



1. Welcome
2. Worship w/Prayer Board
3. Announcements -
4. Handouts: 1. Rylie Study Bible End Time Notes 2. Death – Sheol/Hades/Hell

Next week:

This we know:

There was a letter sent previous to 1 Corinthians reply (Could it be 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1?).

At the end of 2nd Corinthians, Paul mentions wanting to pay the Corinthians a THIRD visit...when did the 2nd visit happen? (1st = Acts 18).

Another very stern letter that Paul wishes he never sent (could it be 2 Corinthians 10-13?).

If it is, we can operate by this time frame:

- i. The 'Previous Letter', which *may* be contained in 2 Corinthians 6:14 – 7:1 (N.B. 6:13 runs very smoothly into 7:2).
- ii. 'Chloe's people' (1 Cor. 1:11_ bring Paul at Ephesus news of divisions at Corinth.
- iii. 1 Corinthians chapters 1-4 were written in reply and Timothy is about to take it to Corinth (1 Cor. 4:17).
- iv. Three men (Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus: 1 Cor. 16:17) arrive with more news and a letter from Corinth: Paul immediately writes chapters 5 and 6 and pens chapters 7-16 in reply to this letter. Timothy then takes the whole of 1 Corinthians to Corinth.
- v. The situation gets worse and Paul makes a disastrous visit to Corinth after which things get even more painful for Paul (cf. 2 Cor. 2:1).
- vi. He then sends the 'Severe Letter' (2 Cor. 10-13) by the hands of Titus (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:13).
- vii. Paul is so worried that he cannot wait for Titus to return; he sets out to meet him in Macedonia (2 Cor. 7:5-13), and then writes 2 Corinthians 1-9, the 'Letter of Reconciliation'.

("Message of 1 Corinthians", David Prior, pg. 18. The Bible Speaks Today, IVP 1985)

Begins to answer the letter that was written to him (Chloe):

Chpt 7 – Marriage

Chpt 8 – Idols (your freedom causing another to stumble)

Chpt 9 – Give Up your rights, run the race

Chpt 10 – ²³You say, "I am allowed to do anything"^d—but not everything is good for you. You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is beneficial. ²⁴Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others.

Chpt 11 – Public Worship/Lord's Supper

Chpt 12 – Spiritual Gifts

Chpt 13 – Love

Chpt 14 – Tongues, Prophecy, Worship

Chpt 15 – Resurrection of Christ, The Dead, The Body [Teach on Last Things?]

Chpt 16 – Final Greetings



The Resurrection of Christ

15 Let me now remind you, dear brothers and sisters,^[a] of the Good News I preached to you before. You welcomed it then, and you still stand firm in it. **2** It is this Good News that saves you if you continue to believe the message I told you—unless, of course, you believed something that was never true in the first place.^[b]

3 I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. **4** He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. **5** He was seen by Peter^[c] and then by the Twelve. **6** After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers^[d] at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. **7** Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. **8** Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him. **9** For I am the least of all the apostles. In fact, I'm not even worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God's church.

10 But whatever I am now, it is all because God poured out his special favor on me—and not without results. For I have worked harder than any of the other apostles; yet it was not I but God who was working through me by his grace. **11** So it makes no difference whether I preach or they preach, for we all preach the same message you have already believed.

The Resurrection of the Dead

12 But tell me this—since we preach that Christ rose from the dead, why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead? **13** For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either. **14** And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless. **15** And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. **16** And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. **17** And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. **18** In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! **19** And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.

20 But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

21 So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man. **22** Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life. **23** But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.

24 After that the end will come, when he will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having destroyed every ruler and authority and power. **25** For Christ must reign until he humbles all his enemies beneath his feet. **26** And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. **27** For the Scriptures say, "God has put all things under his authority."^[e] (Of course, when it says "all things are under his authority," that does not include God himself, who gave Christ his authority.) **28** Then, when all things are under his authority, the Son will put himself under God's authority, so that God, who gave his Son authority over all things, will be utterly supreme over everything everywhere.

29 If the dead will not be raised, what point is there in people being baptized for those who are dead? Why do it unless the dead will someday rise again?

30 And why should we ourselves risk our lives hour by hour? **31** For I swear, dear brothers and sisters, that I face death daily. This is as certain as my pride in what Christ Jesus our Lord has done in you. **32** And what value was there in fighting wild beasts—those people of Ephesus^[f]—if there will be no resurrection from the dead? And if there is no resurrection, "Let's feast and drink, for tomorrow we die!"^[g]**33** Don't be fooled by those who say such things, for "bad company corrupts good character."³⁴ Think carefully about what is right, and stop sinning. For to your shame I say that some of you don't know God at all.

The Resurrection Body

35 But someone may ask, "How will the dead be raised? What kind of bodies will they have?" **36** What a foolish question! When you put a seed into the ground, it doesn't grow into a plant unless it dies first. **37** And what you put in the ground is not the plant that will grow, but only a bare seed of wheat or



whatever you are planting.³⁸ Then God gives it the new body he wants it to have. A different plant grows from each kind of seed.³⁹ Similarly there are different kinds of flesh—one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.

⁴⁰ There are also bodies in the heavens and bodies on the earth. **The glory of the heavenly bodies is different from the glory of the earthly bodies.** ⁴¹ The sun has one kind of glory, while the moon and stars each have another kind. And even the stars differ from each other in their glory.

⁴² **It is the same way with the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever.** ⁴³ **Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength.** ⁴⁴ **They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies.**

⁴⁵ The Scriptures tell us, “The first man, Adam, became a living person.”^[h] But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. ⁴⁶ What comes first is the natural body, then the spiritual body comes later. ⁴⁷ Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven. ⁴⁸ Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly man.⁴⁹ Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like^[i] the heavenly man.

⁵⁰ **What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever.**

⁵¹ But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! ⁵² It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. ⁵³ For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

⁵⁴ Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die,^[j] this Scripture will be fulfilled:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”^[k]

⁵⁵ O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?^[l]”

⁵⁶ For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. ⁵⁷ But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵⁸ So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. **Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.**



Note: Paul preached Christ's Resurrection [Anastasis...Greek word for resurrection] so often that the Greeks at Athens thought he was preaching about two gods!

Now What is Happening at Corinth?

Slide #2

(Acts 17:18) *Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbling wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.)*

Slide #3

Now What is Happening at Corinth?

1 Corinthians 15:1-2

15 Let me now remind you, dear brothers and sisters, of the Good News I preached to you before. You welcomed it then, and you still stand firm in it. ² It is this Good News that saves you if you continue to believe the message I told you—unless, of course, you believed something that was never true in the first place

Slide #4

Now What is Happening at Corinth?

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

³ I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. ⁴ He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said

Slide #5

Now What is Happening at Corinth?

1 Corinthians 15:12-14

*¹² But tell me this—since we preach that Christ rose from the dead, why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead?
¹³ For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless.*

Slide #6

Now What is Happening at Corinth?

1 Corinthians 15:15-16

¹⁵ And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. ¹⁶ And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised.

Slide #7

Now What is Happening at Corinth?

1 Corinthians 15:17-19

¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. ¹⁸ In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! ¹⁹ And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world



Slide #8

Now What is Happening at Corinth?

1. Entrenched Greek/Gnostic belief system of the **immortality of the soul.**

Your body is a prison of that soul which you discard after you die. This discarding allows you to enter into the real world of which this earth is only a shadow of.

Slide #9

Now What is Happening at Corinth?

2. Sceptics belief: Dead men do not rise. (**Acts 26:8** *Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?*)

Slide #10

Now What is Happening at Corinth?

3. Burgeoning Christian belief that we ALREADY have access to everything Christ has to offer.

It is our right by faith and the resurrection has already past.

(2 Timothy 2:16-18 ¹⁶ *But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness,* ¹⁷ *and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,* ¹⁸ *who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some.*

Slide #11

What Happens After This Life?

Death

- Where does your **body** go when it dies? **[In the ground to await its resurrection]**

1Corinthians 15:53-55

⁵³ *For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ 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."*

⁵⁵ *"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"*

⁵³ *For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies. ⁵⁴ Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵ O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"*

Slide #12

What Happens After This Life?

Death

Where does your **body** go when it dies?

Gen 3:19 *By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust **you will return.**"*



Slide #13

What Happens After This Life?

Death Where does your body go when you die?

2 Corinthians 5:2-4

² For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, ³ if indeed by putting it on^[a] we may not be found naked. ⁴ For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

² We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. ³ For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. ⁴ While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life.

Slide #14

What Happens After This Life?

Where does your soul go when your body dies?

As a Christian your soul goes to Paradise with the LORD

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

¹ 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. ² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, ³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. ⁴ 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. ⁵ 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.

⁶ Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷ We live by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. ¹⁰ 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.

For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands.

² We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. ³ For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. ⁴ While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. ⁵ God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

⁶ So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. ⁷ For we live by believing and not by seeing. ⁸ Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. ⁹ So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him. ¹⁰ For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.



Side #15

What Happens After This Life?

Where does your **soul** go when your body dies?

As a Christian your soul goes to Paradise with the LORD

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

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

" **2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23**

"To be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord

Slide #16

What Happens After This Life?

Where does your **soul** go when your body dies?

As an Unbeliever your soul goes to Sheol and then to the Lake of Fire

A Parable Christ Told: Luke 16:19-31

¹⁹ "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. ²⁰ At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹ and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ 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.'

²⁵ "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. ²⁶ 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.' ²⁷ "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, ²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' ²⁹ "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' ³⁰ "No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' ³¹ "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.'"

What Happens After This Life?

Unbeliever for Eternity [Lake of Fire]

Matthew 13:49-51

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

Revelation 20:13-15

¹³ And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.



[HANDOUTS]

SHEOL [SHE ote] — 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).¹

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.²

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

¹ *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.

² Hayford, J. W., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Hayford’s Bible handbook*. Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.



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).³

All this points to the Resurrection!

(Acts 17:30-31 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because He has fixed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom He has appointed; and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead.”)

Slide #18

Resurrection Facts:

Prophesied in Old Testament

Psalm 16:10

¹⁰ For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption

Slide #19

Resurrection Facts: Over 500 Witnesses

John 20:19 & Luke 24:36 & John 20:26 Jesus Appears to the Disciples

Matthew 28:16-20 The Great Commission

Mark 16:14

Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and He rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after He had risen.

Acts 10:41

Not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after He rose from the dead.

- **Over 500 Witnesses**

John 20:26

²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. (A)Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, (B)“Peace be with you.”

John 20:19

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

¹⁹ (A)On the evening (B)of that day, the first day of the week, (C)the doors being locked where the disciples were (D)for fear of the Jews,^[a] Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, (E)“Peace be with you.”

Luke 24:36

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

³⁶ As they were talking about these things, (A)Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!”

Mark 16:14

¹⁴ Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.

Acts 10:41

⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

³ MacDonald, W. (1995). *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments* (A. Farstad, Ed.) (xlviii). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.



Slide #20

Resurrection Facts

Secured our justification

According to Paul, “if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins” (15:17; see Rom. 4:25). Christ’s resurrection, not merely His death on the Cross, secured our justification. His resurrection was a sign of God’s approval of Christ’s sacrifice for our sins. In short, no Resurrection equals no forgiveness of sin.

Romans 4:22-25

²² That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” ²³ But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵ who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

²² *And because of Abraham’s faith, God counted him as righteous.* ²³ *And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn’t just for Abraham’s benefit. It was recorded* ²⁴ *for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.* ²⁵ *He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.*

Slide #21

Resurrection Facts

“Firstfruits” to show us the way

1 Corinthians 15:20

²⁰ *But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.*

The resurrection of Christ was designed to reveal what lies ahead for those who put their trust in Jesus (15:20–57). Christ serves as both an example and a guarantee of what we can expect. Because He has conquered death (15:26, 27, 54–57), we need not fear death. Because He now enjoys a glorified body, we also can expect to inherit a “spiritual body” (15:44–46) after this mortal one wears out.

Slide #22

Resurrection Facts

Our dead, physical body will one day be resurrected.

1 Corinthians 15:42 *It is the same way with the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever.*

Slide #23

Resurrection Facts

We will, once again, be duo in nature:

Resurrected body (physical) reunited with our Soul (spiritual)

1 Corinthians 15:43-44



⁴³ Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength. ⁴⁴ They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies.

Slide #24

Resurrection Facts

Jesus is the power of the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:45 *The Scriptures tell us, “The first man, Adam, became a living person.”^[1] But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit.*

John 11:25
Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,

Resurrection Facts

S/G

Slide #25

Resurrection Facts:

- ▶ **Our physical bodies will be altered. With Jesus as our example, what will our resurrected bodies look like? Be able to do?**

1 Corinthians 15:51-54
John 20:25-27
Luke 24:31, 36, 51

- ▶ **When will our resurrection will take place?**

1 Corinthians 15:53
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- **Our physical bodies will be altered. With Jesus as our example, what will our resurrected bodies look like? Be able to do?**

1 Corinthians 15:51-54

⁵¹ But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! ⁵² It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. ⁵³ For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

⁵⁴ Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die,^[1] this Scripture will be fulfilled:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.



John 20:25-27

²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.”

²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.”

Luke 24:31, 36, 51

³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.

³⁶ As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!”

⁵¹ While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.

- **When will our resurrection will take place?** (When Jesus returns. Rapture)

1 Corinthians 15:53

⁵³ For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.



Rapture

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.

(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

²¹ *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*

Daniel 12:1

The Time of the End

¹² *“At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And 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, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.*

Revelation 7:14

¹⁴ *I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Judgement Seat of Christ

Battle of Armageddon

Millennial Reign

Satan thrown into Lake of Fire



NOTES:

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— ⁵² 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. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ 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." [a] ⁵⁵ "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" [b]

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ 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 Peter 3:13

¹³ 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

² 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? ³ 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.

Facts About the Resurrection

The resurrection of Christ was proclaimed eagerly by the early church. This miracle was considered an essential part of the gospel message. Surely Christ had died, but more importantly, He had been raised. **More than just a suffering Savior, Jesus is our living Lord.**

Christ's resurrection was prophesied in the Old Testament Scriptures (Ps. 16:10). 15:4

15:5-8

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, the gospel message is 15:14, 15 pointless, empty, and dishonest. Jesus Christ would not be alive, interceding for us, and we would not be able to place our hope in a glorious future with Him. The Resurrection is central to the gospel.



According to Paul, “if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins” (15:17; see Rom. 4:25). Christ’s resurrection, not merely His death on the Cross, secured our justification. His resurrection was a sign of God’s approval of Christ’s sacrifice for our sins. In short, no Resurrection equals no forgiveness of sin. 15:17-19

The resurrection of Christ was designed to reveal what lies ahead for those who put their trust in Jesus (15:20-57). Paul called Christ “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (15:20). This Old Testament image (see Ex. 23:16-19) means that Christ serves as both an example and a guarantee of what we can expect. Because He has conquered death (15:26, 27, 54-57), we need not fear death. Because He now enjoys a glorified body, we also can expect to inherit a “spiritual body” (15:44-46) after this mortal one wears out. 15:20-26

Our dead, physical body will one day be resurrected. 15:42

We will once again be both material and immaterial beings, our soul being reunited with our resurrected body. 15:43, 44

The power behind this marvelous, yet mysterious, event is Jesus, the self-declared “resurrection and the life” (John 11:25). 15:45

Our physical body will be altered and changed to prepare us for the life to come. If Jesus is the prototype, we will still be recognizable, but our new body will be capable of supernatural activities (see Luke 24:31, 36, 51). 15:51-54

Our resurrection will take place when Jesus returns (see 1 Thess. 4:13-18). 15:53

15:3 Paul did not originate the proclamation of Jesus that he **delivered** to the Corinthians; he simply gave the Corinthians what he himself had **received**. He viewed himself as a link in a long chain of witnesses to the truth of the death and resurrection of Christ. **Christ died for our sins:** Christ’s death dealt decisively with our sins. He suffered in our place to endure the just wrath of God against us. **according to the Scriptures:** Christ lived and died in accordance with the prophecies about Him in the Old Testament (see Ps. 16:10; Is. 53:8-10).

15:4 The Resurrection verifies the fact that Christ’s death paid the full price for sin. The Greek term translated **rose** here is in the perfect tense, emphasizing the ongoing effects of this historical event. Christ is a risen Savior today.



15:5–8 At the time of Paul’s writing, a person could have verified the truthfulness of the apostle’s statements. The majority of the **five hundred** people who saw the risen Christ, as well as **all the apostles** and **James** (the half brother of Jesus), were still living. **Born out of due time** is probably Paul’s comment on the unique way he became an apostle. Unlike the other apostles, who had the benefit of an initial training period with Christ, Paul became an apostle abruptly, with no opportunity for earthly contact with Christ or His teaching.

15:9 Paul considered himself **the least of the apostles** because at one time he had persecuted the church (see Acts 22:4; Eph. 3:8; 1 Tim. 1:15, 16).

15:10 I labored more abundantly: Even though Paul got a late start and did not have the discipleship training that the other apostles did, he traveled further, established more churches, and wrote more Scripture than all of them (see 2 Cor. 11:23–27). But Paul attributed his success to **the grace of God**.

15:11 whether . . . I or they: Paul did not care who got credit for the Corinthians’ faith. He cared only that the Corinthians believed.

15:12, 13 Some of the Corinthians were teaching **that there is no resurrection**. These opponents of Paul may have been denying the reality of Christ’s resurrection. They may also have been teaching that resurrection is only spiritual rather than physical. Or they may have been teaching that the resurrection had already happened (see 2 Tim. 2:18). Whatever the case, they contradicted the essential teaching that Christ had been physically raised from the dead and that believers in Him will someday also be resurrected.

Word Focus

resurrection

(Gk. *anastasis*) (15:12, 13, 21, 42; Acts 17:32; Rom. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:3) Strong’s #386: The Scriptures often speak of Christ’s resurrection with the phrase that is literally “resurrection out from among dead ones.” This is the wording in the first half of 15:12 and in other verses (see Acts 17:31; 1 Pet. 1:3). When Scripture speaks of the resurrection in general, commonly the phrase is “a resurrection of dead ones.” This is the wording in the second half of 15:12 (see also 15:13, 42). In Rom. 1:4, Christ’s resurrection is spoken of as “a resurrection of dead ones.” The same terminology is used in 15:21, where the Greek text literally reads: “For since through a man death came, so also through a Man came a resurrection of dead persons.” This shows that Christ’s resurrection included the resurrection of believers to eternal life. When He arose, many arose with Him, for they were united with Him in His resurrection (see Rom. 6:4, 5; Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:1).



15:15 false witnesses: In vv. 5–8, Paul listed several people, including himself, who had witnessed the resurrected Christ. To deny the Resurrection was to deny the truth of their testimony.

15:17 you are still in your sins: Christ’s death without His resurrection would not succeed in saving us from our sins.

15:18 Without the resurrection of Christ, those who are **asleep in Christ**—the dead—have **perished** or been destroyed. The Greek word translated *futile* in this passage speaks of something that has no results. Without the resurrection of Christ, the Christian faith brings no forgiveness and no future life in God’s presence.

15:19 we are of all men the most pitiable: If Christians have no hope for the future, the pagans could justifiably consider Christians fools since believers would have suffered for nothing.

15:20 Jesus is the **firstfruits** of all others who believe in Him. This is an Old Testament image of the first installment of a crop which anticipates and guarantees the ultimate offering of the whole crop (see 16:15; Rom. 8:23). Because Christ rose from the dead, those who are **asleep in Christ** (v. 18; 1 Thess. 4:15, 16) have a guarantee of their own resurrection.

15:21, 22 by man came death: The first man, Adam, transgressed God’s law and brought sin and death into the world (see Gen. 2:17; 3:19; Rom. 5:12–21); the second Man, Jesus Christ, was the perfect sacrifice to take away sin and to bring life and resurrection to those who believe in Him (see Rom. 5:15–21). **in Christ all shall be made alive:** The principle here is similar to that in Rom. 5:18, 19, where Paul explains that by one man’s (Adam’s) sin many were made unrighteous, whereas by one Man’s (Christ’s) obedience many will be made righteous.

15:23 Each one in his own order indicates that God has a certain design for the resurrection. The word *order* is a Greek military term that might also be translated “rank.” The Commander is raised first; His troops afterward. In 1 Thess. 4:13–18, **His coming** is described as Christ’s coming with those who have “fallen asleep” (the dead), who are then united with their physical bodies. Following this is the removal of all living Christians from the earth.

15:24 The end here refers to all remaining prophetic events that will occur after the rapture of the church and during the climax of history, when Christ **puts an end to all rule** (vv. 25–28). **delivers the kingdom to God the Father:** When Christ and the church are joined at His coming, God will establish His *kingdom* on this earth, culminating in a new heavens and a new earth. **puts an end to all rule and all authority:** Until the time of *the end*, the Father subjugates everything to the Son (see Ps. 110:1; Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 27). Christ is Lord over the universe (see Col. 1:15–17).

15:25, 26 all enemies: God has allowed His enemy Satan to rule as the “prince of the power of the air” (see Eph. 2:2) and the “god of this age” (see 2 Cor. 4:4), but his final judgment before God is certain. **The last enemy . . . death:** The conquering of *death* is final proof of God’s victory and the inauguration of the new day of the Lord (see Rev. 20:14).

15:27, 28 it is evident: Paul clarified the verses that he had been quoting from the Old Testament. The texts say that everything is put under the Son, but God the Father **is excepted**, or excluded from this subjugation, because the **Son** must be **subject to** the Father. **God may be all**



in all indicates that there will be no challenge to the sovereign rule of God over all the universe. There will be universal peace and prosperity.

15:29 It may be that some of the Corinthians had for some reason been **baptized for** others who had died without baptism. Paul did not approve or disapprove of the unusual practice, though he used **they** rather than “we” when speaking of it. **if the dead do not rise . . . Why then are they baptized:** To deny the resurrection, as the Corinthians did, and yet be involved in such baptism activities made no sense.

15:30–32 why do we stand in jeopardy: Paul risked his life **daily**. To do so would have been of no **advantage** without the hope of a resurrection. Why else should Paul have endured difficulties like fighting **beasts at Ephesus?** It would have been better for him to take the position of the Epicureans, who sought pleasure and avoided pain. The reference to *beasts* might be a figurative reference to Paul’s human enemies at Ephesus. Acts 19 does not record any confrontation with animals.

15:33, 34 Paul had already warned the Corinthians to avoid fellow believers who lived immoral lives (5:9–13). Quoting a proverb from the poet Menander, **evil company corrupts good habits**, Paul warned the Corinthians to stay away from those who teach false doctrine (see 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1).

15:35–37 Some people objected to the resurrection on the grounds that it was too hard to understand. Paul called these people **foolish**. Difficulty understanding the nature of the resurrection should not cause a person to doubt its reality, any more than not understanding how a seed becomes a plant should cause disbelief in the coming harvest.

15:38–41 The variety found in nature among living beings such as **men, animals, fish, and birds**, and among objects such as **celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies** reflect the Creator’s power and will. The varying brightness of the **sun, moon, and stars** serves as a good illustration of the differences between the earthly human body and the heavenly human body. All these different celestial and terrestrial objects are evidence that God the Creator can certainly create new resurrected human bodies out of our old bodies.

15:44–49 natural . . . spiritual: The contrast is not between a material body and an immaterial body, but between a body subject to death and a body that is immortal. The Greek term translated *spiritual* here refers to a body directed by the Spirit, as opposed to one dominated by the flesh (2:15; 10:4). **First man . . . second Man** contrasts the sinful nature that every person inherits with the new righteous nature that comes through Christ.

Word Focus

life-giving spirit

(Gk. *pneuma zōopoion*) (15:45; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 Pet. 3:18) Strong’s #4151; 2227: The Greek expression denotes “the spirit that gives life” or “the spirit that makes alive.” The Lord Jesus entered into a new kind of existence when He was raised from the dead because



He was glorified and simultaneously became life-giving spirit. The verse does not say Jesus became “the Spirit,” since the Second Person of the Trinity did not become the Third Person. Rather, Jesus became spirit in the sense that His mortal existence and form were changed into that which is spiritual. As One now united with the Spirit in a glorified body, Jesus is no longer bound by His mortal body. He is alive in the Spirit (see 1 Pet. 3:18), to give life to all who believe. This is why Paul speaks of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:2).

15:50 Mere **flesh and blood** cannot enter into the glorious existence of an immortal body (vv. 35–49). Something must happen to this *flesh* so that it becomes incorruptible (v. 42).

15:51, 52 we shall all be changed: The teaching here is similar to the teaching given to the Thessalonians (see 1 Thess. 4:13–18). Whereas the dead in Christ will be raised first, the living believers will be instantly transformed into their immortal bodies when Jesus returns.

15:53–57 The living will receive a body that is not subject to death (see v. 50). Satan’s apparent victories in the Garden of Eden (see Gen. 3:13) and at the Cross (see Mark 15:22–24) were reversed by Jesus’ death (see Col. 2:15) and resurrection. From the vantage point of Jesus’ victorious return, **Death** and **Hades** (the grave) have no power over Christians, because Jesus has already conquered both. We participate in His **victory**.

15:58 The Corinthians were to continue **steadfast** in the **work** of Christ, specifically because of the resurrection. **your labor is not in vain:** All the work that we do for Christ will be rewarded (see 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12).⁴

Jesus Christ: Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:1–26

For more on Christ’s resurrection see:

Luke 24:13–53

John 2:18–22

Acts 13:30–39

For more on death see:

Gen. 3:1–19

John 11:1–57

Rom. 6:23

Paul prizes the gospel that he “received” from Christ (v. 3), a message that includes Christ’s death *and* resurrection (vv. 3–4). Indeed, Christ’s resurrection is as essential for our salvation as his

⁴ Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. (1997). [*The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version*](#) (1 Co 15:1–58). Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers.



death, and Paul considers what would result if Christ did not rise (vv. 12–19): both the apostles’ preaching and their hearers’ faith would be useless, living believers would not be forgiven, and deceased believers would have “perished” (v. 18). In sum: “If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied” (v. 19).

Thankfully, “in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (v. 20), which means there are more to come. Paul contrasts the earthshattering effects of the two Adams: Adam’s sin in Eden brought physical and spiritual death to the human race (Rom. 5:12), while Christ, the second and last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45, 47), by his death and resurrection secured resurrection and eternal life for all believers (vv. 21–22). At his return he will vanquish all our enemies (vv. 24–25), including the “last enemy”—death (v. 26; cf. Heb. 2:15; Rev. 21:4).

Theology for Life—Although Christians still die and we grieve, it is not as the lost, “who have no hope” (1 Thess. 4:13). Rather, deceased believers are with the Lord, and we eagerly await the great resurrection day, when death itself will be no more!

The End Times: Resurrection and Immortality

1 Corinthians 15:42–44, 53–54

For more on the resurrection of the dead see:

John 11:1–57

Acts 24:15

Phil. 3:20–21

At present, believers have eternal life in “mortal bodies” (Rom. 8:10–11). Because we believe Jesus died and rose, we await our final salvation—the resurrection of our bodies. In that day, our present bodies, which are perishable, dishonored (by being put in graves), weak, natural (susceptible to death from Adam’s fall), and mortal, will be raised imperishable, glorious, powerful, spiritual (ruled by the Holy Spirit), and immortal. As the seed of a plant only produces the same type of plant, so there will be continuity between our present and resurrection bodies (1 Cor. 15:36–38). But as beautiful tulips come from nondescript bulbs, so our new bodies will be far superior to our present ones (vv. 51–55).

Theology for Life—Christian hope does not culminate in a disembodied spiritual existence in heaven but in a resurrected one on the new earth.⁵

THE FINAL JUDGMENT OCCURS AS A PART OF THE EVENTS ENTAILED BY THE PAROUSIA

There is a clear correspondence between Rev 20:11–15 and 1 Cor 15:20–54. In 1 Cor 15:26 Paul said, “*The last enemy that will be abolished is death.*” First Cor 15:50–54 describes when Christ abolishes death. 15:50 says, “*Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.*” 15:52–53 states that the perishable will “*put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality*” at “*the last trumpet*” when “*the dead will*

⁵ Crossway. (2017). [*ESV Systematic Theology Study Bible: Notes*](#) (pp. 1419–1421). Wheaton, IL: Crossway.



be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.” 15:54 concludes, “*When this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, ‘death is swallowed up in victory.’*” The “clear temporal reference [to the events of 15:54] is to the parousia (cf. verse 52).” Thus, the abolition of death (15:26) occurs at Christ’s “coming” (i.e., the *parousia*, 15:23).

Rev 20:14 says that “*death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.*” Page states, “The symbolic description of the destruction of Death and Hades [at the eschatological judgment] corresponds to Paul’s statement in 1 Cor 15:26.... For both John and Paul the last scene in the drama of redemption before the inauguration of the eternal state is the elimination of death.” As we have seen, the Gospels, Epistles, and Revelation tell a coherent story: the *parousia* entails resurrection and judgment; it is the dividing point between “*this age*” and the “*age to come.*”⁶

15:1–58 *The Futility of Faith If the Dead Are Not Raised.* Many people in the ancient Greco-Roman world believed that death extinguished life completely or led to a permanent but shadowy and insubstantial existence in the underworld. The concept of a physical, embodied existence after death was known mainly from popular fables and was thought laughable by the educated. Paul deals with the Corinthians’ denial of (v. 12) and confusion about (v. 35) the future, bodily resurrection of Christians. These issues were probably raised in their letter to him (7:1).

15:1–11 *The Truthfulness of the Traditions about Christ’s Resurrection.* Paul first establishes the historical reliability of Jesus’ resurrection in order to lay a firm foundation for his argument that it was only the first step in the resurrection of all deceased Christians.

15:1–4 **you received ... I delivered.** Paul is using commonly recognized language for handing on, intact, a body of information that one has received from others (see 11:2, 23; Mark 7:13; Luke 1:2; Acts 6:14; Phil. 4:9; Jude 3). **in accordance with the Scriptures.** See also Luke 24:27; John 2:19, 22; Acts 17:2–3; Rom. 1:2–4. Paul may be thinking especially of Isa. 53:3–12, which describes the substitutionary death and the vindication, after death, of God’s servant, but he may also be thinking of other OT passages. For the resurrection, see also Hos. 6:2 and Jonah 1:17; 2:1 (Matt. 12:40), and for the OT in general pointing to **Christ**, see Luke 24:25–27 and the article, Overview of the Bible.

15:5 **Cephas** is the Aramaic name for the apostle Peter (Gal. 2:8–9). He and John were the first of the men who followed Jesus to know that his tomb was empty (Luke 24:12; John 20:5–6; cf. Mark 16:7). **The twelve** includes Judas’s replacement, Matthias (see Acts 1:21–23, 26).

15:6 These witnesses were **still alive** and therefore able to give firsthand testimony to the truth of this tradition. **though some have fallen asleep.** Paul is careful not to exaggerate (cf. 7:10, 12, where he carefully distinguishes between his own words and Jesus’ words), evidence of the great care that early Christians took in their preservation of the historically accurate details about Jesus.

⁶ Menn, J. (2013). *Biblical Eschatology* (pp. 297–298). Eugene, OR: Resource Publications.



15:7 James was the brother of the Lord (Gal. 1:19) and leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 2:9, 12). See note on 1 Cor. 9:4–5. **all the apostles.** The group of apostles is larger than “the Twelve,” including, among others, James and Paul (1 Cor. 15:8). One of the qualifications for apostleship was seeing the risen Lord (9:1).

15:8 Last of all. Sandwiched between vv. 7 and 9, this suggests that Paul thought there would be no more apostles chosen after him. **appeared also to me.** Making Paul an apostle (see note on 1:1).

15:9 On Paul as persecutor of the church, see Acts 7:58; 8:1–3; 9:1–2; Gal. 1:13; Phil. 3:6; 1 Tim. 1:13.

15:10 grace of God. Paul considered his conversion from “persecutor” to “apostle to the Gentiles” to be a free and wholly undeserved gift of God (Rom. 15:15–16; Gal. 1:15; 2:9; Eph. 3:7–8; Phil. 1:9; 1 Tim. 1:14). God’s grace did not lead to passivity, however, for it prompted hard work on Paul’s part.

15:11 I or they. Cf. 3:6; Phil. 1:18. Paul does not care who gets the credit for the gospel’s advancement, only that it advances.

15:12–34 Christ’s Resurrection and the Resurrection of Believers. Paul next argues that there is a seamless connection between the resurrection of Christ in the recent past and the future resurrection of believers on the final day.

15:12 raised from the dead. Some of the Corinthians were denying not that Jesus rose from the dead (they “believed” this, v. 11) but that his followers generally would be raised. Paul emphasizes four times in vv. 12–19 that those who deny the physical and bodily resurrection of believers also deny the bodily resurrection of Christ, even if they claim the latter is true.

15:17 still in your sins. The proof that Christ’s death was an effective substitutionary sacrifice for sins (v. 3; 11:24–25) lies in Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. (See also Rom. 4:25.) If in fact Christ has not been raised, then his death did not pay for sin, and there is no hope for life with God in heaven (see 1 Cor. 15:18–19).

15:18–19 Although Paul believed that those who died went to be with the Lord immediately after their death and prior to their resurrection (2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:21, 23), he also conceived of the believer’s eternal existence as an embodied existence. If there is no such existence, then there is no eternal life.

15:20 Christ’s resurrection, grounded in the truth of eyewitness testimony (vv. 4–8), changes everything. If God raised Christ from the dead, then Christ truly was the **firstfruits** (Ex. 23:19; Lev. 23:10; Deut. 18:4; Neh. 10:35) or the first of many others who would also be raised from the dead. (See also Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 15:23; Col. 1:18.) The term “firstfruits” (Gk. *aparchē*) refers to a first sample of an agricultural crop that indicates the nature and quality of the rest of the crop; therefore, Christ’s resurrection body gives a foretaste of what those of believers will be like.



15:22 in Adam all die. See Rom. 5:12, 14–15, 17; Eph. 2:1, 5. **in Christ shall all be made alive.** See Rom. 5:17, 21; 6:4; Eph. 2:5–6. By divine appointment, Adam represented the whole human race that would follow him, and his sin therefore affected all human beings. Similarly, Christ represented all who would belong to him, and his obedience therefore affected all believers (see note on 1 Cor. 15:23).

15:23 at his coming. When Christ returns, all his people from all time will receive resurrection bodies, never again subject to weakness, illness, aging, or death. Until that time, those who have died exist in heaven as spirits without bodies (see 2 Cor. 5:8; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 6:9). **Those who belong to Christ** demonstrates that the “all” in relation to Christ in 1 Cor. 15:22 does not imply universalism.

15:24–27 On the **reign** of Christ and the subjection of all things **under his feet**, see Ps. 8:6; 110:1; Eph. 1:20–21; Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:5–9; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:18–22. **death.** When believers are finally resurrected from the dead, the destruction of death will be complete. (See 1 Cor. 15:54–55; Heb. 2:14–15; Rev. 20:13–14; 21:4.)

15:28 the Son ... will also be subjected. Jesus is one with God the Father and equal to the Father in deity (8:6; John 10:30; 14:9; Heb. 1:8) yet functionally subordinate to him (Mark 14:36; John 5:19, 26–27, 30; 17:4), and this verse shows that his subjection to the Father will continue for all eternity. **God will be all in all**, not in the sense that God will be everything and everything will be God, as some Eastern religions imagine, but in the sense that God’s supreme authority over everything will be eternally established, never to be threatened again.

15:29 baptized on behalf of the dead. Some interpreters through the centuries have thought this referred to vicarious baptism on behalf of deceased people, probably those who had believed in Christ but had not been baptized before they died (cf. Luke 23:43). But the interpretation is uncertain, and whatever the practice is, Paul reports it without necessarily approving it, and is clearly not commanding it. Baptism for the dead is an important part of Mormonism, but the Bible gives no support to the idea that anyone can be saved apart from personal faith in Christ (see notes on John 3:18; 14:6). Other interpreters argue that by “the dead” Paul means the bodies of living Christians, which are subject to death and decay: they are baptized “on behalf of their dying bodies,” showing hope that their bodies will rise again (see Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 15:42–44, 47–49, 53–54). On this view, Paul argues here that the baptism of perishing bodies is useless if the dead are not raised.

15:30–34 Risk-taking activities for the sake of the gospel are done in vain if there is no resurrection. **No knowledge of God** (v. 34) manifests itself in denial of the bodily resurrection of believers.

15:35–58 The Nature of the Resurrection Body. Apparently the Corinthians did not understand how material bodies, subject as they were to sickness, death, and eventual decay, could live eternally. In this section, Paul explains that God will change the bodies of believers to make them immortal.

15:35–43 How are the dead raised? Using illustrations from various realms of the natural world, Paul explains that God will change the bodies of the deceased to make them appropriate for their



new, imperishable existence. Verses 42–43 emphasize the discontinuity between present corruptible bodies and future immortal bodies.

15:42 imperishable. No longer subject to physical decay or aging.

15:43 dishonor ... glory. These terms have to do with outward physical appearance: the Christian’s resurrection body will be physically attractive beyond anything imaginable.

15:44–47 natural. The Greek term is *psychikos*, the adjectival form of the noun *psychē*, which is translated **being** in v. 45 and can also be rendered “life” or “animated existence.” Paul’s contrast between “natural” and “spiritual” is a contrast between that which is temporally alive and that which has an eternal existence with God (cf. 2:14–3:3). Starting from Gen. 2:7, Paul explains that God created Adam from the **dust** and animated him with breath. Christ, however, is the **last Adam**, and his resurrection gave him a **spiritual** and therefore imperishable body (cf. Phil. 3:21). By **spiritual body** Paul does not mean an immaterial body but a body animated and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

15:50 Corruptible bodies (**flesh and blood**) **cannot** inherit the kingdom. Hence, the need for resurrection.

15:51–53 mystery. See note on 4:1. Christians who are alive at the time of the resurrection will be transformed so that their bodies become spiritual and immortal like the bodies of those who are resurrected from the dead. (See 1 Thess. 4:13–18.)

15:54–55 Death is swallowed up. See v. 26.

15:56 power of sin is the law. See Rom. 5:20–21; 7:5–25; 8:1–3.

15:58 Therefore implies a practical application for the doctrine of the resurrection: the **work** (such as evangelism) that Christians do for the kingdom of God will bring results that last forever. On fruitfulness **in the Lord**, see John 15:1–5 and Phil. 2:12–13.

Earthly Bodies and Resurrection Bodies (1 Corinthians 15)

Verse	Earthly Bodies	Resurrection Bodies
v. 42	perishable	imperishable
v. 43a	exist in dishonor	raised in glory
v. 43b	exist in weakness	raised in power
v. 44	natural	spiritual
vv. 45, 47	first Adam a living being, from the earth	last Adam (Christ) a life-giving spirit, from heaven



On the Emmaus Road	To two disciples	Luke 24:13–35
In Galilee	To the disciples	Matt. 28:16–20 John 21:1–24
Unknown	To 500 people	1 Cor. 15:6
Unknown	To James and the apostles	1 Cor. 15:7
On the road to Damascus	To Paul	Acts 9:1–6; 18:9, 10; 22:1–8; 23:11; 26:12–18; 1 Cor. 15:8

15:17 Some Ancient Greek philosophy viewed everything spiritual as intrinsically good and everything physical as intrinsically evil. To those holding this view, the idea of a resurrected body would have been repugnant. The Corinthians were affected by contemporary philosophy. Although they had faith in the Resurrection of Christ, some had begun to question the resurrection of believers. Paul demonstrated that the two go hand in hand (vv. 13–19). Resurrection is not only possible but is essential to the Christian faith. In order to vindicate the work of His Son, God raised Christ from the dead. Therefore, a denial of the resurrection of the dead is a denial of the gospel. Paul argued that if Christ were not risen from the dead, all believers throughout history would have believed for nothing, lived for nothing, and died for nothing.

15:23 Prior to reaping their fields, Israelites were to bring a representative sample of their crop to the priests as an offering to the Lord (Lev. 23:10). Full harvest was not allowed until this sample, called the “firstfruits,” was offered. This practice was behind Paul’s imagery of Christ as the “firstfruits.” Christ’s Resurrection was the first sample of the coming harvest of the resurrection of the believing dead. He Himself was the offering made to the Father on their behalf. In referring to Christ as “firstfruits,” Paul furthered his resurrection argument. The “firstfruits” were only the initial installment; the rest of the crop would follow. Therefore, in order to complete the Father’s harvest, it was necessary that all those who believed in Christ also be resurrected.

15:29 A difficult and obscure text cannot structure biblical doctrine. Though there is no easy explanation, the sense seems to be that the preposition “for” (Gk. *hyper*) is better translated



“concerning” so that Christian baptism “concerning” death as it relates to the Resurrection is meaningless unless the Resurrection is, in fact, true.

15:45 Paul concluded his presentation on the doctrine of the Resurrection by explaining that there were two types of bodies, “natural” and “spiritual” (v. 46). The first man, Adam, was created with a natural, physical body, which became subject to decay and death. Jesus Christ, “the last Adam,” overcame death and was given a “spiritual” (glorified), immortal body. Therefore, by virtue of creation, Adam was “of the earth,” and by virtue of the Resurrection, Christ was “from heaven” (v. 47). Paul said that these two were prototypes: the first bearers of the two kinds of bodies. The first man Adam represents all those who share in having a physical body. The last Adam represents all those who bear His spiritual likeness. The first Adam was human, the last, infinitely more. Believers have borne the image of the former, and they shall someday also bear the image of the latter (v. 49).

15:50–52 Paul affirmed that some Christians would not face death. When Christ returns, the dead in Christ will be raised first (v. 52), but then those believers who are alive will be caught up to meet Him (vv. 51, 52; see 1 Thess. 4:17, note; chart, Glossary Terms in Eschatology).

DEATH: *THE END OR THE BEGINNING?*

Jesus Christ repeatedly overturned the enemy, Death, and robbed Death of its sting (1 Cor. 15:26; 2 Tim. 1:8–10). After Lazarus’ dead body had been in its grave for four days, Jesus prayed, then called Lazarus back to life (John 11:1–44). When Jesus arrived at the house of Jairus, He found the ruler’s twelve-year-old daughter dead. He took the child by the hand and told her to arise. To her parents’ astonishment, she came back to life (Mark 5:38–42). Jesus stopped a funeral procession in Nain. He touched the open coffin of a widow’s only son and commanded him back to life. Then Jesus presented the living son to his mother (Luke 7:11–15).

In Scripture, death is often connected with sin (Rom. 6:23; 5:12–21). Death was considered a curse when it occurred to someone in the prime of life or to a childless person.

Death has two stages: 1) The permanent cessation of all bodily vital functions and the separation of the spirit and soul from the body (James 2:26); and finally 2) Resurrection in Christ (Is. 26:19). Through His death and resurrection, Jesus gives to all hope for everlasting life (John 5:24).

See also Mark 9:43–48, note; Luke 8:41–56; notes on Euthanasia (Gen. 4); Grief (Is. 53); Heaven (2 Tim. 4)



The destruction of death

First Cor 15:25–26 states that Christ “*must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death.*” That constitutes “*the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father*” (1 Cor 15:24). Rev 19:11–21 describes the *parousia* of Christ and the concomitant death and destruction of “the rest,” the “small and great.” Rev 20:7–9 similarly pictures the destruction and death of the nations who gathered together for “the war” against Christ and his church “*when the thousand years are completed.*” The question therefore is: When is death abolished—at Christ’s *parousia* or a thousand years thereafter?

Paul answers the question of when Christ abolishes death in the context of 1 Corinthians 15 when he describes the consummation in vv. 50–57. He begins in v. 50 by saying that “*flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.*” He then states when the perishable will “*put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality*” (v. 53; see also v. 51). That occurs at “*the last trumpet*” when “*the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed*” (v. 52). Verse 54 goes on to say that “*when this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, ‘death is swallowed up in victory.’*” Andrew Lincoln points out, “The clear temporal reference [to the events of v. 54] is to the *parousia* (cf. verse 52).” Thus, “the end” (15:24) is coterminous with the abolition of death (15:26), which is when our mortal bodies are changed and “*put on immortality*” (15:52–54). Those events all occur at Christ’s “coming,” i.e., the *parousia* (15:23). That means that Revelation 20 has to recapitulate Revelation 19 and the *parousia* must occur after, not before, the “thousand years.”

The premillennialist sequential reading of Revelation 19 and 20, which includes an intermediate millennial kingdom, and *then* the destruction of death, would turn the theme and climax of Paul’s argument into a penultimate anti-climax. It would also mean that there would be *two* victories over death—one at the resurrection of Christ’s people at the *parousia* and another at the end of the millennium. That, of course, is contrary to the two-age eschatological structure, the significance of the second coming, and the nature of existence in the “age to come” after the *parousia*, discussed previously.

Venema concludes, “The parallels between these visions—in language, symbolism, use of Old Testament prophecy, and content—is so pervasive and compelling as to yield but one likely explanation: they are describing the same period of history, the same episodes and the same conclusion at the end of the age.” Additionally, since at his coming Jesus will raise to glory *all* those who believe in him (e.g., Matt 24:31; John 6:39–40), and according to Rev 19:18, 21 *everyone* else is slain, no one would be left to enter a post-*parousia* “millennium” and repopulate the earth in any event.

The “thousand years”

The broad context of Revelation as a whole, beginning with Rev 1:1’s use of *sēmainō* (“communicate by symbols”) and *deichnumi* (“show”), together with the repeated introductory

⁸ Thomas Nelson, I. (1995). *The Woman’s Study Bible* (1 Co 15:2–50). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.



formula “I saw” (or similar expressions) throughout the book, *including Rev 20:1*, denote “the general symbolic nature of the communication,” as opposed to the merely general conveyance of information. The meaning of visionary terms is not self-evident. Poythress has described that in such cases—*including Rev 20:1–6*—one needs to consider and distinguish four levels of communication: (1) *the linguistic level* (i.e., the textual record itself); (2) *the visionary level* (i.e., what John actually saw; his “visual experience”); (3) *the referential level* (i.e., the historical reference of the various particulars in the description); and (4) *the symbolic level* (i.e., the interpretation of what the symbolic imagery actually connotes about its historical referent). The idea that one should interpret “literally” except where one is forced to interpret symbolically by clear contextual indications “should be turned on its head” in connection with the interpretation of Revelation since “the essence of the book is figurative.”⁵⁸ That is particularly true of Revelation 20 because in Rev 20:1–6 John:

employs the words “one thousand years,” “resurrection,” and “life” because he saw, at the visionary level, people who were resurrected and given life for one thousand years. Because the objects he sees and what he hears and seen and heard in a vision, they are not *first* to be understood literally but viewed as symbolically portrayed and communicated, which is the *symbolic* level of the vision. That this vision is shot through with symbols is apparent merely from the obvious symbolic nature of such words as “chain,” “abyss,” “dragon,” “serpent,” “locked,” “sealed,” and “beast.” Therefore, the words “resurrection” and “life,” for example, do not by themselves give a clue about whether the visionary, symbolic portrayal has a one-to-one (literal) correspondence to its historical referent together with a figurative meaning or only an indirect figurative relation. Thorough exegesis must decide in each case.

Insofar as the “thousand years” of Rev 20:2–7 is concerned, Summers points out, “Numbers are used in apocalyptic literature as symbols of ideas. This has been clearly demonstrated by comparative studies within the literature.” Further, the Bible frequently uses the number 1000 in a symbolic way. Non-temporal figurative uses of “thousand” include Deut 1:10–11; 32:30; Josh 23:10; Job 9:3; 33:23; Ps 50:10; 68:17; Song 4:4; Isa 7:23; 30:17; 60:22; Dan 7:10; Amos 5:3. Temporal figurative uses of “thousand” include Deut 7:9; 1 Chron 16:15–17; Ps 84:10; 105:8–10; Eccl 6:6; 7:28. Given the symbolic nature and symbolic use of numbers in Revelation, and the symbolic use of “thousand” throughout the Bible, there can be no objection *in principle* to the amillennial view that the “thousand years” is a symbolic term which stands for a particular or prolonged period of time, as opposed to a literal thousand years.

The specific context of Revelation 20 itself indicates that the term “thousand years” is, in fact, a symbolic or figurative term, not a literal thousand-year period of time. Premillennialists Ladd, Osborne, and most other commentators agree. In Rev 20:1–3, “the multiplication of visual features—key, chain, hand, dragon, throwing, locking, and sealing—underscores the symbolic genre of the entire vision, since John’s audience knows well that Satan is not a literal dragon who can be bound with a physical chain or locked away in a physical pit.” To hold to a “literal” thousand years requires, to be consistent, that the “key” and “chain” held by the angel in Rev 20:1 are a physical key and chain and that the “abyss” of Rev 20:3 is an actual pit in the earth which has a physical lock and physical “seal.”



Contrary to such absurdity, Beale reminds us that the abyss is not spatial but “represents a spiritual dimension existing alongside and in the midst of the earthly, not above or below it ... The abyss is one of the various metaphors representing the spiritual sphere in which the devil and his accomplices operate.” Premillennialists, of course, do not contend that the key and chain are “literal.” However, it is only their pre-existing theological presuppositions that cause them to interpret some of the words or phrases *in the same passage* “literally” or physically but others figuratively or spiritually.

The “two resurrections”

Erickson says, “The major exegetical problem for amillennialism, however, is not the one thousand years, but the two resurrections.” Rev 20:4 talks about those who “come to life” (Greek = *ezēsan*), which is called “the first resurrection” in Rev 20:5b. Amillennialists view the “first resurrection” as our new life in and union with Christ, or as Christ’s resurrection in which believers spiritually participate,⁶⁹ or as the Christians’ translation to heaven upon their physical death. Rev 20:5a is a parenthetical statement about “the rest of the dead” who did not “come to life” (*ezēsan*) until the thousand years were completed. Amillennialists view that as a reference to the general resurrection of all people at the *parousia*.

Premillennialist George E. Ladd says he did not find a sufficient “contextual clue” to justify interpreting the first *ezēsan* spiritually and the second *ezēsan* “literally” or physically. Sydney Page responds:

Ladd’s point that the verb [*ezēsan*] should be interpreted in the same way in both verses unless there is a contextual clue indicating otherwise is well taken, but the reference to the millennium may be the very clue he seeks. If the thousand-year reign in vv 4–6 is coterminous with the thousand-year imprisonment of Satan in vv 1–3, and if the original readers of Revelation believed that the binding of Satan referred to the age in which they lived, they would have understood the coming to life and reigning with Christ as a present reality as well.

It is likely that the original readers *did* interpret Rev 20:1–6 in the manner Page suggests:

The relevance of this scene of the glory of martyred souls for the early church under persecution from Rome is obvious and commands this interpretation. What could be more relevant for the persecuted believers of the early church than to be told that the apparent victory of Rome over them in bringing about their deaths was only apparent? What could be more encouraging than to be told that their death was really a promotion to true life, to a participation in the resurrection glory of Christ? Their deaths were really their sharing in the *first resurrection*, while the continued earthly life of those who capitulated to the beast only promised them a part in the *second death*.

Additionally, the wording and the context of Rev 20:4–6 offer compelling reasons why the two uses of *ezēsan* do *not* both represent bodily resurrections separated by thousand literal years.

The use of “resurrection,” “live,” and “life” elsewhere in the NT



“Most striking is the observation that elsewhere in the NT *anastasis* [resurrection] and *zaō* [‘to live’] (or the cognate noun *zōē*, ‘life’) and synonyms are used interchangeably of both spiritual and physical resurrection *within the same immediate contexts*.” In John 5:25 “the coming hour already is: the resurrection life for the physically dead in the end time is already being manifest as life for the spiritually dead,” whereas in John 5:28 “the future, final apocalyptic resurrection is in view. The voice of the Son is powerful enough to generate spiritual life now; it will be powerful enough to call forth the dead then.” The descriptions of the resurrections in John 5 and Revelation 20 are perfectly parallel.

Similarly, in Rev 2:10 (“crown of life”) “the reward of life commences at the point of death,” not after the bodily resurrection only. Further, the verb *zaō* (“to live”) also is used for the soul living on after the death of the body in Luke 20:38 and 1 Pet 4:6. *Ezēsan* (Rev 20:4–5) is the aorist tense of *zaō*. Since the words *life* and *resurrection* can be used together to contrast a spiritual with a physical state of affairs, the primary hermeneutical objection to the amillennial view of Rev 20:4–6 is undercut. The amillennial view, which sees the verb *ezēsan* in Rev 20:4 as the spiritual life of Christians that occurs before the general bodily resurrection of all people on the last day, and the *ezēsan* of 20:5 as the general resurrection of all people that occurs at the *parousia*, is perfectly consistent with the use of that word, and use of the words “life” and “resurrection” elsewhere in the NT.

The contrasting “first-second” schema of Rev 20:4–6

Rev 20:4 says, “I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded ... and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.” The claim that this (the “first resurrection,” Rev 20:5) refers to a bodily resurrection is not justified by the language John uses in Rev 20:4. Waldron points out, “The resurrection is never referred to in the New Testament as ‘souls coming to life’ and that this is surely a strange way to refer to the resurrection of the body.” Hoeksema similarly observes that it is:

a strange way of referring to persons in the body, whether corruptible or resurrected, ... to speak of the ‘souls of them that were beheaded’!... And surely the statement in verse 5, that ‘this is the first resurrection,’ does not change matters at all. The Chiliast, indeed, adduces this clause in support of his contention that verse 5 refers to risen saints, but he is mistaken. The text plainly says: *this* is the first resurrection. And the pronoun *this* refers back to the statement in verse 4 concerning the souls that reign with Christ. Therefore, in answer to the question, what is the first resurrection, we cannot introduce our own preconceived notion, but we are bound to the text and, therefore, constrained to say: *the reign of the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus is the first resurrection!*

Waldron adds, “Though ‘souls’ may occasionally refer to whole persons, there is good reason to see a reference here to disembodied souls. The context demands the meaning of a disembodied soul. The Greek verb translated, beheaded, is in the perfect tense. This demands a translation like, ‘souls in a condition of having been beheaded.’ The perfect tense plainly means that the effects of their being beheaded continue into the present. Furthermore, the meaning of ‘disembodied soul’ is not foreign to the Apocalypse. Rev. 6:9 uses the term, soul, of disembodied souls.”



More importantly, specific “contextual clues” exist in Rev 20:4–6 to justify interpreting the first *ezēsan* (Rev 20:4) (“they lived” or “they came to life”) spiritually and the second *ezēsan* (Rev 20:5) physically. In Rev 20:5–6 the “first resurrection” and the “second death” are explicitly mentioned; the “second resurrection” and “first death” are not, but are implied. Although the word *anastasis* (“resurrection”) appears 41 times in the New Testament, and usually refers to a physical resurrection, in Revelation *anastasis* is only found in Rev 20:5–6. Moreover, “the ordinal ‘first’ (*prōtos*) with ‘resurrection’ occurs nowhere else in the OT or the NT. This is a hint that lexical study of words expressing the ideas of ‘first’ and ‘second’ needs to be conducted in order to comprehend the full meaning of ‘resurrection’ in the present context.”

That contextual clue—the use of “first” along with “resurrection”—provides the key which demonstrates that the so-called “two resurrections” of Rev 20:4–6 are, in fact, of qualitatively different orders. Over 200 years ago, Alexander Fraser pointed out, “The terms, first and second, are used in Scripture to distinguish subjects which are in some respects similar, but in others are very different, lest we should mistake the one for the other.” In Revelation and elsewhere the use of “first” and “second,” “old” and “new,” “first” and “last,” are markers of *qualitative antithesis*, not temporal sequence of things that are alike. Thus, in Rev 20:5–6 the “first resurrection” is not simply the first of two resurrections which are alike but is *antithetically contrasted* with the “second death” and with the (implied) “second resurrection.”

Indeed, the fact that a “second resurrection” is not explicitly mentioned is itself evidence that the “second” resurrection is of a qualitatively different kind than the “first” resurrection: “John refuses to mention the ‘second resurrection’ by name in 20:13 [or in 20:5–6], not because resurrection is not in view, but because he wishes to discourage the very idea ... that the ‘rest of the dead’ will experience ‘life’ in the deepest sense when they finally ‘stand again’ in their bodies.... The second ‘resurrection’, that of the unrepentant, can hardly be called such because it issues not in everlasting life, but in the second death.”

The use of “first” and “second,” “old” and “new,” “first” and “last,” as terms of *contrast*, not *sequence*, is found throughout the NT. Fraser states, “The Scriptures frequently mention the second or new birth. The first birth is that of the body. Is it necessary that the second should be so too? Will any man, acquainted with the Scriptures, put the question now which Nicodemus formerly proposed to our Lord, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? How can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?’ (John 3:4). The second birth is doubtless an allegory. But does it follow that the first birth is an allegory too?” In 1 Cor 15:22, 42–46, the “first Adam” had a perishable, natural body and brought death; the “last Adam” has an imperishable, spiritual body and brought life. In 1 Cor 15:47–49, the “first man” is from the earth and is earthy; the “second man” is from heaven and is heavenly.

Meredith Kline points out how Hebrews uses the exact terminology used in Revelation in order to distinguish the “first” or “old,” temporary, non-salvific Mosaic Covenant from the “second” or “new,” everlasting, salvific New Covenant: “In the Book of Hebrews the terms ‘first’ and ‘new’ are used to distinguish the Mosaic and the Messianic administrations of God’s redemptive covenant (cf. 8:7, 8, 13; 9:1, 15, 18; 10:9). The new covenant is also called ‘the second’: ‘He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second’ (10:9). Here then in this terminology for the two-covenant pattern is the identical pairing of terms, including the same alternate for ‘new,’ that we find in Revelation 20 and 21.”



Hebrews does more to establish this pattern. Heb 9:2–12 contrasts the “first tabernacle” (the earthly cultic rituals) with the “second” (the “greater and more perfect tabernacle,” i.e., heaven and the eternal redemption brought about by Christ). William Lane summarizes this portion of the argument of Hebrews:

The writer’s distinctive use of *prōtē*, “first,” and *deutera*, “second,” to describe spatially the two compartments of the tabernacle recalls his use of these numerical terms to designate the old and new covenants (8:7, 13). The “front compartment” (*hē prōtē skēnē*) becomes a spatial metaphor for the time when the “first covenant” (*hē prōtē diathēkē*) was in force. As an illustration for the old age, which is now in the process of dissolution (8:13), it symbolizes the total first covenant order with its daily and annual cultic ritual (9:6, 7). Once the first has been invalidated, the second becomes operative (see 10:9). In the figurative language of the writer, the front compartment of the tabernacle was symbolic of the present age (*ton kairon enestēkota*), which through the intrusion of the *kairos diorthōseōs*, “the time of correction” (v 10), has been superseded.

Beale concludes, “Neither in Revelation nor in 1 Corinthians nor in Hebrews does the ‘first’ (*prōtos*) function as an ordinal in a counting of things that are *identical in kind*.”

That same pattern is found in Revelation itself. In Revelation 21, which is thematically and proximately related to Revelation 20, *prōtos* (“first”) is repeatedly used, *not* as the first in a series of things that are alike but as something that stands *in contrast to* what is described as “new” or “second.” “The contextual force of *prōtos* [is] descriptive of the pre-consummate stage of things.” Thus, in Rev 21:1 there is antithesis between the “first” (old) creation and the second (“new”) creation: “the former was preconsummate or incomplete and the latter consummate or complete.” Further, “Rev. 21:1, 4 are a clear allusion to Isa. 65:16–17, where the same qualitative contrasts occur between the ‘first affliction’ or ‘former’ earth and ‘a new heaven and a new earth.’”

The use of “second death” is another verbal, contextual clue that the “two resurrections” contrast and are of different orders. The phrase “second death” occurs only in the book of Revelation (2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8). Fraser rhetorically asks, “The Scriptures mention the second death: now, the first death is that of the body. But is it necessary that we understand the second death of the body only? Does it affect the body in the same manner, by putting it in a state of insensibility and putrefaction (sic)?” Just as “first” coupled with “resurrection” provides the contextual clue that the “first resurrection” is not physical, so “second” coupled with “death” indicates that the “second death” likewise is not physical. “The first death is that of the *body*, the second that of the body and soul; the first death is common to the righteous and the wicked, the second is the everlasting portion of the wicked alone.” Just as Rev 21:1–8 used “first” as a marker of *contrast* in connection with creation, so Rev 21:4–8 continues the antithesis between “first” and “second” in connection with “death.” “Physical ‘death’ is the focus of the clause ‘the *first things* have passed away’ in 21:4; it is then contrasted with ‘the second [spiritual] death’ (21:8) which is part of ‘the new things’ of the eternal new creation (21:5).”

These many passages confirm the contrasting “first-second” schema. “The first resurrection is distinguished as first because it brings victory, not over physical death (as in a bodily resurrection), but over spiritual death. The second death is second because it means liability to punishment, not in a physical separation of body and soul, but in a spiritual separation or excommunication from



God's presence. The term 'second death' seems to confirm, therefore, that the first resurrection is not a physical resurrection."

Rev 20:4–6 also is connected with Rev 20:11–15 which deals with the general resurrection and final judgment of all people. The connection between the passages is as follows: Both passages deal with people who have undergone the (implied) "first death," i.e., the physical death of the body: Rev 20:4–5 speaks of those who have been beheaded for the sake of Christ, i.e., Christians, and 20:12–13 speaks of the dead who are to be judged, i.e., all people. Both passages deal with the fact that all people, even though they have died physically, will be resurrected in the general resurrection at the *parousia*, i.e., the "second resurrection": 20:5a speaks of "the rest of the dead" coming to life when the thousand years were completed and 20:12–13 pictures the dead "standing before the throne." R. Fowler White describes how Rev 20:5 serves to distinguish the "first resurrection" (which pertains only to Christians) from the (second) resurrection (which applies to everyone):

The distinction is achieved by identifying the non-Christian dead as participants only in the (second) resurrection, and the Christian dead as the only participants in the first resurrection. In other words, verse 5 is a profoundly important statement to the effect that the first resurrection is not to be confused with the resurrection in which the Christian dead and the non-Christian dead are both participants—it is not to be confused with the (second [general]) resurrection, which answers to the death of both Christians and non-Christians and has as its ironic consequence the second death of non-Christians.... Those who claim that Christians have no part in the resurrection of the dead in v 13 must explain the function of v 5 in its context. To say that only Christians take part in the first resurrection is not to [say] that they have no part in the second.

The "first resurrection" occurs in this age, is spiritual, and applies only to believers; the (implied) "second resurrection" is the general resurrection at the end of the age, is physical, and applies to all people. The (implied) "first death" occurs in this age, is physical, is temporary, and applies to all people; the "second death" occurs in the age to come, is spiritual, lasts forever, and applies only to nonbelievers. This contrasting schema "suits the thought of 20:6, since a first, eternal, spiritual resurrection is the minimal condition to prevent one from suffering a second, eternal, spiritual death."

Rev 20:4–6 reflects the following chiasm:

Summers earlier arrived at a similar chiastic relationship between resurrection and death in the passage:

Kline summarizes the contrasting pattern and antithetical usage of *prōtos* (first) in this context:

The antithetical usage of *protos* in this context requires a conclusion diametrically opposite to the customary premillennial assumption. If the second resurrection is a bodily resurrection, the first resurrection must be a non-bodily resurrection.... [T]he meaning of *protos* in this context is, as we have seen, antithetical to consummation and permanence.



That which is “first” belongs to the order of the present passing world. “The first resurrection” must then be something this side of bodily resurrection, some experience that does not bring the subject of it into his consummated condition and final state.... Within this schematic pattern, where we would expect to find mention of the second resurrection we find instead “the second death.” When describing the event of bodily resurrection that at least includes if it is not exclusively concerned with the unjust (v. 13), the author deliberately does not refer to it as a “resurrection.” For the true significance of the event is to be found in the destiny in which it issues and in the case of the unjust the grave delivers them up (v. 13) only to deliver them over to the lake of fire (v. 15). Hence, the real meaning of the resurrection of the unjust to physical life is conveyed by the paradoxical metaphor of death, “the second death” (v. 14).

As Venema puts it, “Only one resurrection is specifically mentioned, and it is particularly defined as the first resurrection because it brings the benefits of the believer’s reign with Christ and immunity from the power of the second death.” Or, as Beale puts it, “Ironically, the first physical death of saints translates them into the first spiritual resurrection in heaven, whereas the second physical resurrection translates the ungodly into the second spiritual death.”¹⁰²⁹

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 (2ND 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 2nd Coming*}

Titus 2:11-15

God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.¹² It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,¹⁴ 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.¹⁵ 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 2nd 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. }

⁹ Menn, J. (2013). *Biblical Eschatology* (pp. 354–363). Eugene, OR: Resource Publications.



1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

The three basic truths of our church's doctrine of the 2nd 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. (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

²¹ 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

²⁹ "Immediately after ^(A)the tribulation of those days ^(B)the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and ^(C)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 ^(A)Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And ^(B)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, ^(C)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

¹⁴ I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of ^(A)the great tribulation. ^(B)They have washed their robes and ^(C)made them white ^(D)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 ²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a human being. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But in this order: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For he "has put everything under his feet." ^[c] 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. ²⁸ 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

⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ 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."

⁵⁵ "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

¹ 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. ² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, ³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. ⁴ 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. ⁵ 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.

⁶ Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷ We live by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. ¹⁰ 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 ⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

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

A Parable Christ Told: Luke 16:19-31

¹⁹ "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. ²⁰ At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹ and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ 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.'

²⁵ "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. ²⁶ 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.' ²⁷ "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, ²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' ²⁹ "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' ³⁰ "No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' ³¹ "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).¹⁰

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.¹¹

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

¹⁰ *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.

¹¹ Hayford, J. W., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Hayford's Bible handbook*. Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; London; Vancouver: Thomas Nelson Publishers.



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).¹²

Matthew 12:40

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)

⁴⁹ *This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous⁵⁰ and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* ⁵¹ *"Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked. "Yes," they replied.*

Stop here for MAG MM

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

²⁷ *For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.* ²⁸ *Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather.* ²⁹ *"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." ³⁰ *"At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the peoples of the earth^[b] will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.* ³¹ *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.*

³² *"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.* ³³ *Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it^[c] is near, right at the door.* ³⁴ *Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.* ³⁵ *Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.*

³⁶ *"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son,^[d] but only the Father.* ³⁷ *As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.* ³⁸ *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;* ³⁹ *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.* ⁴⁰ *Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.* ⁴¹ *Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.*

⁴² *"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.* ⁴³ *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.* ⁴⁴ *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?

¹² MacDonald, W. (1995). *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments* (A. Farstad, Ed.) (xlviii). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.



{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 (1st or 2nd Phase of the 2nd Coming?)

⁷"Look, he is coming with the clouds," ^[a] and "every eye will see him, even those who pierced him"; and all peoples on earth "will mourn because of him." ^[b] 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) (1st or 2nd Phase of the 2nd Coming?)

¹⁴ 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

⁵ You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake ^[a] 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 ⁵My 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)

⁶Then 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."
⁷ 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.

⁸ Fine linen, bright and



clean, was given her to wear."

(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's people.)

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

¹¹ 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. ¹² 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. ¹³ He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵ Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." ¹⁶ He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁷ On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. ¹⁸ 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, ¹⁹ 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."

¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ 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. ²¹ 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)

² 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]

¹⁰ 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

¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ 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)

¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ 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. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵ 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



⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—⁵² 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. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ 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." ^[a] ⁵⁵ "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" ^[b]
⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ 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)

¹ But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—⁵ 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

¹¹ 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. ¹² 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. ¹³ He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵ Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." ^[a] He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

¹⁷ 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, ¹⁸ 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."

¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ 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. ²¹



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

Essential Doctrines Week #7

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**

¹ And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³ 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.

⁴ 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. ⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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

⁷ When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ 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. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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

¹¹ 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. ¹² 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. ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. ¹⁵ 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)

⁴⁹ *This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous* ⁵⁰ *and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* ⁵¹ *"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]

Doctrine #16

{ Student manual 37-38}

THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH

2 Peter 3:13

¹³ *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

² *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?*

³ *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

¹ *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. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ 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. ⁴ '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."*

⁵ *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."*

⁶ *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. ⁷ Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. ⁸ 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

⁹ *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."* ¹⁰ *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.*

¹¹ *It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.* ¹² *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.* ¹³ *There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west.* ¹⁴ *The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

¹⁵ *The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls.*

¹⁶ *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 ^[c] in length, and as wide and high as it is long.* ¹⁷ *He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits ^[d] thick, ^[e] by human measurement, which the angel was using.* ¹⁸ *The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.* ¹⁹ *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, ²⁰ 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. ^[f] ²¹ *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.**

²² *I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.* ²³ *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.* ²⁴ *The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.* ²⁵ *On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.* ²⁶ *The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.* ²⁷ *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

¹ 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 ² 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. ³ 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. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ 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

⁶ 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."

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

⁸ 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. ⁹ 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!"

¹⁰ Then he told me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this scroll, because the time is near. ¹¹ 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

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

¹⁴ "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. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

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

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ 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.

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

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

²¹ 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**

²² If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed! Come, Lord ^[a]!

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

²¹ 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. ²² 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

¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ 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 ^[a] before your very eyes," says the LORD.

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

Romans 11:26-27

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

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

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

⁶ *The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling ^[a] together; and a little child will lead them.* ⁷ *The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.* ⁸ *Infants will play near the hole of the cobra; young children will put their hands into the viper's nest.* ⁹ *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

³ *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.* ⁴ *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

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

⁹ *"Where do you want us to prepare for it?" they asked.*

¹⁰ *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, ¹¹ 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?'" ¹² He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Make preparations there."*

¹³ *They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.*

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

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

¹⁹ *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."*

²⁰ *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."*