



God's Plan of Redemption

Review

In the previous chapter we explored how we can easily perceive that the current world falls far short of our human aspirations. God became angry with Adam and Eve when they revolted against him, so he banished them from the garden of Eden and put a curse on the human body and on nature. As their descendants, we have inherited their sinful nature and this fallen world. And we remain under God's anger and wrath. As a result of the fall, sinful human beings experience three forms of death:

1. Spiritual death while we live out our short lives alienated from the life of God
2. The death of our mortal bodies
3. The second death of our bodies and souls in the lake of fire on Judgment Day

When we repent and receive Christ, however, we overcome God's wrath and are reconciled to him. To overcome these forms of death, God's plan of redemption is structured around four forms of resurrection:

1. The resurrection of our dead spirits upon conversion
2. The resurrection of our spirits to heaven upon the death of our mortal bodies

3. The resurrection of our natural bodies to inherit the restored natural earth during the millennium
4. The resurrection of our eternal bodies to inherit eternal life in the new heavens and new earth as sons of God

Because of these resurrections, believers never really die.

Restored Creation

This final chapter is a review of the major themes in this book based on the postrestorational view of God's endgame.

There are four fundamental reasons why our human aspirations for an abundant life on this earth fall so far short of our expectations:

1. Humans have a sinful nature that separates us from God.
2. Unrighteous rulers govern the nations.
3. The world remains Satan's dominion as demons operate throughout this world.
4. Nature remains under a curse.

During the millennial reign of Christ, all these conditions will be dramatically changed. Righteous humans will reinhabit the restored earth through the first resurrection of their natural bodies. Righteous men and women will become rulers over their respective nations. Satan and all demons will be removed from this world. The curse on this creation will be removed, and the earth will be regenerated to its Edenic condition. This leads to a restored human paradise, where all our unfulfilled aspirations for an abundant life will be fulfilled.

God's plan of redemption unfolds while Christ remains on his throne in heaven. After his resurrection and ascension, Jesus taught, "But *from now on* the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God" (Luke 22:69). Postrestorationalism proposes that instead of Christ returning to the earth to establish his millennial kingdom, he rules the world from his exalted throne in heaven.

In fact, nowhere in chapters 19 and 20 of Revelation is Christ described as residing on this earth. When Christ is described as riding on a white horse engaged in the battle of Armageddon, no mention is made of Christ descending to the plane of this earth. Later, when the beginning of the millennium is described, there is no mention of

Christ sitting on a throne on this earth to establish his reign. All these thrones are described as being occupied by humans who are resurrected to reign with Christ over the nations. The first resurrection is not of the raptured body. Rather, it is of the natural body in the manner of Lazarus. The saints will receive restored human bodies of flesh and blood and will marry and fulfill the original creation mandate to fill and subdue the restored Genesis creation.

Christ's Second Coming

After the millennium, Christ returns at the final resurrection on Judgment Day, known as the Great White Throne judgment. The saints are raptured into their eternal bodies and inherit the Father's eternal kingdom at the same time that unbelievers are resurrected from hades to face eternal condemnation. The books are opened to determine rewards for the saints on the new earth and the level of punishment for unbelievers in the lake of fire.

Christ's return on Judgment Day is also when the Genesis earth is burned up and perishes and we inherit the eternal new heavens and new earth. Peter taught this doctrine concerning Judgment Day:

According to his great mercy, he [the Father] has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead [we hope for a resurrected eternal body like Christ's resurrected body], to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you [in the new heavens and new earth], who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. . . . at the revelation of Jesus Christ [when Christ comes again]. (1 Peter 1:3-7)

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved [the Genesis earth is destroyed], and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed [when the books are opened]. . . . But according to his promise [of an eternal body to be taken to an eternal kingdom] we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:10-13)

Peter revealed that when Christ returns on the last day, the current Genesis creation will be destroyed and the saints will be resurrected into eternal bodies like Christ's resurrected body. It is Judgment Day, when our works are rewarded or punished. The immortal sons of God will inherit the imperishable new heavens and new earth. In short, Peter places the second coming *and* the rapture at the end of the world—not at the beginning of the millennium, as claimed by premillennialists.

The Ante-Nicene Millennialists

Like modern premillennialists, the early church millennialists such as Irenaeus and Lactantius may have mistakenly taught that Christ returned at the beginning of the millennium. But unlike today's premillennialists, they did not place the rapture before the Tribulation, midway through the Tribulation, or after the Tribulation in conjunction with the second coming of Christ. Rather, they placed the rapture *after* the millennium at the final resurrection on the last day.

These early millennialists also taught that the first resurrection of the departed saints is of their natural bodies that will experience marriage and reproduction. That is because they are destined for a restored Edenic earth—natural bodies for a restored natural earth. They linked this resurrection to the resurrection described in Ezekiel 37, known as the valley of dry bones. They also linked this kind of resurrection to the resurrection of Lazarus, who came back to life in his mortal body.

They taught that the final resurrection had to be of the eternal body not given in marriage because the sons of God are destined for the eternal new heavens and new earth—an eternal body for the Father's eternal kingdom. They linked this resurrection to the resurrection Jesus described in his answer to the Sadducees. Jesus told the Sadducees that unlike the Adamic creation, the sons of God will have immortal bodies that, like the angels, will not be given in marriage.

The teachings of the early millennialists are important because some of these men were in the unique position to know disciples of John who could have asked John what he had meant by the first resurrection. From oral testimony such as this, Papias was able to write an entire book on the millennium as a restored Edenic paradise.

The only major difference between postrestorational eschatology and the eschatology of the early millennialists is that postrestora-

tionalism has Christ ruling this world during the millennium from his throne in heaven at the right hand of God the Father, rather than having Christ physically return to this earth to establish his kingdom. Even with this important correction, however, out of all the prevailing views on eschatology today, postrestorationism is undoubtedly the closest to the teachings of the early church millennialists, which gives this eschatology great credibility.

The Stealthy Restoration

It is important to remember that the prophets described the messianic kingdom as an earthly kingdom, with the rulers of all nations subject to the Jewish Messiah. The Messiah will be King and Lord of all nations, and all roads will lead to Jerusalem, not Rome. This vision of Christ's earthly kingdom would have presented a geopolitical threat to the Roman Empire, which is likely the reason why the New Testament authors and Jewish missionaries downplayed the Messiah's reign as they evangelized the Roman world. The apostles wisely focused their gospel message on the eternal kingdom of heaven during this embryonic stage of the church's growth. This posed no real threat to the Roman authorities. This approach also explains why God used the stealthy book of Revelation to inform us of his future reign. Like a complex parable, Revelation revealed the truth about Christ's earthly kingdom to the believer, but it remained cleverly hidden from the Romans. Maybe it was a little too stealthy because theologians struggle even today to understand God's endgame.

Understanding the Two Orders of Being

I believe much of the confusion that surrounds the subject of eschatology can be attributed to the failure of theologians to understand and differentiate between the two orders of being and their corresponding kingdoms that are described in the Scriptures. The Adamic order of being is defined as man as male and female in natural bodies being given in marriage and reproducing their kind as they fill and subdue the earth. The restoration of humanity corresponds to God the Son's 1,000-year restoration of this Genesis earth. Through the first resur-

rection of their natural Adamic bodies, the saints will experience an abundant life on an Edenic earth during an age of righteous humanity.

The new order of being as children of God is defined in the Scriptures as a new creation that is neither male nor female. The new creation as sons of God corresponds to the Father's heavenly kingdom, or the new heavens and new earth in the eternal age to come. Through the final resurrection of their eternal bodies, the saints will experience a new kind of eternal paradise in heaven as immortal sons of God. There are two resurrections of the body because the saints are destined to inherit two different kingdoms of the triune God—one on earth and the other in heaven.

Using this method of interpretation, one can read the Bible and easily determine when the authors are describing a future Adamic paradise and when they are describing the children of God's eternal paradise in heaven. For example, in Ezekiel 37, the prophet describes a valley of dry bones that are resurrected into natural bodies in order to inherit the messianic kingdom of peace, justice, righteousness, and prosperity. This corresponds to John's description in Revelation 20 of the first resurrection at the beginning of the millennium. It can also be linked to Jesus' promise to the disciples of a hundredfold reward in this Genesis age described in Matthew 19, Mark 10, and Luke 18, when Christ sits on his throne in heaven and rules over the regenerated earth.

In contrast, Paul described the resurrection of a new kind of eternal body destined for the Father's eternal kingdom when Christ returns (1 Corinthians 15). Paul taught that the nature of our eternal bodies at the final resurrection remains a mystery at this time. A pecan planted into the ground does not germinate into another pecan; rather, it is transformed into a pecan tree. One cannot examine the pecan and know in advance what the resulting tree will be like. Likewise, one cannot examine the current human body and know in advance what the future eternal body will be like. The human body will be transformed into a new kind of body adapted for the eternal new earth.

Paul also taught that the Genesis creation will somehow be brought into the eternal kingdom, just as our transformed bodies will be brought into the eternal new earth. The continuity between this Genesis creation and the eternal new earth, however, also remains a mystery at this time. Paul instructed us to trust God to create a new habitat suitable for the transformed sons of God. God has already demonstrated his awesome creativity with this current creation, and

he will use this same creativity when he creates our new kind of bodies adapted for the new heavens and new earth.

Four Forms of Sitting on His Throne

Jesus taught that after his ascension, “*from now on* the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God” (Luke 22:69). Distinguishing between the different forms of Christ sitting on his throne in heaven after his ascension helps in discerning God’s endgame.

1. Sitting and Waiting

Christ is currently waiting on the Father to say when it is time for him to establish his kingdom and dominion over this world:

But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, **waiting** from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. (Heb. 10:12–13)

In the meantime, he is gathering people out of Satan’s dominion of darkness into his kingdom. His people, however, remain in a hostile, demonic world full of the cosmic spiritual forces of evil. It is definitely not paradise on earth.

2. Sitting to Rule

One day, Christ will indeed sit on his throne and rule the world:

Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world [regenerated earth], when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne [to rule the world from his throne in heaven], you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel [on earth through the resurrection of their natural bodies]. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold [during the restoration in this age] and [in addition] will inherit eternal life [in the eternal kingdom of heaven in the age come].” (Matt. 19:28–29)

When Christ sits on his throne in heaven and rules the world, the Genesis creation will be renewed, restored, or regenerated. The disciples will inherit a life on the restored earth that is a hundred times better than the rich man's life, with houses, lands, and extended human families. They will even assist Christ by ruling over the restored nation of Israel.

Notice that Christ characterizes this hundredfold reward in this age as an Adamic existence. These are human habitats (houses and lands) and human relationships derived from marriage (brothers or sisters or father or mother or children). With this description of his kingdom on earth, Jesus is probably alluding to Isaiah and the prophets, who described the messianic kingdom as an Adamic paradise. Isaiah wrote:

“They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit [lands]. . . . They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity [extended human families], . . . The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox [on an earth restored to an Edenic paradise], . . .” says the LORD. (Isa. 65:21–25)

To establish his messianic kingdom, Christ simply binds Satan and exercises his reign over this world from heaven. Peter and all followers of Christ will be resurrected into natural bodies at the first resurrection. We will marry and reproduce, have extended human families, live in human habitats, and experience fruitful lands. We will reinhabit the regenerated earth and experience a hundredfold reward as Adamic creatures in an Edenic paradise. Our human aspirations will indeed be fulfilled, and we will experience an abundant life on this earth as Christ, the Good Shepherd and rightful God of this creation, exercises his reign. Satan will no longer be able to rob us of the joys of life on the redeemed earth.

Christ is making a clear distinction between the two types of kingdoms the disciples will inherit. One is Adamic and of this Genesis creation—“houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands,” which corresponds to the Son's restored paradise on the regenerated earth. The other is of the eternal new creation as God's immortal children, which corresponds to the Father's eternal paradise in the new heavens and new earth.

3. Sitting to Judge

After experiencing this restoration, we will inherit eternal life in the age to come. This occurs at the end of the Genesis age when Christ returns and sits on his throne to judge the world:

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then **he will sit on his glorious throne** [the Great White Throne]. Before him will be gathered all the nations [at the final resurrection], and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. . . . Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” . . . Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels [the lake of fire].” (Matt. 25:31–41)

The second coming on Judgment Day ushers in the Father’s eternal kingdom—not the Son’s millennial kingdom.

4. Sitting to Create

The final form of Christ “sitting” on his throne in heaven is when he creates the new heavens and new earth as the eternal home for the sons of God. John wrote:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, . . . **And he who was seated on the throne said**, “Behold, I am making all things new.” (Rev. 21:1–5)

The Son of God was the unique person of the Trinity who created this heavens and earth. He is also the person of the Trinity tasked with creating the new heavens and new earth as the eternal home for the sons of God.

In summary, after ascending to heaven, Christ sat down at the Father’s right hand, where he currently waits for the Father to say it is time for his reign to begin. When Satan is bound and removed, Christ will govern the world as he sits on his throne in heaven. When Christ

returns on Judgment Day, he will judge the world while sitting on his Great White Throne in heaven. After he destroys this Genesis creation, he will create the eternal new earth while he sits on his throne. All four forms of sitting occur from his throne in heaven, where he said he would remain seated at the right hand of God the Father.

The Gospel of the Kingdom

On the Mount of Olives, the disciples asked Jesus, “What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” (Matt. 24:3). Jesus answered, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matt. 24:14). Most theologians believe Christ is referring to the Great Commission being fulfilled before he comes again. But he is not describing the proclamation of the gospel. Rather, based on Isaiah, Christ is teaching that the messianic kingdom of peace, justice, righteousness, and prosperity *must be realized* on this earth “as a testimony to all nations” before he comes again. Isaiah taught:

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “**Your God reigns**” [the gospel realized when the Messiah exercises his reign as Lord]. The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God [as “a testimony to all nations”]. (Isa. 52:7–10)

Isaiah equated the “good news” with the implementation of Christ’s future reign when the whole world actually hears, sees, and experiences his messianic kingdom. The messianic kingdom will demonstrate to the world that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Messiah and the true God of this creation. Through the 1,000-year restoration, God wants to demonstrate to mankind and the heavenly witnesses what God’s kingdom on this earth would have been like if Adam and Eve

had not sinned. We will witness righteous humanity as he had originally planned when he created the garden of Eden under the Lordship of the Son of God.

Jesus taught that after this “gospel of the kingdom” is accomplished, “then the end will come,” when he comes again at the end of the age to destroy this Genesis creation, judge the world, separate the sheep from the goats, and usher in the Father’s eternal kingdom.

In heaven, we will always remember that we were at one time fallen Adamic creatures destined for judgment and destruction, just like the demons. We will be eternally grateful that God in his mercy instituted a means of salvation for us, whereby we would be saved from his final wrath and brought into his eternal kingdom as his beloved children. God’s plan of redemption will reveal something about his character for all eternity.

A Trinitarian Eschatology

Jesus Christ was more than a Jewish king. The Jewish Messiah was none other than the eternal Son of God incarnate. Within the Trinity, this creation was specifically created through, by, and for the Son of God. Therefore, Christ has a divine right to rule over the whole world.

Before the fall, the world was the Son’s kingdom on earth. When Adam and Eve sinned, they let Satan into our world, and the world became Satan’s kingdom. When Satan is completely removed from this world, there will be a regime change, and the world will once again become the Son’s dominion and kingdom.

We tend to think that the thousand years of paradise on earth is for our pleasure. But, in fact, the restoration is primarily for the Son’s pleasure and glory. He wants to delight in his restored creation during an age of righteous humanity, as he did in the beginning when he celebrated his creation as good. What better way to glorify Christ than by fulfilling the human experience as men and women of God as intended before the fall.

After this 1,000-year restoration, Christ will come again to take us to be with him in heaven in his Father’s house for eternity. There we will experience a completely new order of being even more glorious than restored humanity. God’s endgame revolves around this fascinating interplay between the members of the Godhead.

With this understanding of God's endgame, we discover that the Lord's Prayer covers a great deal of the major events that will occur in the future. Jesus taught us to pray like this:

Our Father in heaven [as children of God, we call him Father],
hallowed be your name [as a first priority, we worship him].

Your kingdom come [we look forward to the Father's heavenly kingdom in the eternal age to come], **your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven** [in the Son's kingdom when he establishes a reign of righteousness].

Give us this day our daily bread [we should live a daily life of dependence on God while we wait for these events], **and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors** [and live a life of love and mercy toward our neighbors].

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil [today, and during the Great Tribulation]. (Matt. 6:9–13)

Jesus taught how we should live today as we wait for the following major events to unfold in the future:

- The Father's kingdom of heaven
- The Son's kingdom on this earth
- The Great Tribulation

In the meantime, we should:

- Learn to worship the Father to whom we have been reconciled
- Learn to depend on him for our daily sustenance
- Learn to forgive and love our neighbors

Being Prepared for the Tribulation

If postrestorationism is the correct interpretation of the Scriptures, the next major eschatological event facing the church is the Great Tribulation. The church needs to be spiritually and physically prepared for this period of demonic humanity. Fortunately, the New Testament has a lot to say about enduring suffering by looking forward to the reward set before us. (Unfortunately, many theologians either

believe the Great Tribulation already took place in AD 70 or that the church is raptured before the Tribulation occurs.)

At some point the Tribulation will be on the horizon, and the church will need to start making physical preparations to hide in wilderness areas from the Antichrist and his followers for more than three and a half years. The logistics involved in such an endeavor are almost insurmountable. It will not be easy to blaze trails to remote hiding places that cannot be traced. Most likely not every person will have left his or her smartphone or other digital devices behind to avoid being traced. Going completely off the grid will be difficult.

My suggestion is to form wilderness survival organizations with a dual purpose: to teach members about nature and teamwork in the wild, and at the same time prepare hiding places for small groups when the Tribulation approaches. The Tribulation, however, is not imminent because there is no temple for the Antichrist to enter and present himself as God. But when the temple rebuilding program starts, either on the current temple mount or in another location in the old City of David, it will be time for churches to begin preparations.

Today's Confusion

Each of the current views on God's endgame has its strengths and weaknesses. But none of them provide a logical biblical theology of the future based on the relevant biblical data.

- *Premillennialists* affirm a literal millennium, but they have the second coming and the rapture in the wrong time frame.
- *Postmillennialists* affirm that Christ can rule this world from his throne in heaven, but they are under the false impression that sinful man can usher in an age of righteous humanity with Satan still operational in the world.
- *Amillennialists* affirm the second coming and the rapture on the last day to usher in the Father's kingdom, but they boldly claim there is no 1,000-year messianic kingdom on this earth before the eternal kingdom of heaven.

Amillennialists claim that Satan continues to rule this evil age until the end of the world when Christ comes again. But Christ has a

divine right to rule this creation before he comes again to take us to his Father's kingdom because the world was the Son's kingdom before the fall. And the Father has promised his Son that one day he will remove Satan and his demonic hosts and restore this creation to his Son, who is its rightful Lord: "The Lord [God the Father] said to my Lord [God the Son], 'Sit at my right hand, until I [the Father] put your enemies under your feet'" (Matt. 22:44). This is an unconditional covenant between the Father and the Son.

If amillennialists are correct and the Son of God never gets his creation back free of Satan, then Satan will have robbed the Son of his right to delight in his own Genesis creation. Christ will never be restored as the true God of this world—his very own creation. From a human perspective, the suffering caused by human sin, demons, and the curse is heart-breaking. But our Creator, too, is heartbroken and greatly distressed by the thoughts and actions of sinful mankind. He has been cheated out of the joy and delight of his good creation. The Son of God, however, has the divine right, power, and authority to restore this Genesis creation to himself in its original glory and rule over this world. According to the Scriptures, this *must* be accomplished before he comes again, destroys this Adamic creation, and takes his people to the Father's kingdom.

In Revelation, John describes the saints in heaven singing praises to God when Christ's reign over this earth unfolds:

And *they sang a new song*, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and *they shall reign on the earth.*" . . . and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "*The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ,*" . . . And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for *you have taken your great power and begun to reign* [over this earth]." (Rev. 5:9–10; 11:15–17)

John hears a song in heaven celebrating Christ's future messianic kingdom on this earth. For some reason, amillennialists cannot hear this music. They claim that Christ never gets his Genesis kingdom back and that there is never an age of righteous humanity. They deny the Son the divine right, joy, and glory of delighting in his own restored creation. Yet, Jesus, himself, insists that we listen to all God's promises that must be fulfilled before he returns:

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, *that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.*" Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. (Luke 24:44–45)

All the prophetic verses about Christ and his messianic kingdom "must be fulfilled" before he returns. Amillennialists need to open their minds so they can understand the Scriptures and hear the music in Revelation.

Many theologians like to organize the flow of biblical history by describing different dispensations or covenants described in the Bible. These methods have merit, but I prefer to use the following ages of mankind to describe the overall flow of biblical history:

The seven ages:

- An age of righteous humanity in the garden of Eden
- An age of unrighteous humanity after the fall
- An age of violent and corrupt humanity in Noah's day
- An age of demonic humanity during the Great Tribulation
- An age of restored righteous humanity during the millennial reign of Christ
- The end of this Genesis age when this creation perishes
- The eternal age and the beginning of the new creation as sons of God on the eternal new earth

Faith in God

The Bible informs us of what God has done in the past, is doing today, *and will do* in the future. It will not just all "pan out" in the end,

as some Bible teachers like to say. Disciples of Christ should be able to speak intelligently about what Christ *will do* in the future. Believing in these promises requires *faith* in a God whom we can trust to keep his word about what he will do to establish his future kingdom on earth and in heaven. Theologian and author Donald E. Hartley paraphrased Hebrews 11:1–6 and described this kind of faith:

So what is faith? Faith is really the heart-felt confidence of coming to pass all that is rightfully hoped for, the deep seated certitude that untranspired but promised events will eventually take place. And without this type of faith, it is impossible to please God. Why? Because when approaching God, only this faith treats him as absolutely trustworthy to keep his promises and he must therefore be a rewarder to those who earnestly seek him.⁴⁴

If we are to please God by having faith in him and his promises, then we certainly need to understand what he has promised he will do. Christians should not consider the subject of eschatology or the kingdom of God an elective. It is the study of the very gospel itself, for it gets to the heart of what God as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit has done, is doing, *and promised he will do*.

Conclusion

Now that Christ has come to this earth, has been crucified for our sins, has been resurrected, and has ascended to the right hand of the Father, I propose that the biblical data supports the proposition that ***he will do*** the following to establish God's kingdom on earth and then in heaven:

- Christ will continue to gather those whom the Father has given him out of Satan's dominion of darkness into his kingdom through our work of evangelism and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Christ will one day bring repentant Jews into his kingdom.

44 Donald E. Hartley, "Heb. 11:6 – A Reassessment of the Translation 'God Exists,'" *Trinity Journal* 27.2 (Fall 2006): 307.

- Christ will remove Michael, the archangel who restrains Satan, and the Great Tribulation against his people will begin.
- Christ will pour out his wrath against those who worship Satan and his Antichrist during the Tribulation.
- Christ will destroy the Antichrist and his false prophet at the battle of Armageddon to bring the Tribulation to an end.
- Christ will send an angel to bind Satan at the beginning of the millennium at a time set by the Father.
- Christ will remove the curse and regenerate the earth to its Edenic condition.
- Christ will sit on his throne in heaven at the right hand of the Father and will rule over the restored earth for one thousand years.
- Christ will resurrect all deceased saints into their natural bodies to reinhabit the restored natural earth as restored human beings during his millennial reign.
- Christ will designate some resurrected saints from all nations to sit on thrones to assist him in governing the nations during this age of righteous humanity.
- Christ will release Satan for a short time after the millennium to command one last rebellion on the earth, leading to the battle of Gog and Magog.
- Christ will put down this rebellion and destroy Satan by sending him to the lake of fire for eternity.
- Christ will return on the last day of this Genesis creation.
- Christ will destroy the heavens and earth with fire.
- Christ will then make all things new when he creates the new heavens and new earth.
- Christ will sit on his Great White Throne and judge every human being.
- Christ will resurrect unbelievers from hades, punish them according to their evil deeds, and send them to the lake of fire.
- Christ will gather all believers, whether asleep or alive, and transform their bodies to be like his resurrected and glorified body—immortal and imperishable.

- Christ will reward the glorified saints for their good deeds and give them eternal life in the Father's eternal kingdom of heaven.
- Christ will consummate the marriage with the church, his bride, in the New Jerusalem.
- Christ, as the Alpha and Omega of this Genesis creation, will then say, "It is done!"
- Christ will have completed the work of redemption that the Father has given him.
- Christ will turn his kingdom over to his Father and be subject to the Father.

By faith we can be certain that God is absolutely trustworthy to keep all these promises concerning what he will do in the future.

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