

THE END TIMES

SIMPLE STUDIES SERIES

A STUDY RESOURCE FROM
HOPEWELL CHURCH

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INTRODUCTION

In the midst of all the end times hoopla a clear and concise statement of what the Bible teaches is paramount. Thankfully, the proverbial wheel does not need to be reinvented. A simple and clear account is already available to us.

The following material is an adaptation of Louis Berkhof's classic book *Summary of Christian Doctrine*. This book is unequaled when it comes to its usefulness for understanding basic Christian teachings. Having been disseminated throughout the world and used by pastors, teachers, parents, and youth leaders, the *Summary* stands as a time tested and universally acclaimed resource for Christian discipleship.

With Scripture selections for memory, discussion questions, and strong theological grounding, this work provides an abundance of excellent material for either personal or group study. Readers of this book will find themselves thoroughly equipped to understand, defend, and articulate what they believe.

This ebook contains the final section of the *Summary*, the part on the end times, with only minor adaptations. The section on the millennium was expanded to provide a more thorough treatment of the various positions.

This book is provided by Hopewell Church in Ashland, OH as a free gift for your spiritual development. For more discipleship opportunities and Christian fellowship, we invite you to visit us at hopewellashland.com.

CHAPTER 1

PHYSICAL DEATH



PHYSICAL DEATH

I. The Nature of Physical Death

Physical death is variously represented in Scripture. It is spoken of as the death of the body, as distinguished from that of the soul, Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:4, as the termination or loss of animal life, Luke 6:9; John 12:25, and as a separation of body and soul, Eccl. 12:7; Jas. 2:26. It is never an annihilation, but may be described as *a termination of physical life by separation of body and soul*.

II. The Connection between Sin & Death

Those who hold to the theory of evolution believe that death is a natural part of the material world. Pelagians and Socinians teach that man was created so that he had to die. However, these views are not in harmony with Scripture.

Scripture teaches us that death resulted from sin and is a punishment for sin, Gen. 2:17; 3:19; Rom. 5:12, 17; 6:23. Instead of being something natural, it is an expression of divine anger, Ps. 90:7, 11, a judgment, Rom. 1:32, a condemnation, Rom. 5:16, and a curse, Gal. 3:13, filling the hearts of men with dread and fear.

III. The Significance of Death to the Believer

But since death is a punishment for sin, and believers are redeemed from the guilt of sin, the question naturally arises, "Why must they still die?" It is clear that death cannot be a punishment for a Christian. Rather, it must be regarded as an important element in the process of sanctification. It is the consummation of their dying unto sin.

In sum, death for the believer is the final blow to sin. When one is first saved, the guilt of sin is removed and the dominion of sin is broken. Nevertheless, the Christian continues to battle against the evil cravings of his flesh throughout the rest of his life. This war ends when the Christian breathes his last. When the Lord terminates the believer's physical life sin dies with it, making the child of God perfect in holiness.

MEMORIZE

A. Death is a punishment for sin:

Rom. 5:12. *Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned.*

Rom. 6:23. *For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

B. Believers are victorious over death:

1 Cor. 15:55-57. *O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

FOR FURTHER STUDY

A. What does the Scripture teach regarding the cause of death? Gen. 2:16-17; Gen. 3; Romans 6:23

B. What do the following passages teach respecting death? 1 Cor. 15:55-57; 2Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 1:18; 20:14.

FOR REVIEW

1. How is physical death represented in Scripture?
2. How can you prove that death is not something natural?
3. What is the connection between sin and death?
4. Is death a punishment for believers? What purpose does it serve?

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CHAPTER 2

LIFE AFTER DEATH

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE



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THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

Opinions differ very much as to the condition of man between death and the general resurrection. The most important theories call for a brief discussion.

I. The modern idea of Sheol-Hades.

The idea is very prevalent at present that at death both the pious and the wicked descend into an intermediate place, which the Old Testament calls Sheol, and the New Testament, Hades. It is not a place of reward or punishment, but a place where all share the same fate, a dreary abode where life is but a weakened reflection of life on earth, a place of weakened consciousness, of slumbrous inactivity, where life has lost its interests and the joys of living are turned into sadness.

But this is hardly a scriptural representation. If the terms Sheol and Hades always denote a place to which both the pious and the wicked descend, how can the descent into it be held up as a warning to the wicked, Ps. 9:17; Prov. 5:5; 7:27; 9:18; 15:24; 23:14? And how can Scripture speak of God's anger as burning there, Deut. 32:22? It was in Hades that the rich man lifted up his eyes, Luke 16:23, and he calls it a "place of torment," vs. 28. It is better to assume that the words Sheol and Hades are not always used in the same sense, but sometimes denote the grave, Gen. 42:38; Ps. 16:10, sometimes the state or condition of

death, represented as a place, 1 Sam 2:6; Ps. 89:48, and sometimes the place of eternal punishment, Deut. 32Q22; Ps 9:17; Prov. 9:18.

B. Purgatory, Limbus Patrum, & Limbus Infantum.

According to the Church of Rome the souls of those who are perfect at death are at once admitted to heaven, Matt. 25:46; Phil. 1:23, but those who are not perfectly cleansed at death --and this is the condition of most believers-- enter a place of purification called purgatory. The length of their stay there varies according to the need of individual cases, and can be shortened by the prayers, good works, and masses of pious friends or relatives. *This doctrine finds no support in Scripture.*

The Limbus Patrum is the place where, according to Rome, the Old Testament saints were detained until Christ set them free between His death and resurrection. The Limbus Infantum is the supposed abode of all unbaptized children. They remain there without any hope of deliverance, suffering no positive punishment, but nevertheless excluded from the blessings of heaven. *Neither of these views find any support in Scripture.*

C. The sleep of the soul.

The notion that at death the soul enters into a state of unconscious repose or sleep, was advocated by several sects in the past, and is now also a favorite doctrine of the Jehovah's Witness. It has a peculiar fascination for those who find it hard to believe in a

continuance of consciousness apart from the brain. They find support for it in Scripture passages which speak of death as a sleep, Matt. 9:24; Acts 7:60; 1Thess. 4:13, or seem to say that the dead are unconscious, Ps. 6:5; 30:9; 115:17; 146:4. But the former simply speak of death as a sleep because of the similarity between a dead body and a body asleep, and the latter simply stress the fact that the dead can no more take notice of nor share in the activities of the present world. Believers are represented as enjoying a conscious life immediately after death, Luke 16:19-31; 23:43; 2Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; Rev. 6:9.

D. Annihilationism and Conditional Immortality.

According to these doctrines there is no conscious existence, if any existence at all, of the wicked after death. *Annihilationism* teaches that man was created immortal, but that they who continue in sin are by a positive act of God deprived of immortality and finally destroyed or bereft forever of consciousness.

According to the doctrine of *conditional immortality*, however, man was created mortal, and only believers receive the gift of immortality in Christ. The wicked ultimately perish completely or lose all consciousness. The result is the same in both cases.

These doctrines are supposed to find support in the fact that the Bible represents eternal life as a gift of God in Christ, John 10:27-28; Rom. 2:7; 6:23, and threatens sinners with death and destruction, Ps. 73:27; Mal. 4:1; 2Pet. 2:12. But the Bible clearly teaches that sinners will continue to exist, Matt. 25:46;

Rev. 14:11; 20:10, and that there will be degrees of punishment of the wicked, Luke 12:47-48; Rom. 2:12.

E. A second probation

Some scholars hold that they who die in their sins will have another opportunity after death to accept Christ. No man will perish without having been offered a favorable opportunity to know and accept Jesus. They appeal to such passages as Eph. 4:8-9; 1Cor. 15:24-28; Phil. 2:9-11; Col. 1:19,20; 1Pet. 3:19; 4:6. But these do not prove the point.

Moreover, Scripture represents the state of unbelievers after death as a fixed state, which cannot be altered, Eccl. 11:3; Luke 16:19-31; John 8:21, 24; 2Pet 2:4,9; Jude 7, 13. Their judgment depends on what they have done in the flesh, Matt. 7:22-23; 10:32-33; 25:34-46; 2Cor 5:9-10; 2Thess. 1:8.

Among those who hold to this error are the Mormons, or the cult otherwise known as The Latter Day Saints.

MEMORIZE

A. Sheo-Hades is typically a place of punishment:

Ps. 9:17. *The wicked shall be turned back unto Sheol, Even all the nations that forget God.*

Prov. 15:24. *To the wise the way of life goeth upward, That he may depart from Sheol beneath.*

Luke 16:23. *And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments.*

B. Believers are with Christ immediately after death:

2 Cor. 5:8. *We are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.*

Phil. 1:23. *But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better.*

C. Unbelievers continue to exist after death:

Matt. 25:46. *And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.*

Luke 12:47-48. *And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.*

Rev. 14:11. *And the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name.*

D. There is no escape after death:

Luke 16:26. *And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us.*

2 Pet. 2:9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment.*

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FOR FURTHER STUDY

A. Do you think the following passages support the doctrine of purgatory? Isa. 4:4; Mic. 7:8; Zech. 9:11; Mal. 3:2; Matt. 12:32; 1 Cor. 3:13-15.

B. Does the word of Jesus to the dying thief on the cross fit in with the doctrine of the sleep of the soul? Luke 23:43.

FOR REVIEW

1. What is the modern idea of sheol-hades?
2. What objections are there to this theory?
3. What do these terms denote in Scripture?
4. How do the doctrines of annihilation and conditional immortality differ?
5. What is the supposed Scripture basis for these?
6. How can you disprove them?
7. What is the Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory, Limbus Patrum, and Limbus Infantum?
8. What is the doctrine of the sleep of the soul?
9. What is its supposed Scripture basis? How would you refute it?
10. What is the doctrine of second probation?
11. Does Scripture support or contradict this doctrine?

CHAPTER 3

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING



CHRIST'S 2ND COMING

The New Testament clearly teaches us that the first coming of Christ will be followed by a second. Jesus referred to His return more than once, Matt. 24:30, 25:19; 26:64; John 14:3; angels called attention to it at the ascension, Acts 1:11; and the Epistles speak of it repeatedly, Phil. 3:20; 1Thess. 4:15-16; 2Thess. 1:7, 10; Tit. 2:13; Heb. 9:28.

I. GREAT EVENTS PRECEDING THE 2nd COMING

According to Scripture several important events must precede the return of Christ.

a. *The calling of the Gentiles.* The gospel of the kingdom must be preached to all nations before the coming of Christ, Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10; Rom. 11:25. This means that the nations as a whole must be so thoroughly evangelized that the gospel becomes a power in the life of the people, a sign that calls for decision.

b. *The conversion of the full number of Israel.* 2Cor. 3:15 and Rom. 11:25-29 refer to a conversion of Israel, and the passage in Romans seems to connect this with the end of time. Some take these passages to teach that Israel as a whole, Israel as a nation, will finally turn to the Lord. It is more likely, however, that the expression "all Israel" in Rom. 11:26 simply refers to the full number of the elect out of the ancient covenant people. The whole passage does seem to imply that in the end large numbers of Israel will turn to the Lord.

c. The Great Apostasy and the Great Tribulation.

The Bible teaches repeatedly that toward the end of time there will be a great falling away. Iniquity will increase, and the love of many will wax cold, Matt. 24:12; 2Thess. 2:3; 2Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-4. Wickedness crying to high heaven will result in a terrible tribulation "such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be." Matt. 24:21. If those days were not shortened no flesh would be saved; but they will be shortened for the sake of the elect.

d. The coming of the Antichrist. The spirit of Antichrist was already in evidence in the apostolic age, 1John 4:3, and many antichrists had made their appearance, 1John 2:18. But the Bible leads us to expect that at the end of the age a single individual will stand out as the incarnation of all wickedness, "the man of sin," "the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God." 2Thess. 2:3-4.

e. Signs and wonders. The Bible also refers to striking signs as marking the beginning of the end. There will be wars, famines, and earthquakes in diverse places, which are called the beginning of travail, to be followed by the rebirth of the universe; and also fearful portents in heaven, when the powers of the heavens will be shaken, Matt. 24:29-30; Mark 13:24-25; Luke 21:25-26.

II. THE SECOND COMING ITSELF

After these signs the Son of Man will be seen coming on the clouds of heaven.

a. *The time of His coming.* Some believe that the coming of Christ is imminent, that is, may now occur at any time. But the Bible teaches us that the events and signs mentioned in the foregoing must precede the return. From God's point of view the coming is always near, Heb. 10:25; Jas. 5:9; 1Pet. 4:5; but no one can determine the exact time, not even the angels nor the Son of Man, Matt. 24:36.

b. *The manner of His coming.* The person of Christ will return. He has already come in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but He will return in the body, so that He can be seen, Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Acts 1:11; Tit. 2:13; Rev. 1:7. Though several signs will precede His coming, yet it will be unexpected and take people by surprise, Matt. 24:37-44; 25:1-12; 1Thess. 5:2-3; Rev. 3:3. Moreover, it will be a glorious and triumphant coming. The clouds of heaven will be His chariot, Matt. 24:30, the angels His bodyguard, 2Thess. 1:7, the archangels His heralds, 1Thess. 4:16, and the saints of God His glorious retinue, 1Thess. 3:13; 2Thess. 1:10.

c. *The purpose of His coming.* Christ will return to introduce the future age, the eternal state of things, and will do this by two mighty events, the resurrection and the final judgment, John 5:25-29; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:3-16; 2Cor. 5:10; Phil. 3:20-21; 1Thess. 4:13-17; 2Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 20:11-15; 22:12

A. The calling of the gentiles:

Matt. 24:14. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come."

Rom. 11:25-26a. "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved."

B. The conversion of Israel:

Rom. 11:26. Cf. above under a.

2 Cor. 3:15-16. "But unto this day, whensoever Moses is read, a veil lieth upon their heart. But whensoever it shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away."

C. The Great Apostasy and the Great Tribulation:

Matt. 24:9-13. "Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all the nations for my name's sake. And then shall many stumble, and shall deliver up one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray. And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold. But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

Matt. 24:21-22. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

D. The revelation of the Antichrist:

2 Thess. 2:8-9. "And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders."

1 John 2:18a, 22. "Little children, it is the last hour: and as ye heard that antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists... Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, [even] he that denieth the Father and the Son."

E. The second coming of Christ:

Matt. 24:44. "Therefore be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh."

Phil. 3:20. "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Tit. 2:13. "Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

FOR FURTHER STUDY

a. How would you explain the passages that speak of the coming of Christ as near? Matt. 16:28; 24:34; Heb. 10:25; Jas. 5:9; 1 Pet. 4:5; 1 John 2:18.

b. Who are the "false Christs" or "antichrists," of which the Bible speaks, Matt. 24:24; 1John 2:18?

c. What would you say in reply to the idea that the second coming of Christ belongs to the past, since He returned in the Spirit, John 14:18, 28

FOR REVIEW

1. What great events will precede the second coming of Christ?
2. In what sense must the nations be evangelized?
3. How must we understand the predicted conversion of Israel?
4. What is the great apostasy and the great tribulation?
5. What does the Bible mean when it speaks of the Antichrist?
6. In what sense are there antichrists even now?
7. What signs will precede the second coming?
8. In what sense can it be regarded as near?
9. Can we regard the second coming as a past event? If not, why not?
10. Can you prove that it will be physical and visible?
11. How can it be sudden, when it will be preceded by signs?
12. What will be the purpose of Christ's return?

CHAPTER 5

THE MILLENNIUM

THE 1000 YEAR REIGN OF CHRIST

THE 1000 YEARS

The book of Revelation mentions a 1000 year period wherein Christ reigns. This unique era of history commences with Satan being bound and made unable to deceive the nations. After the 1000 years Satan is released and brings about a great apostasy. He then meets his end, being thrown into the lake of fire for eternity, and the eternal kingdom of the New Heavens and New Earth commence.

The text is typically interpreted in one of four ways. Two interpretations involve Christ coming back before the millennium begins. These positions are called pre-millennial. Two interpretations, called post-millennial, see Christ's return following the 1000 years.

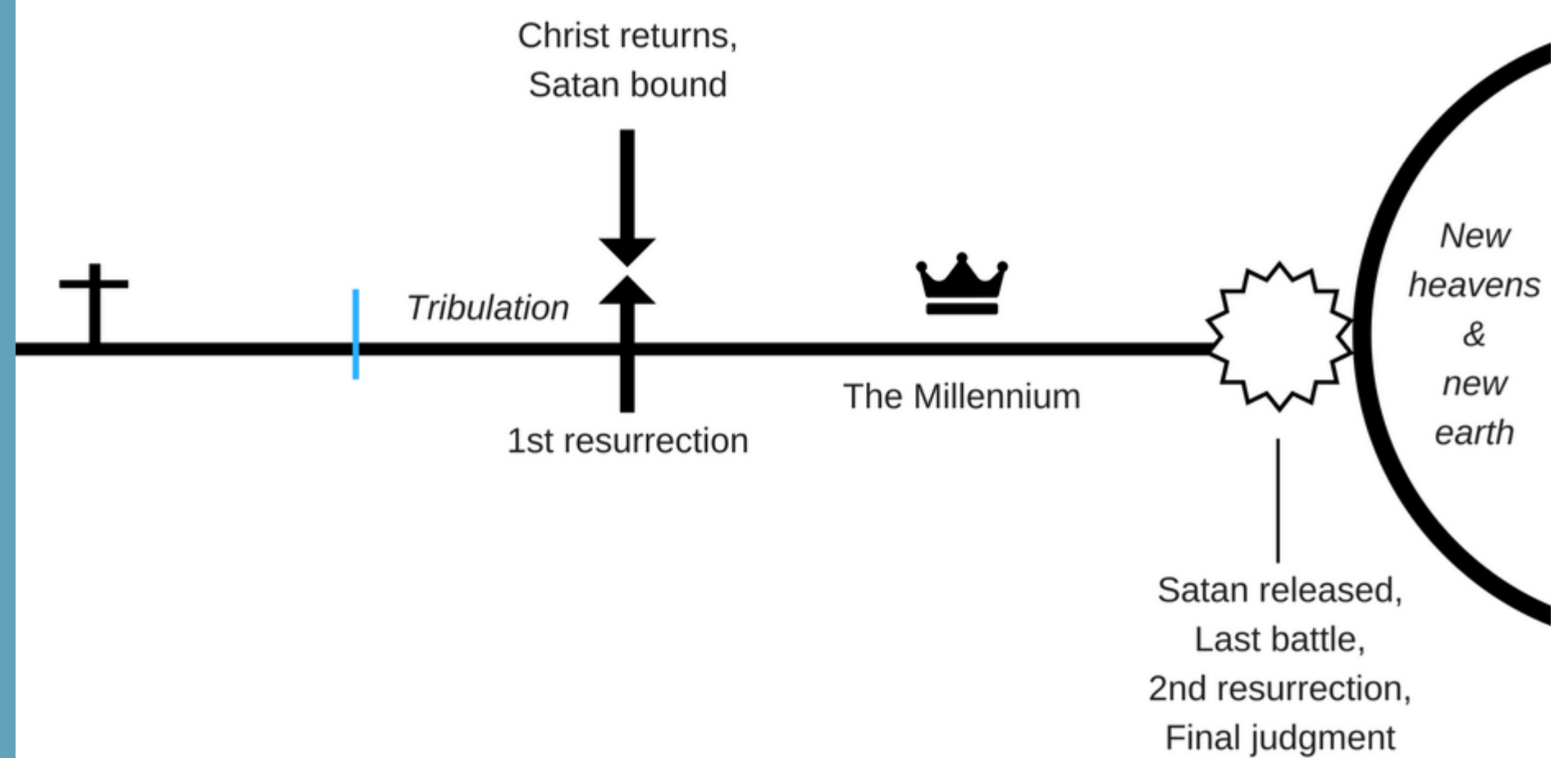
The following is a brief overview of each of the four major interpretations.

Historic Pre-millennialism

Historic pre-millennialism is historic in that it was the view of many of the early church fathers. It continues to be prevalent today among many Christians.

This view says that Christ will come back after a time of intense tribulation and bind Satan. At this point the first resurrection will take place, wherein believers will be raised up and those living will enter into their glorified state. Christ will then reign on earth for a

thousand years. After this time, which may be a literal or symbolic thousand years, Satan will be released and gather the unbelieving in a final rebellion. Satan will be cast into the lake of fire and the rest of the unbelieving will be raised up and judged. The people of God will then enter the eternal kingdom of the New Heavens and New Earth.



Dispensational Pre-millennialism

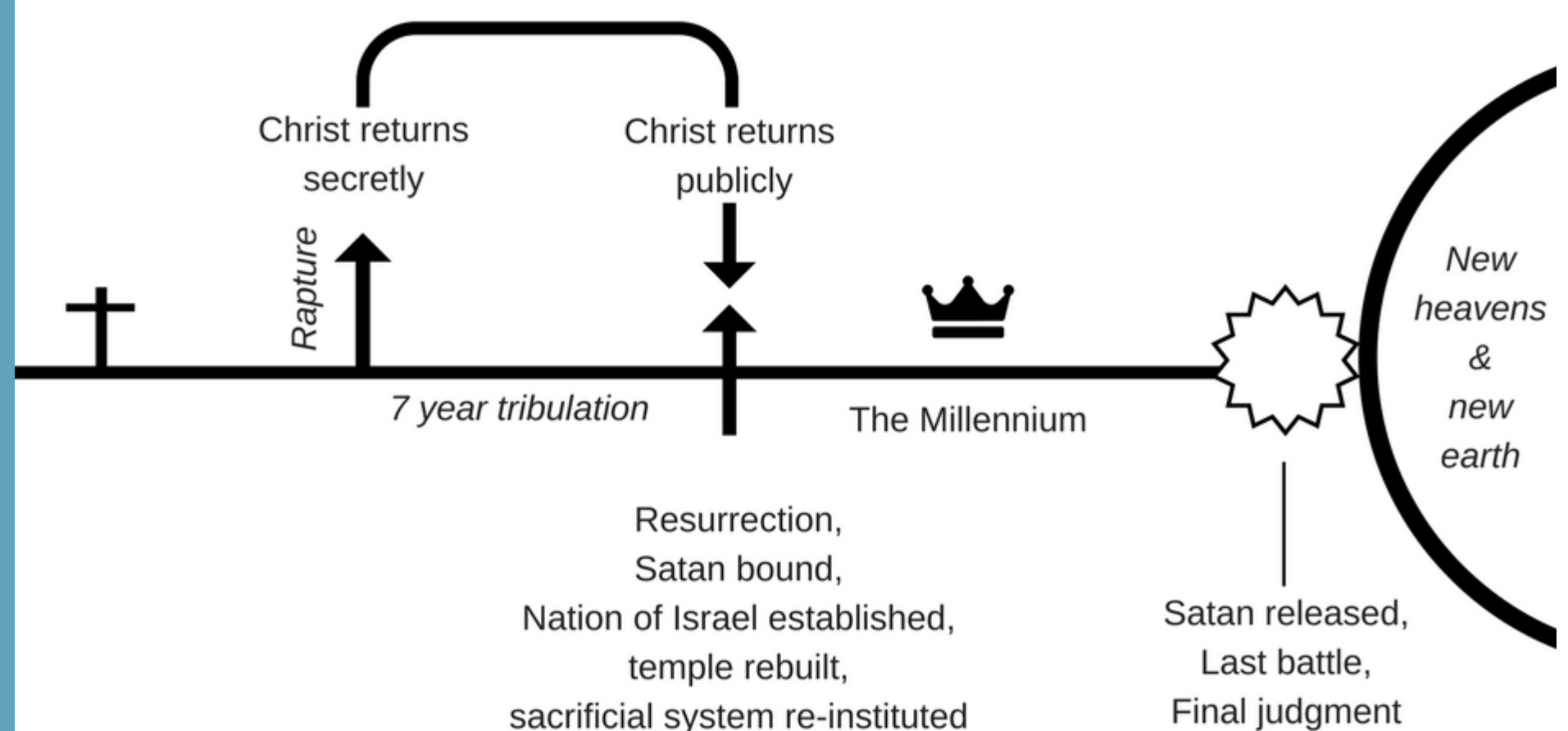
Dispensationalist eschatology varies widely among its adherents. Central to its system is its radical distinction between the New Testament church and the Jews of the Old Testament. Dispensationalism holds that God will renew His plans for the ancient people in the future by recreating a literal Israelite theocracy wherein Christ will rule as the fulfillment of the David covenant.

In order for this to happen, dispensationalists believe that the New Testament church must first be removed from the earth. This will be effected through an act called rapture. Christ will secretly come back at some

undetermined point in time and steal His people away into heaven. There they will stay for approximately seven years.

During this seven year period the earth will experience great tribulation as the man of lawlessness is revealed and comes to power. At the end of this period, Christ will come back to earth with the saints and set up his millennial kingdom. The temple will be rebuilt and the sacrificial system will be re-instituted as the Jewish theocracy is formally instated in its full idealized form.

Peace will endure until the 1000 years are ended at which time Satan will be released and lead his rebellion. Once it is put down the New Heavens and New Earth will commence.



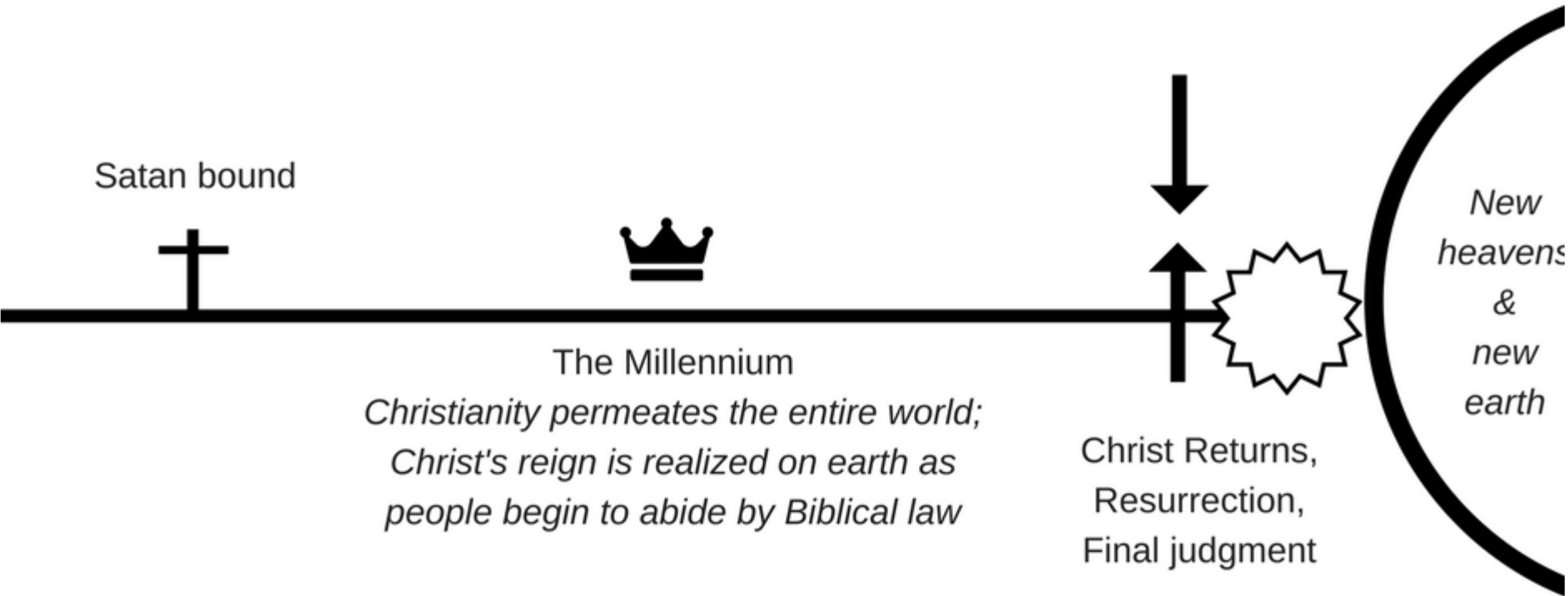
Post Millennialism

Post millennialism differs from the pre-millennial views in that it holds that Christ will come back after the millennium. Most post millennialists also believe that the 1000 years of Revelation 21 is a symbolic number representing a long period of time.

Perhaps the key distinctive of post-millennialism is its optimistic view of history. Post-millennialists believe that the gospel will spread throughout the world until the entire globe becomes Christianized. This occurs because Satan is bound at the first coming of Christ. At His death, resurrection, and ascension Jesus deals a deadly blow to Satan & his kingdom. Since the Devil's sway over the nations is broken, the gates of hell can no longer prevail. Thus, the gospel goes forth in a relatively unhindered fashion and the kingdom of God permeates the entirety of the earth.

While not every person will become a believer, the majority of the population is converted. Those few who remain unregenerate are so heavily influenced by the Christian faith that they abide by the precepts of Christianity. This is much due to the fact that the nations, being converted to Christ, institute biblical law as the foundation for their societies and civil law.

Because of the evangelization of the world and conversion of nations, a general peace reigns over the earth. Christ, though not physically on earth, may be said to reign because all people essentially acknowledge His kingship and law.



At some point this millennial peace is disrupted. Satan is released and a degree of apostasy occurs. Christ then physically returns to the earth and brings the dead up from the grave. He then judges the earth and condemns the wicked to their everlasting abode. After sin has been fully dispelled, the eternal kingdom commences.

Amillennialism

Amillennialism is another form of post-millennialism and has much in common with the preceding section. However there are a few distinctive elements.

Clarifications need to be made in regards to the word amillennial. The prefix "a" signifies a negation and the word literally means "no millennium." This is an unfortunate thing as it has led some to mistakenly think that amillennialists deny the Biblical claim to a millennium rule of Christ.

Amillennialists, however, do believe in a millennium, though it be a symbolic time period. It has been proposed that a better denomination for this view would be "realized" millennialism because Jesus is currently reigning at the right hand of God. The millennium is thus the period of time that stretches from Christ's first advent to His second.

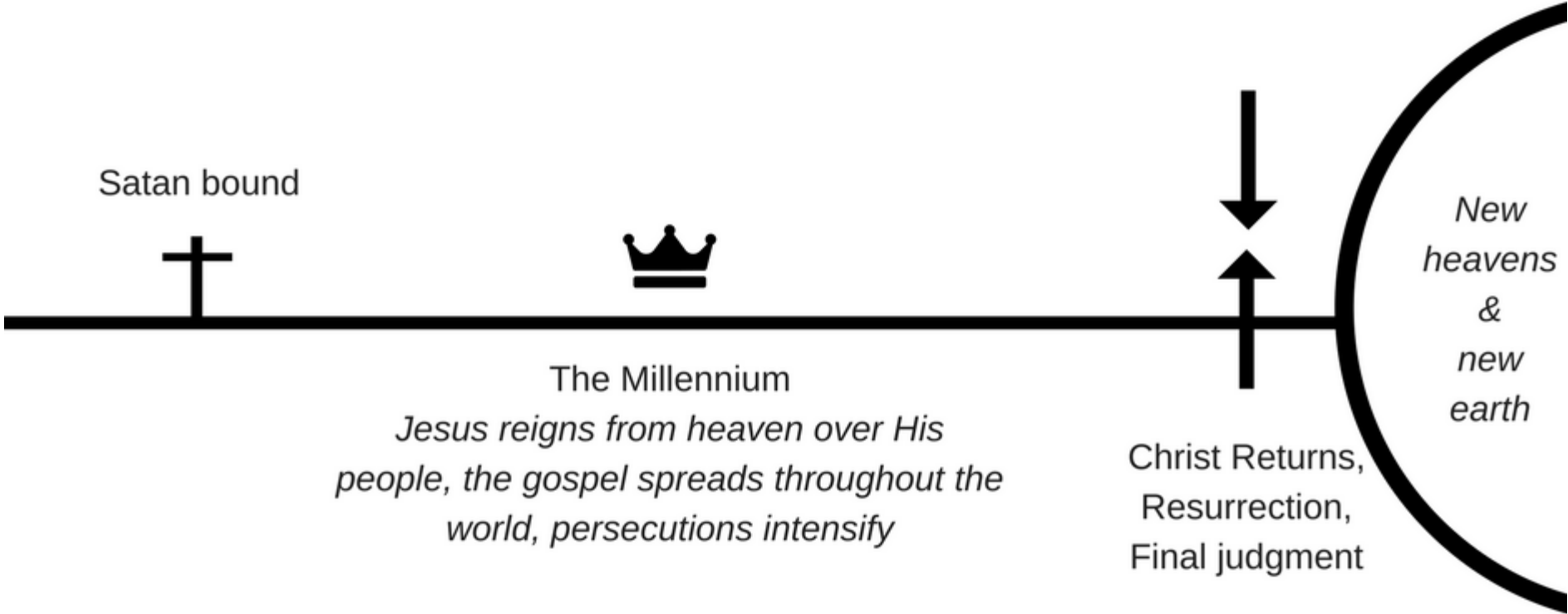
Amillennialists, like the post-millennialists, believe that Satan was bound at the cross. Jesus, at his first coming, entered into the strong man's house, subdued him, and is now plundering his house (i.e. the nations,

Matt. 12:29). The gospel is going forward and many gentiles are being converted throughout the world.

Amillennialism differs from post-millennialism in that it is not as optimistic. Amillennialists hold that a strong antithesis to the gospel exists, and its vehemence will continue to grow until the coming of Christ. While the gospel will gain much traction and be disseminated throughout the world, there will never cease to a severe opposition to the it. Persecutions will continue and intensify as the hearts of men grow cold.

According to this view, the reign of Christ is a spiritual one. Christ rules over the hearts of His people from His throne in heaven. His dominion, while spiritual and limited to the regenerate, is nevertheless real.

At the end of the age Satan is unleashed and a great apostasy ensues. More persecution thus falls upon the believers. At the the darkest moment Christ physically returns from heaven to judge the earth. Satan and his associates are condemned and the righteous enter the eternal kingdom of the New Heavens and New Earth.



FOR FURTHER STUDY

A. What do the following Scriptures teach about the end times? How do they affect one's view of the millennium? Matt. 12:32; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Eph. 1:21

B. The following verses use the word "thousand." What is the significance of the term, particularly for one's millennial view? Lev. 26:8; Deut. 1:11; 7:9; Psalm 50:10; 68:17; 90:4.

C. What objections can be levied against each view? How can they be answered?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. What is the difference between a post and pre millennial?
2. Sketch the Historic pre-millennial view. What are the main components of it?
3. Sketch the Dispensational pre-millennial view. How does it differ from the historic position?
4. Sketch the Post-millennial position. What is its most significant component?
5. Sketch the Amillennial view. How does it differ from the post-millennial position?

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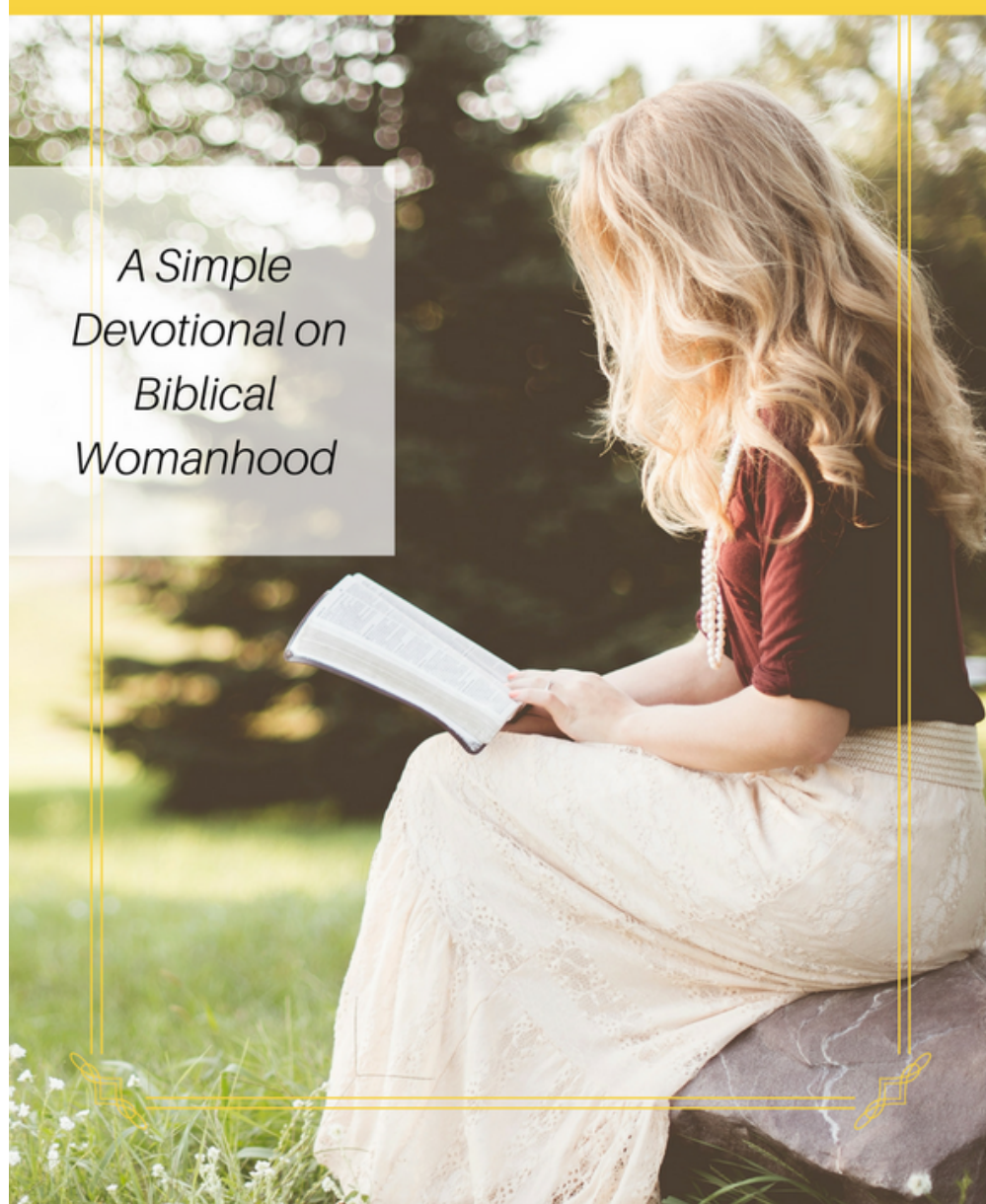
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CHAPTER 6

THE RESURRECTION, LAST JUDGMENT, & FINAL STATE



THE RESURRECTION

Scripture teaches us that at the return of Christ the dead will be raised up. The Old Testament clearly speaks of it in Isa. 26:19, Dan. 12:2. The New Testament contains more abundant proof of it, John 5:25-29; 6:39-40, 44; 11:24-25; 1Cor 15; 1Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 20:13.

A. The character of the resurrection.

Scripture teaches us to look forward to a bodily resurrection, similar to the resurrection of Christ. The redemption in Christ will include the body, Rom. 8:23; 1Cor. 6:13-20. Such a resurrection is clearly taught in 1Cor. 15, and in Rom. 8:11. It will include both the righteous and the wicked, but will be an act of deliverance and glorification only for the former. For the latter the re-union of body and soul will issue in the extreme penalty of eternal death.

B. The time of the resurrection.

According to Scripture the general resurrection will coincide with the return of Christ and the end of the world, and will immediately precede the final judgment, John 5:27-29; 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24; 1Cor. 15:23; Phil. 3:20-21; Rev. 20:11-15. Pre-millennarians teach a double resurrection: one of the just at the return of Christ, and another of the unjust a thousand years later, at the end of the world. But the Bible speaks of the resurrection of both in a single breath. Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15. It connects the judgment of

the wicked with the coming of Christ, 2Thess. 1:7-10, and places the resurrection of the just at the last day, John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24.

THE LAST JUDGMENT

The doctrine of the resurrection leads right on to that of the last judgment. The Bible speaks of the coming of a final judgment in no uncertain terms, Ps. 96:13; 98:9; Eccl. 3:17; 12:14; Matt. 25:31-46; Rom. 2:5-10; 2Cor. 5:10. 2Tim. 4:1; 1Pet. 4:5; Rev. 20:11-14.

A. The Judge and his assistants.

Christ as the Mediator will be the Judge, Matt. 25:31-32; John 5:27; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Phil. 2:10; 1Tim. 4:1. This honour was conferred on Christ as the reward for His atoning work. The angels will assist Him, Matt. 13:41-42; 24:31; 25:31, and the saints will also have some share in His judicial work, 1Cor. 6:2-3; Rev. 20:4.

B. The parties that will be judged.

It is perfectly evident from Scripture that every individual of the human race will have to appear before the judgment seat, Eccl. 12:14; Matt. 12:36-37; 25:32; Rom. 14:10; 2Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12. Some think that the righteous will be excepted, but this is contrary to Matt. 13:30, 40-43, 49; 25:31-36; 2Cor. 5:10. Clearly the demons will also be judged, Matt. 8:29; 1Cor. 6:3; 2Pet 2:4; Jude 6.

C. The time of the judgment.

The final judgment will naturally be at the end of the world, and will follow immediately after the resurrection of the dead, John 5:28-29; Rev. 20:12-13. The duration of the judgment cannot be determined. The Bible speaks of "the day of judgment", but this does not necessarily mean that it will be a day of twenty-four hours. Neither is there any ground to assert with the Pre-millennarians that it will be a day of a thousand years.

D. The standard of judgment.

The standard by which saints and sinners will be judged will evidently be the revealed will of God. Gentiles will be judged by the law of nature; Jews by the Old Testament revelation, and those acquainted with the fuller revelation of the gospel will be judged by it, Rom. 2:12. God will give every man his due.

THE FINAL STATE

The final judgment serves the purpose of setting forth clearly what the final state of each person will be.

A. The final state of the wicked.

The wicked are consigned to the place of punishment called "hell". Some deny that hell is a place and regard it merely as a condition, but the Bible uses local terms right along. It speaks, for instance, of a "furnace of

fire", Matt. 13:42, a "lake of fire", Rev. 20:14-15, and of a "prison", 1Pet. 3:19, all of which are local terms. In this place they will be totally deprived of the divine favour, will experience an endless disturbance of life, will suffer positive pains in body and soul, and will be subject to pangs of conscience, anguish, and despair, Matt. 8:12-13; Mark 9:47-48; Luke 16:23, 28; Rev. 14:10; 21:8. There will be degrees in their punishment, Matt. 11:22, 24; Luke 12:47-48; 20:47.

It is evident that their punishment will be eternal. Some deny this, because the words 'eternal' and 'everlasting' may simply denote a long period of time. Yet this is not the usual meaning of the words, and there is no reason to think that they have that meaning when applied to the future punishment of the wicked. Moreover, other terms are used, which point to endless punishment, Mark 9:43, 48; Luke 16:26.

B. The final state of the righteous.

The final state of believers will be preceded by the passing of the present world and the establishment of a new creation. This will not be an entirely new creation, but rather a renewal of the present creation. Ps. 102:26-27; Heb. 12:26-28.

Heaven will be the eternal abode of believers. Some think of heaven merely as a condition, but the Bible clearly represents it as a place, John 14:2; Matt. 22:12-13; 25:10-12. The righteous will not only inherit heaven, but the entire new creation, Matt. 55:; Rev. 21:1-3.

The reward of the righteous is described as eternal life, that is, not merely endless life, but life in all its fulness, without any of the imperfections and disturbances of the present. This fulness of life is enjoyed in communion with God, which is really the essence of eternal life, Rev. 21:3. While all will enjoy perfect bliss, there will be degrees also in the enjoyments of heaven, Dan. 12:3; 2Cor. 9:6.

MEMORIZE

A. A general resurrection:

Dan. 12:2. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

John 5:28-29. "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."

Acts 24:15. "Having hope toward God, which these also themselves look for, that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust."

B. A resurrection body

Rom. 8:11. "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

1 Cor. 15:35. "But some one will say, How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come?" Also verse 44. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

C. A resurrection at the last day / coming of Christ:

1 Cor. 15:22-23. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming."

1 Thess. 4:16. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

John 6:40. "For this is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on Him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

D. A final judgment with Christ as Judge

2 Cor. 5:10. "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things [done] in the body, according to what he hath done, whether [it be] good or bad."

2 Tim 4:1. "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead..."

Rev. 20:12. "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works."

E. Eternal rewards & punishments:

Matt. 25:46. "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life."

Rom. 2:6-8. "Who will render to every man according to his works: to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life: but unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation."

2 Thess. 1:9. "Who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might."

F. Degrees in rewards & punishments:

Dan. 12:3. "And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Luke 12:47-48. "And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more."

2 Cor. 9:6. "But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- A. How does Jesus argue the resurrection in Matt. 22:23-33?
- B. Does Paul in 2 Thess. 1:7-10 place the judgment of the wicked a thousand years after the coming of Christ?
- C. Does 1 Cor. 6:3 prove that the good angels will also be judged?

FOR REVIEW

1. How can you prove the resurrection of the body from the New Testament?
2. What Bible proof is there for the resurrection of the wicked?
3. How does their resurrection differ from that of the righteous?
4. What does the Bible teach respecting the time of the resurrection?
5. How would you disprove the doctrine of a double resurrection?
6. What Scripture proof is there for a last judgment?

7. Who will be the Judge, and who will assist Him?

8. What parties will be judged?

9. When will the last judgment be, and how long will it last?

10. By what standard will men be judged?

11. In what will the punishment of the wicked consist?

12. How can you prove that it will be unending?

13. Will the new creation be an entirely new creation?

14. What will be the reward of the righteous?

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