sup>26</sup> And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.' <sup>27</sup> "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, <sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' <sup>29</sup> "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' <sup>30</sup> "No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' <sup>31</sup> "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

**SHEOL** [SHE ole] — in Old Testament thought, the abode of the dead. Sheol is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek *Hades*, which means "the unseen world."

Sheol was regarded as an underground region (Num. 16:30, 33; Amos 9:2), shadowy and gloomy, where disembodied souls had a conscious but dull and inactive existence (2 Sam. 22:6; Eccl. 9:10). The Hebrew people regarded sheol as a place to which both the righteous and unrighteous go at death (Gen. 37:35; Ps. 9:17; Is. 38:10; death, NIV; Deut. 32:22; the realm of death, NIV), a place where punishment is received and rewards are enjoyed. Sheol is pictured as having an insatiable appetite (Is. 5:14; Hab. 2:5; the grave, NIV).

However, God is present in sheol (Ps. 139:8; hell, NKJV; the depths, NIV). It is open and known to Him (Job 26:6; Prov. 15:11; Death, NIV). This suggests that in death God's people remain under His care, and the wicked never escape His judgment. Sheol gives meaning to Psalm 16:10. Peter saw the fulfillment of this messianic psalm in Jesus' resurrection (Acts 2:27).<sup>2</sup>

**HELL**—the place of eternal punishment for the unrighteous. The NKJV and KJV use this word to translate *sheol* and *hades*, the Old and New Testament words, respectively, for the abode of the dead.

Hell as a place of punishment translates *Gehenna*, the Greek form of the Hebrew word that means “the vale of Hinnom”—a valley just south of Jerusalem. In this valley the Canaanites worshiped Baal and the fire-god Molech by sacrificing their children in a fire that burned continuously. Even Ahaz and Manasseh, kings of Judah, were guilty of this terrible, idolatrous practice (2 Chr. 28:3; 33:6).

The prophet Jeremiah predicted that God would visit such destruction upon Jerusalem that this valley would be known as the “Valley of Slaughter” (Jer. 7:31-34; 19:2, 6). In his religious reforms, King Josiah put an end to this worship. He defiled the valley in order to make it unfit even for pagan worship (2 Kin. 23:10).

In the time of Jesus the Valley of Hinnom was used as the garbage dump of Jerusalem. Into it were thrown all the filth and garbage of the city, including the dead bodies of animals and executed criminals. To consume all this, fires burned constantly. Maggots worked in the filth. When the wind blew from that direction over the city, its awfulness was quite evident. At night wild dogs howled and gnashed their teeth as they fought over the garbage.

Jesus used this awful scene as a symbol of hell. In effect he said, “Do you want to know what hell is like? Look at the valley of Gehenna.” So hell may be described as God's “cosmic garbage dump.” All that refuse to be made fit for heaven will be turned away into hell.

The word *Gehenna* occurs twelve times in the New Testament. Each time it is translated as “hell.” With the exception of James 3:6, it is used only by Jesus (Matt. 5:22, 29-30; 10:28; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5). In Matthew 5:22, 18:9; and Mark 9:47, it is used with “fire” as “hell fire.” So the word hell (*Gehenna*) as a place of punishment is used in the New Testament by Him who is the essence of infinite love.

In Mark 9:46 and 48, hell is described as a place where “their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.” Repeatedly Jesus spoke of outer darkness and a furnace of fire, where there will be wailing, weeping, and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28). Obviously this picture is drawn from the valley of Gehenna.

The Book of Revelation describes hell as “a lake of fire burning with brimstone” (Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14-15; 21:8). Into hell will be thrown the beast and the false prophet (Rev. 19:20). At the end of the age the devil himself will be thrown into it, along with death and hades and all whose names are not in the Book of Life. “And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever” (Rev. 20:10).

Because of the symbolic nature of the language, some people question whether hell consists of actual fire. Such reasoning should bring no comfort to the lost. The reality is greater than the symbol. The Bible exhausts human language in describing heaven and hell. The former is more glorious, and the latter more terrible, than language can express.<sup>3</sup>

**Hell** (“conceal”), the place of woe for the departed. “Hades” is the New Testament name for “Sheol,” which was conceived as a place where the souls of all dead resided (Ps. 16:10; Matt. 11:23; Acts 2:27). The KJV also has hell as its translation of Gehenna, a valley outside Jerusalem that Jesus used as a symbol of woe for lost souls. For believers, He said that Hades would be Paradise (Luke 23:43); for the godless, it would be “Gehenna” (cf. Luke 16:22, 23).<sup>4</sup>

## Matthew 12:40

<sup>2</sup> *Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary*. 1995 (R. F. Youngblood, F. F. Bruce, R. K. Harrison & Thomas Nelson Publishers, Ed.). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

<sup>3</sup> Hayford, J. W., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Hayford's Bible handbook*. Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

<sup>4</sup> MacDonald, W. (1995). *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments* (A. Farstad, Ed.) (xlviii). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

- So, what was Jesus doing during these three days?

The Nonbeliever/Unrighteous spend eternity in the Lake of Fire according to **Matthew 13:49-51**.

- What would this verse personally motivate you to do? {Evangelize}
- Where are those souls prior to the end of the age (See box on Sheol, Hades, Hell)

<sup>49</sup> This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous <sup>50</sup> and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>51</sup> "Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked. "Yes," they replied.

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### **Matthew 24:27-44 (Luke 17:24-37)**

<sup>27</sup> For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>28</sup> Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather. <sup>29</sup> "Immediately after the distress of those days

" 'the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light;  
the stars will fall from the sky,

and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' <sup>30</sup> "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the peoples of the earth <sup>[b]</sup> will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup> And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

<sup>32</sup> "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. <sup>33</sup> Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it <sup>[c]</sup> is near, right at the door. <sup>34</sup> Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. <sup>35</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

<sup>36</sup> "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, <sup>[d]</sup> but only the Father. <sup>37</sup> As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; <sup>39</sup> and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>40</sup> Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. <sup>41</sup> Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

<sup>42</sup> "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. <sup>43</sup> But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>44</sup> So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

**Footnotes:** a. [Matthew 24:29](#) Isaiah 13:10; 34:4 b. [Matthew 24:30](#) Or the tribes of the land c. [Matthew 24:33](#) Or he d. [Matthew 24:36](#) Some manuscripts do not have nor the Son.

- What does verse 27 say the coming of Jesus will be like? What do you think this means? {Jesus' return will be 'as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west'. This statement could imply that Jesus' coming will be instantaneous, but it most likely refers to the worldwide visibility of His return. Unlike the first coming, no one on earth will be unaware when Jesus comes again.}



- What will take place immediately before Jesus appears (v.v. 29-30)? *{Jesus spoke of “the distress of those days” which we equate with the entire Great Tribulation, as immediately preceding His return and the accompanying disruption of the universe.}*
- Why will the ungodly react differently to Jesus’ return than believers, for whom His return is a blessed hope?

*{All the nations of the earth will mourn (verse 30) because they have only judgment to look forward to. For believers, however, Jesus’ return will bring only blessing and reward.}*

- According to verse 31, Jesus will gather all believers at His visible return. Since we believe the Rapture will have happened seven years before, what are we to make of this verse?

*{The Old Testament prophecies seemed to point to a single coming by the Messiah, but we know now that only parts of these prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus’ first coming. In the same way, we believe that New Testament prophecies of the end times do not always neatly separate the phases of Jesus’ second coming.}*

- What would Jesus say about the timing of His return?

*{Despite Jesus’ instruction to read the signs of the time (v.v. 32-33), He prophesied that His return will take everyone by surprise, allowing no last minute changes of heart (vv.36-41).}*

- How did Jesus say we are to prepare for His return (v.v. 42-44)?

*{We can only live in constant readiness, as if He could return within the next moment.}*

#### CHART:

#### Revelation 1:7 (1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming?)

*<sup>7</sup>“Look, he is coming with the clouds,” <sup>[a]</sup> and “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him”; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.” <sup>[b]</sup> So shall it be! Amen.*

Footnotes: a.

[Revelation 1:7](#) Daniel 7:13 b. [Revelation 1:7](#) Zech. 12:10

#### Revelation 17:14 (Faithful Followers) (1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming?)

*<sup>14</sup> They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will triumph over them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.*

#### Zechariah 14:5

*<sup>5</sup> You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake <sup>[a]</sup> in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.*

Footnotes: a. [Zechariah 14:5](#) Or <sup>5</sup>My mountain valley will be blocked and will extend to Azel. It will be blocked as it was blocked because of the earthquake

#### Revelation 19:6-9 (Marriage Supper of the Lamb)

<sup>6</sup>Then I

*heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: “Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty*

*reigns.*

<sup>7</sup> Let us rejoice and be glad and give him

*glory!*

*For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.*

<sup>8</sup> Fine linen, bright and clean,

*was given her to wear.”*

(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's people.) <sup>9</sup> Then  
the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!' "  
And he added, "These are the true words of God."

- What is the Marriage Supper of the Lamb?

{An actual meal in Heaven, is the final manifestation of the marriage of Christ and His wife. This culminates their initial relationship, likened to an engagement which was a legal arrangement in Jewish culture. This follows the coming of Christ as Bridegroom in the Rapture of the church before the Great Tribulation and precedes His return seven years later to establish His millennial kingdom.}

- When does it happen? {Follows the Rapture and before His Triumphal Coming.}

- What are we really doing? {What we doing during the Tribulation.}

{Passover as foreshadowing the marriage supper of the Lamb: **Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:7-20. Verse in whole at the end of this section.**}

### **Revelation 19:11-21 (White Horse) The Heavenly Warrior Defeats the Beast**

<sup>11</sup> I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. <sup>13</sup> He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. <sup>14</sup> The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. <sup>15</sup> Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." <sup>16</sup> He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. <sup>17</sup> On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. <sup>18</sup> And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God, <sup>19</sup> so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and the mighty, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, great and small."

<sup>20</sup> Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. <sup>21</sup> But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. <sup>22</sup> The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

Footnotes: a. [Revelation 19:15](#) Psalm 2:9

### **2 Corinthians 11:2 (Presentation of the Bride of Christ)**

<sup>2</sup> I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.

### **2 Corinthians 5:10 (Judgment Seat of Christ)** [highlight REWARD handout]

<sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive what is due them for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

### **Luke 14:14**

And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

### **1 Corinthians 3:10-15**

<sup>10</sup> By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. <sup>11</sup> For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, <sup>13</sup> their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. <sup>14</sup> If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

### **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 (Rapture)**

<sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

- Why does Jesus' return give us hope about those believers who die (v.v. 13)?

{*Though we will not see our saved loved ones for some time, we can be certain that we will all meet again at the Rapture (v.v. 14).*}

- How will Jesus announce His return?

{*"The Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God."* (v.v.16).}

- What will happen to those believers who are living when the Rapture occurs?

{*All living believers will join the dead in Christ and be caught up together in the clouds to meet Jesus.*}

#### **The Pretribulation Rapture**

Our church holds a premillennial view of Jesus' second coming. This means we believe Jesus will return and gather all believers before the Millennium—the thousand-year reign on earth (Revelation 20). Most Pentecostals also hold a pretribulation view of the Rapture. That is, we believe Jesus will "catch away" the faithful before the Great Tribulation. All believers will gather in heaven to participate in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb before returning with Jesus to defeat the forces of the enemy (Revelation 19). End-time prophecy is difficult to understand, but we believe this is the best interpretation of what will occur.

### **CLOSING PRAYER: Romans 8:22-25**

<sup>22</sup> We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. <sup>23</sup> Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

**HANDOUTS:** Tribulation Chart; Daniel's Timeline; End Times Chart; AoG Position Paper on The Rapture; Rewards Document

### **HOMEWORK:**

- **1Corinthians 15:51-52**

<sup>51</sup> Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—<sup>52</sup> in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.<sup>53</sup> For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.<sup>54</sup> When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>55</sup> "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Footnotes: a. [1 Corinthians 15:54](#) Isaiah 25:8 b. [1 Corinthians 15:55](#) Hosea 13:14

- What is the mystery that Paul shares in verse 51?

{We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed." That is, though not every believer will survive until Jesus' return, all believers – dead or alive – will be glorified when He comes.}

- What do you think it means that "the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable (v.v. 53)?

{Right now, our bodies are mortal because of the Fall. We are subject to death, illness, and injury. But when Jesus returns, our bodies will become transformed into the immortal, supernatural bodies in which we will live for eternity.}

- Why do you think the Rapture will remove the "sting" of death (v.v. 55)?

{Death is not a threat to believers, but the pain of losing loved ones in a sinful world remains (v.v. 56). At the Rapture, however, believers will never have to experience the "sting" of spiritual or physical death again.}

## **2 Timothy 3:1-5 (Conditions of the last days)**

<sup>1</sup> But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. <sup>2</sup> People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— <sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.

List the conditions of the last days that Paul records in the above scripture.

Write down a current event, situation, or cultural attitude that corresponds in some way to the listed conditions.

### **CONDITIONS**

### **CULTURAL CORRESPONDENCE**

## **Revelation 19:11-14 The Heavenly Warrior Defeats the Beast – Lake of Burning Fire**

<sup>11</sup> I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. <sup>13</sup> He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. <sup>14</sup> The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. <sup>15</sup> Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter."<sup>[a]</sup> He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. <sup>16</sup> On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

*<sup>17</sup> And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God, <sup>18</sup> so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and the mighty, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, great and small."*

*<sup>19</sup> Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. <sup>20</sup> But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. <sup>21</sup> The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.*

**Footnotes:** a. [Revelation 19:15](#) Psalm 2:9

# The Blessed Hope · The Millennial Reign of Christ · The Final Judgment · The New Heavens and The New Earth

(Doctrine #14, #15, #16 can be taught lecture style. All notes are in the Students Manual.)

Doctrine #14

## THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST

{student manual pages 35}

- What is the Millennial Reign of Christ?

{A literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on the earth without the influence of Satan..}

**mil·len·ni·um** [mi lénnee əm] noun

1. **1,000 years:** a period of 1,000 years, especially a period that begins or ends in a year that is a multiple of 1000.  
*Also called millenary*
2. **CHRISTIANITY prophesied rule by Jesus Christ:** the thousand-year period of peace on earth that, according to one interpretation of prophecies in the book of Revelation, will follow the Second Coming of Jesus Christ
3. **hoped-for utopian age:** an imagined future utopian period of joy, peace, and justice, especially one created through revolution
4. **thousandth anniversary:** a thousand-year anniversary, especially the one in the year 2000

[Mid-17th century. From modern Latin , formed from Latin *mille* “thousand” + *annus* “year” (see annual).]

- What will it demonstrate?

{God’s reign and government is perfect. It will replace all failed systems of human government.}

- **Revelation 20:1-7**

<sup>1</sup> And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. <sup>2</sup> He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. <sup>3</sup> He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

<sup>4</sup> I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years. <sup>7</sup> When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison

The word THOUSAND – Actual or Representative?

The phrase “thousand years” might mean “a very long time” once or twice in a passage, but it is used six times in just seven verses. Also, verse 3 says Satan will be released for “a short time” – an inexact phrase in contrast to the repeated “a thousand years”. The Millennium is not a general era of godly influence, but a specific, future time period.

## Postmillennialism and Amillennialism

Postmillennialists

believe Christ will return after the Millennium, which they consider an extension of the present Church Age. The spread of the gospel will cause a gradual binding of evil, leading to a great period of revival in which most people will be Christians. Amillennialists believe in no earthly Millennium. Some of them interpret the binding of Satan as Jesus' victory at Calvary or a person's salvation. Others think the Millennium is happening now in heaven. Both amillennialists and premillennialist (our position) believe things on earth will only get worse and Jesus will return to rescue us from judgment.

Doctrine #15

{ Student manual 36}

## THE FINAL JUDGMENT

### The Judgment of Satan

#### Revelation 20: 7-10

<sup>7</sup> When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison <sup>8</sup> and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—and to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. <sup>9</sup> They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. <sup>10</sup> And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

### The Great White Throne Judgment

#### Revelation 20:11-15

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. <sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and everyone was judged according to what they had done. <sup>14</sup> Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. <sup>15</sup> All whose names were not found written in the book of life were thrown into the lake of fire.

The basis for judgment at the Great White Throne is that EACH PERSON will be judged according to what they have done. The first question is do they belong to Christ (Vs. 15).

Are there punishments in Hell just like there are rewards in Heaven? Is this what is being judged as well? Notice the list of what goes into the Lake of Fire (Vs.14-15).

#### The Great White Throne Judgment

According to **2 Corinthians 5:10**, believers will face the "judgment seat of Christ". Only those not in the book of life will be judged at the Great White Throne (**Revelation 20:11-15**). Some think this judgment may determine degrees of punishment according to each person's sins. What is certain is that the lost will suffer "second death" in the lake of fire – cut off forever from God's presence. While this may seem harsh, it is the forewarned culminations of His righteous judgments on sinfulness. God does not glory in those who will come under this judgment, but in those who will escape it through His grace.

#### Remember **Matthew 13:49-51** (listed already in Chpt. 13)

<sup>49</sup> This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous <sup>50</sup> and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

<sup>51</sup> "Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked.

"Yes," they replied. [**Matthew 13:49-51** The Separation of the Wicked and The Righteous & **2 Corinthians 5:10**; **Luke 14:14**; **1 Corinthians 3:10-15**; The Judgment Seat of Christ]

**THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH****2 Peter 3:13**

*<sup>13</sup> But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.*

**John 14:2-3**

*<sup>2</sup> My Father's house has plenty of room; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.*

Why a New Heaven and New Earth?

Our future world will be a beautiful place where there will be no sickness, no death, and no tears.

The Old Order of things (Vs. 4) is filled with the effects of the Fall so a New Heaven and Earth are needed.

**Revelation 21 A New Heaven and a New Earth**

*<sup>1</sup> Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," [a] for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. <sup>2</sup> I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup> 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' [b] or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

*<sup>5</sup> He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."*

*<sup>6</sup> He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. <sup>7</sup> Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. <sup>8</sup> But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."*

**The New Jerusalem, the Bride of the Lamb**

*<sup>9</sup> One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." <sup>10</sup> And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. <sup>11</sup> It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. <sup>12</sup> It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>13</sup> There were three gates on the east,*



three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. <sup>14</sup> The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

<sup>15</sup> The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. <sup>16</sup> The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia <sup>[c]</sup> in length, and as wide and high as it is long. <sup>17</sup> He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits <sup>[d]</sup> thick, <sup>[e]</sup> by human measurement, which the angel was using. <sup>18</sup> The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. <sup>19</sup> The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, <sup>20</sup> the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. <sup>[f]</sup> <sup>21</sup> The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass.

<sup>22</sup> I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. <sup>23</sup> The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. <sup>24</sup> The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. <sup>25</sup> On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. <sup>26</sup> The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. <sup>27</sup> Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

**Footnotes:**

- a. [Revelation 21:1](#) Isaiah 65:17
- b. [Revelation 21:4](#) Isaiah 25:8
- c. [Revelation 21:16](#) That is, about 1,400 miles or about 2,200 kilometers
- d. [Revelation 21:17](#) That is, about 200 feet or about 65 meters
- e. [Revelation 21:17](#) Or *high*
- f. [Revelation 21:20](#) The precise identification of some of these precious stones is uncertain.

### There Was No More Sea

When John wrote Revelation 21:1, most of his readers would have understood a new earth without seas as a place without fear or dangers. Among ancient peoples, sea travel was avoided as much as possible. Mariners had no chart or compasses and were subject to the hazards of storm and reef. The Mediterranean did not accommodate sea travel during the winter months (see Acts 27:12). Psalm 107:25-30 describes the terror of a violent storm at sea. Isaiah 57:20 describes the turbulence of the wicked like a sea casting up mire, churning in a rolling storm. In contrast, the new earth will be serene.

List your interpretation of what the New Jerusalem will be like (vs. 11-21):

Why is there no temple or no sun in the New Jerusalem (vs. 22)? *“the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple”*. We had the temple to help us understand something of the majesty of God’s presence and remind us that we cannot yet live in that presence. In the new creation, we will be perfected, able to commune face to face with our creator and Savior. *“The glory of God give it light, and the Lamb is its lamp”* (vs. 23). Physical light is a created representation of God’s uncreated glory. Perfected, we will be able to bear the “light “ of His full glory.

## Revelation 22

### Eden Restored

<sup>1</sup> Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup> down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for

the healing of the nations. <sup>3</sup> No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. <sup>4</sup> They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

### **John and the Angel**

<sup>6</sup> The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God who inspires the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place."

<sup>7</sup> "Look, I am coming soon! Blessed are those who keep the words of the prophecy in this scroll."

<sup>8</sup> I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. <sup>9</sup> But he said to me, "Don't do that! I am a fellow servant with you and with your fellow prophets and with all who keep the words of this scroll. Worship God!"

<sup>10</sup> Then he told me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this scroll, because the time is near. <sup>11</sup> Let those who do wrong continue to do wrong; let those who are vile continue to be vile; let those who do right continue to do right; and let those who are holy continue to be holy."

### **Epilogue: Invitation and Warning**

<sup>12</sup> "Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what they have done. <sup>13</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

<sup>14</sup> "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. <sup>15</sup> Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

<sup>16</sup> "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you <sup>[a]</sup> this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

<sup>17</sup> The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let those who hear say, "Come!" Let those who are thirsty come; and let all who wish take the free gift of the water of life.

<sup>18</sup> I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If any one of you adds anything to them, God will add to you the plagues described in this scroll. <sup>19</sup> And if any one of you takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from you your share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

<sup>20</sup> He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon."

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

<sup>21</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.

**Footnotes:** a. [Revelation 22:16](#) The Greek is plural.

What two features of the new creation are described in verses 1 and 2? {Revelation 22 describes the "river of the water of life" that flows from God's throne, and the "tree of life" that grows around this river.}

#### **The River and the Tree of Life: Two Features of the New Creation**

The "river of the water of life" of Revelation 22:1 is living water – constantly flowing with an unending supply – and a clear allusion to the river that flowed from Eden (see Genesis 2:10). In this new Eden, believers will not be barred from the tree of life, but will enjoy its continual abundance. The river flowing from God's throne and the tree that grows around it make explicit what we have always known by faith: God is the Source and Substance of all life. No matter what else the new creation will be, it is all about the God of life.

Why do you think verse 11 tells both the ungodly and the righteous to keep on living like they have been? {Without Christ, not even good deeds will help you, do not bother.}

The Timing of the End Times

Our anticipation of Jesus' return must be based on the promise of Revelation 22:20. Some claim that Jesus was really saying, "I will come quickly", meaning that when He does come back, everything will occur in rapid succession. But a better understanding is that His coming is truly imminent – ready to take place. It has been nearly 2,000 years since Jesus said these words to John. It may seem to us that this is not very soon. But in the scope of all history, it will not be long at all before Jesus' return leads to earth's end, the judgment, and the establishment of an eternal home for all those who love Him.

**According to this chapter, what is our response to be to Jesus' promise that He is "coming soon"?**

*"The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!'... 'Amen. Come, Lord Jesus' MARANATHA!}"* **See Also: 1 Corinthians 16:22**

<sup>22</sup> *If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed! Come, Lord <sup>[a]</sup>!*

**Footnotes:** a. [1 Corinthians 16:22](#) The Greek for Come, Lord reproduces an Aramaic expression (*Marana tha*) used by early Christians.

### Archangel

In the celestial hierarchy, the archangel seems to be a spiritual being higher in rank than angels in general. We see archangels referred to a number of times throughout the Bible. Michael the archangel argued with the devil about Moses' body (Jude 9) and is seen to have great power and authority in the Old Testament. Michael is said to be the guardian of Israel, especially in the times of trouble predicted for the Jews during the end days (Daniel 12).

### Salvation of Israel as a nation:

#### **Ezekiel 37:21-22**

<sup>21</sup> *and say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. <sup>22</sup> I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms.*

#### **Zephaniah 3:19-20**

<sup>19</sup> *At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you. I will rescue the lame; I will gather the exiles. I will give them praise and honor in every land where they have suffered shame. <sup>20</sup> At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honor and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes <sup>[a]</sup> before your very eyes," says the LORD.*

**Footnotes:** a. [Zephaniah 3:20](#) Or I bring back your captives

#### **Romans 11:26-27**

<sup>26</sup> *and in this way <sup>[a]</sup> all Israel will be saved. As it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. <sup>27</sup> And this is <sup>[b]</sup> my covenant with them when I take away their sins." <sup>[c]</sup>*

**Footnotes:** a. [Romans 11:26](#) Or and so b. [Romans 11:27](#) Or will be c. [Romans 11:27](#) Isaiah 59:20,21; 27:9 (see Septuagint); Jer. 31:33,34

### Establishment of universal peace:

#### **Psalm 72:3-8**

<sup>3</sup> *May the mountains bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness. <sup>4</sup> May he defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; may he crush the oppressor. <sup>5</sup> May he endure <sup>[a]</sup> as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations. <sup>6</sup> May he be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth. <sup>7</sup> In his days may the righteous flourish and prosperity abound till the moon is no more. <sup>8</sup> May he rule from sea to sea and from the River <sup>[b]</sup> to the ends of the earth.*

**Footnotes:** a. [Psalm 72:5](#) Septuagint; Hebrew You will be feared b. [Psalm 72:8](#) That is, the Euphrates

### **Isaiah 11:6-9**

<sup>6</sup> The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling <sup>[a]</sup> together; and a little child will lead them. <sup>7</sup> The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup> Infants will play near the hole of the cobra; young children will put their hands into the viper's nest. <sup>9</sup> They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Footnotes: a. [Isaiah 11:6](#) Hebrew;

Septuagint lion will feed

### **Micah 4:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. <sup>4</sup> Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken.

### **Luke 22:7- 20**

#### **The Last Supper**

<sup>7</sup> Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover."

<sup>9</sup> "Where do you want us to prepare for it?" they asked.

<sup>10</sup> He replied, "As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, <sup>11</sup> and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'" <sup>12</sup> He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Make preparations there."

<sup>13</sup> They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

<sup>14</sup> When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. <sup>15</sup> And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. <sup>16</sup> **For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.**"

<sup>17</sup> After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. <sup>18</sup> For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

<sup>19</sup> And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

<sup>20</sup> In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

**The above are personal notes from Maranatha's Membership Curriculum**

### **What Is the Day of the Lord?**

The phrase "day of the Lord" usually identifies events that take place at the end of history (Isaiah 7:18–25) and is often closely associated with the phrase "that day." One key to understanding these phrases is to note that they always identify a span of time during which God personally intervenes in history, directly or indirectly, to accomplish some specific aspect His plan.

Most people associate the day of the Lord with a period of time or a special day that will occur when God's will and purpose for His world and for mankind will be fulfilled. Some scholars believe that the day of the Lord will be a longer period of time than a single day—a period of time when Christ will reign throughout the world before He cleanses heaven and earth in preparation for the eternal state of all mankind. Other scholars believe the day of the Lord will be an instantaneous event when Christ returns to earth to redeem His faithful believers and send unbelievers to eternal damnation.

The phrase "the day of the Lord" is used nineteen times in the Old Testament (Isaiah 2:12; 13:6, 9; Ezekiel 13:5, 30:3; Joel 1:15, 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14; Amos 5:18, 20; Obadiah 15; Zephaniah 1:7, 14; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi. 4:5) and four

times in the New Testament (Acts 2:20; 2 Thessalonians 2:2; 2 Peter 3:10). It is also alluded to in other passages (Revelation 6:17; 16:14).

The Old Testament passages dealing with the day of the Lord often convey a sense of imminence, nearness, and expectation: “Wail, for the day of the Lord is near!” (Isaiah 13:6); “For the day is near, even the day of the Lord is near” (Ezekiel 30:3); “Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand” (Joel 2:1); “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision” (Joel 3:14); “Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near” (Zephaniah 1:7). This is because the Old Testament passages referring to the day of the Lord often speak of both a near and a far fulfillment, as does much of Old Testament prophecy. Some Old Testament passages that refer to the day of the Lord describe historical judgments that have already been fulfilled in some sense (Isaiah 13:6–22; Ezekiel 30:2–19; Joel 1:15, 3:14; Amos 5:18–20; Zephaniah 1:14–18), while others refers to divine judgments that will take place toward the end of the age (Joel 2:30–32; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 4:1, 5).

The New Testament calls it a day of “wrath,” a day of “visitation,” and the “great day of God Almighty” (Revelation 16:14) and refers to a still future fulfillment when God’s wrath is poured out on unbelieving Israel (Isaiah 22; Jeremiah 30:1–17; Joel 1–2; Amos 5; Zephaniah 1) and on the unbelieving world (Ezekiel 38–39; Zechariah 14). The Scriptures indicate that “the day of the Lord will come quickly, like a thief in the night (Zephaniah 1:14–15; 2 Thessalonians 2:2), and therefore Christians must be watchful and ready for the coming of Christ at any moment.

Besides being a time of judgment, it will also be a time of salvation as God will deliver the remnant of Israel, fulfilling His promise that “all of Israel will be saved” (Romans 11:26), forgiving their sins and restoring His chosen people to the land He promised to Abraham (Isaiah 10:27; Jeremiah 30:19–21, 40; Micah 4; Zechariah 13). The final outcome of the day of the Lord will be that “the arrogance of man will be brought low and the pride of men humbled; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day” (Isaiah 2:17). The ultimate or final fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the day of the Lord will come at the end of history when God, with wondrous power, will punish evil and fulfill all His promises.

### **What Is the Marriage Supper of the Lamb?**

In his vision in Revelation 19:7–10, John saw and heard the heavenly multitudes praising God because the wedding feast of the Lamb—literally the “marriage supper”—was about to begin. The concept of the marriage supper is better understood in light of the wedding customs in the time of Christ.

These wedding customs had three major parts. First, a marriage contract was signed by the parents of the bride and the bridegroom, and the parents of the bride would pay a dowry to the bridegroom or his parents. This began what was called the betrothal period—what we would today call the engagement. This period was the one Joseph and Mary were in when she was found to be with child (Matthew 1:18; Luke 2:5).

The second step in the process usually occurred a year later, when the bridegroom, accompanied by his male friends, went to the house of the bride at midnight, creating a torchlight parade through the streets. The bride would know in advance this was going to take place, and so she would be ready with her maidens, and they would all join the parade and end up at the bridegroom’s home. This custom is the basis of the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1–13. The third phase was the marriage supper itself, which might go on for days, as illustrated by the wedding at Cana in John 2:1–2.

What John’s vision in Revelation pictures is the wedding feast of the Lamb (Jesus Christ) and His bride (the Church) in its third phase. The implication is that the first two phases have already taken place. The first phase was completed on earth when each individual believer placed his or her faith in Christ as Savior. The dowry paid to the Bridegroom’s Parent (God the Father) would be the blood of Christ shed on the Bride’s behalf. The Church on earth today, then, is “betrothed” to Christ and, like the wise virgins in the parable, all believers should be watching and waiting for the appearance of the Bridegroom (the Second Coming). The second phase symbolizes the Rapture of the Church, when Christ comes to claim His bride and take her to the Father’s house. The marriage supper then follows as the third and final step.

Attending the wedding feast will be not only the Church as the bride of Christ, but others as well. The “others” include Old Testament saints who are going to be raised at the Second Coming, as well as the martyred dead of the

Tribulation. As the angel told John to write, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:9). The marriage supper of the Lamb is a glorious celebration of all who are in Christ!

### **What Is the Millennial Kingdom, and Should It Be Understood Literally?**

The millennial kingdom is the title given to the 1000-year reign of Jesus Christ on the earth. Some seek to interpret the 1000 years in an allegorical manner. They understand the 1000 years as merely a figurative way of saying “a long period of time,” not a literal, physical reign of Jesus Christ on the earth. However, six times in Revelation 20:2–7, the millennial kingdom is specifically said to be 1000 years in length. If God wished to communicate “a long period of time,” He could have easily done so without explicitly and repeatedly mentioning an exact time frame.

The Bible tells us that when Christ returns to the earth He will establish Himself as king in Jerusalem, sitting on the throne of David (Luke 1:32–33). The unconditional covenants demand a literal, physical return of Christ to establish the kingdom. The Abrahamic Covenant promised Israel a land, a posterity and ruler, and a spiritual blessing (Genesis 12:1–3). The Palestinian Covenant promised Israel a restoration to the land and occupation of the land (Deuteronomy 30:1–10). The Davidic Covenant promised Israel forgiveness—the means whereby the nation could be blessed (2 Samuel 7:10–13).

At the second coming, these covenants will be fulfilled as Israel is re-gathered from the nations (Matthew 24:31), converted (Zechariah 12:10–14), and restored to the land under the rule of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. The Bible speaks of the conditions during the millennium as a perfect environment physically and spiritually. It will be a time of peace (Micah 4:2–4; Isaiah 32:17–18), joy (Isaiah 61:7, 10), and comfort (Isaiah 40:1–2). The Bible also tells us that only believers will enter the millennial kingdom. Because of this, it will be a time of obedience (Jeremiah 31:33), holiness (Isaiah 35:8), truth (Isaiah 65:16), and the knowledge of God (Isaiah 11:9, Habakkuk 2:14). Christ will rule as king (Isaiah 9:3–7; 11:1–10). Nobles and governors will also rule (Isaiah 32:1; Matthew 19:28), and Jerusalem will be the political center of the world (Zechariah 8:3).

Revelation 20:2–7 gives the precise time period of the millennial kingdom. Even without these scriptures, there are countless others that point to a literal reign of the Messiah on the earth. The fulfillment of many of God’s covenants and promises rests on a literal, physical, future kingdom. There is no solid basis for denying the literal interpretation of the millennial kingdom and its duration being 1000 years.

### **Who / What is the restrainer in 2 Thessalonians 2:6?**

2 Thessalonians 2:6–7 mentions a “restrainer” that is holding back sin and lawlessness. What or who that restraining force is, Paul does not say specifically in this letter. Many have speculated as to the identity of the restrainer, naming the restraining force as 1) human government; 2) gospel preaching; 3) the binding of Satan; 4) the providence of God; 5) the Jewish state; 6) the church; 7) the Holy Spirit; and 8) Michael. Whatever now restrains the Antichrist of vv. 3, 4, 8–10 from being revealed in the fullness of his apostasy and evil must be more than human or even angelic power. The power that holds back Satan from bringing the final apostasy and unveiling of his Satan-possessed false Christ (the Antichrist) must be supernatural. It must be God’s power in operation that holds back Satan, so that the “man of sin,” “the son of destruction” (v. 3) won’t be able to come until God permits it by removing the restraining power. The reason for the restraint was so that the Antichrist would be revealed at God’s appointed time and no sooner, just as was Christ (Gal. 4:4), because God controls Satan.

The Holy Spirit of God is the only Person with sufficient (supernatural) power to do this restraining. How does He do it? Through Christians, He works in society to hold back the swelling tide of lawless living. At some point, though, He will be removed from the earth, allowing sin to have dominion over mankind. This can only happen when the Church—all true believers in Jesus Christ—is removed. This is because the Holy Spirit lives within each believer. When the church leaves the earth at the rapture, the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the way in the sense that His unique lawlessness-restraining ministry—through God’s people” will be removed (see Genesis 6:3).

The removal of the Restrainer at the time of the rapture must obviously precede the “day of the Lord.” But as soon as individuals again start placing their faith in Christ during the tribulation, the Holy Spirit will again be “present” in the world. His ministry of restraining, though, seems limited to the time before the tribulation.<sup>5</sup>

#### LORD OF HOST

*Is 1:9* Unless the *Lord of hosts* had left to us a very small remnant, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been made like Gomorrah

*Is 1:24* Therefore the Lord says, the *Lord of hosts*, the Mighty One of Israel

*Is 2:12* For the day of the *Lord of hosts* shall come upon everything proud and lofty, upon everything lifted up and it shall be brought low

*Is 3:1* For behold, the Lord, the *Lord of hosts*, takes away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stock and the store, the whole supply of bread and the whole supply of water

*Is 5:7* For the vineyard of the *Lord of hosts* is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are His pleasant plant

*Is 5:9* In my hearing the *Lord of hosts* said, “Truly, many houses shall be desolate, great and beautiful ones, without inhabitant

*Is 5:16* But the *Lord of hosts* shall be exalted in judgment, and God who is holy shall be hallowed in righteousness

*Is 5:24* because they have rejected the law of the *Lord of hosts*, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel

*Is 6:3* Holy, holy, holy is the *Lord of hosts*; the whole earth is full of His glory

*Is 6:5* for my eyes have seen the King, the *Lord of hosts*

*Is 8:13* The *Lord of hosts*, Him you shall hallow; let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread

*Is 8:18* We are for signs and wonders in Israel from the *Lord of hosts*, Who dwells in Mount Zion

*Is 9:7* The zeal of the *Lord of hosts* will perform this

*Is 9:13* For the people do not turn to Him who strikes them, nor do they seek the *Lord of hosts*

*Is 9:19* Through the wrath of the *Lord of hosts* the land is burned up, and the people shall be as fuel for the fire

*Is 10:16* Therefore the Lord, the *Lord of hosts*, will send leanness among his fat ones

*Is 10:26* And the *Lord of hosts* will stir up a scourge for him like the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb

*Is 10:33* Behold, the Lord, the *Lord of hosts*, will lop off the bough with terror

*Is 13:4* A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together! The *Lord of hosts* musters the army for battle

*Is 13:13* Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth will move out of her place, in the wrath of the *Lord of hosts* and in the day of His fierce

*Is 14:22* For I will rise up against them,” says the *Lord of hosts*

*Is 14:23* I will sweep it with the broom of destruction,” says the *Lord of hosts*

*Is 14:24* The *Lord of hosts* has sworn, saying, “Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand

*Is 14:27* For the *Lord of hosts* has purposed, and who will annul it

*Is 17:3* they will be as the glory of the children of Israel,” says the *Lord of hosts*

*Is 18:7* In that time a present will be brought to the *Lord of hosts* from a people tall and smooth of skin, and from a people terrible from their beginning onward, a nation powerful and treading down, whose land the rivers divide to the place of the name of the *Lord of hosts*, to Mount Zion

*Is 19:4* And the Egyptians I will give into the hand of a cruel master, and a fierce king will rule over them,” says the Lord, the *Lord of hosts*

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<sup>5</sup> Got Questions Ministries. (2002–2013). [Got Questions? Bible Questions Answered](#). Logos Bible Software.

*Is 19:12* Let them tell you now, and let them know what the *Lord of hosts* has purposed against Egypt

*Is 19:16* In that day Egypt will be like women, and will be afraid and fear because of the waving of the hand of the *Lord of hosts*, which He waves

*Is 19:17* everyone who makes mention of it will be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the *Lord of hosts* which He has determined against it

*Is 19:18* In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear by the *Lord of hosts*

*Is 19:20* And it will be for a sign and for a witness to the *Lord of hosts* in the land of Egypt

*Is 19:25* whom the *Lord of hosts* shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance

*Is 21:10* That which I have heard from the *Lord of hosts*, the God of Israel, I have declared to you

*Is 22:14* Then it was revealed in my hearing by the *Lord of hosts*

*Is 22:25* In that day,’ says the *Lord of hosts*, ‘the peg that is fastened in the secure place will be removed and be cut down and fall, and the burden that was on it will be cut off

*Is 23:9* The *Lord of hosts* has purposed it, to bring to dishonor the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth

*Is 24:23* for the *Lord of hosts* will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously

*Is 25:6* And in this mountain the *Lord of hosts* will make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of well-refined wines on the lees

*Is 28:5* In that day the *Lord of hosts* will be for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of His people

*Is 28:29* This also comes from the *Lord of hosts*, Who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in guidance

*Is 29:6* You will be punished by the *Lord of hosts* with thunder and earthquake and great noise, with storm and tempest And the flame of devouring fire

*Is 31:4* so the *Lord of hosts* will come down to fight for Mount Zion and for its hill

*Is 31:5* Like birds flying about, so will the *Lord of hosts* defend Jerusalem

*Is 37:16* O *Lord of hosts*, God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth

*Is 37:32* The zeal of the *Lord of hosts* will do this

*Is 39:5* Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the *Lord of hosts*

*Is 44:6* Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the *Lord of hosts*

*Is 45:13* he shall build My city and let My exiles go free, not for price nor reward,” says the *Lord of hosts*

*Is 47:4* As for our Redeemer, the *Lord of hosts* is His name, the Holy One of Israel

*Is 48:2* for they call themselves after the holy city, and lean on the God of Israel; the *Lord of hosts* is His name

*Is 51:15* But I am the Lord your God, who divided the sea whose waves roared the *Lord of hosts* is His name

*Is 54:5* For your Maker is your husband, the *Lord of hosts* is His name<sup>6</sup>

## Almost #2.)

Yet another consideration supports the view that the ‘spirits in prison’ are the sinners of Noah’s generation. A recent commentator has pointed to a better translation of 1 Peter 3:19–20: ‘He went and preached to those who are now spirits in prison when they disobeyed formerly when God’s patience was waiting in the days of Noah.’ **This preferred translation shows that the disobedience was going on along with the preaching.** ... But the shift in translation underscores the fact that we are to understand that the spirits are *now* in prison. These sinners, now under condemnation, were those who were disobedient when the Spirit of Christ preached to them *long ago* through Noah (3:20; 1:11). This understanding gives the same interpretation to *in prison* that

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Nelson Publishers. (2000). [Find it Fast in the Bible](#) (pp. 438–439). T. Nelson Publishers.



is given to 'dead' in 1 Peter 4:6. In both cases Peter is referring to people in terms of their present state. (The NIV translates 1 Peter 4:5 'to those who are *now* dead', adding the word to convey the meaning.)...

In this whole passage Peter continues to give reassurance to Christians who must endure suffering and persecution. Christ has conquered by the power of his resurrection. He has prevailed to bring them to God. The devil may still be on the prowl like a roaring lion (5:7), but he cannot destroy those whose refuge is the Lord. Peter reminds suffering Christians of the period before the flood. The power of evil might then have been greater, the number of the elect even fewer. But God was in control.

He withheld judgment, then as now, only to display his longsuffering grace. But his judgment did come: Noah and his family were delivered from that evil age by the judgment, the waters of the flood. **Yet the judgment of the flood was only provisional, and the deliverance of Noah but a prefiguring, or 'type', of the final and full salvation of Jesus Christ...** Those who reject the gospel put themselves under the judgment that will come when Christ comes. But those who are united to Christ are saved by the same promise that delivered Noah and his family<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Clowney, E. P. (1988). [\*The message of 1 Peter: the way of the cross\*](#) (pp. 143–168). InterVarsity Press.