



So far in the main narrative of *Redemption By Jesus*, we have only considered the rewards that the redeemed will receive. However, we must not forget that **God’s redemptive plan is first and foremost about rewards for the Redeemer, God’s Son**. As with the redeemed, the Son of God will receive His greatest rewards in the coming era that the prophets and apostles call the יוֹם־יְהוָה, *the day of the LORD*.

We speak of the day of the LORD as *an era* because eschatological passages referring to this time describe more events occurring in that “day” than could possibly fit in a 24-hour period. In these passages, Scripture clearly uses the word *day* in the sense that we do when we say things like, “the day of Rome’s glory” or “the day of the Protestant Reformers.” Other biblical phrases with this nuance of *era* (or *epoch*) include, “day of battle” (Pr 21.31), “day of prosperity” (Ec 7.14), “day of our king” (Ho 7.5), and “the day of salvation” (2Co 2.2). As with these phrases, Scripture evidently uses the phrase “day of the LORD” to refer to a period of time characterized by notable events or circumstances, and that lasts longer than a solar day. We also observe that Scripture places so great an emphasis upon the coming day of the LORD as to make ludicrous the idea that Jesus, the apostles, and the prophets looked forward to only a 24-hour period. Indeed, over 250 verses of the Bible mention the day of the LORD, in the writings of at least 25 authors,

including Job, Moses, David, thirteen of the writing prophets, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, Paul, and Jude! Everything that Scripture tells us about the character of the day of the LORD, and the events that occur during that day, confirms that “**the day of the LORD**” **refers to an era.**

Now, as affirmed by the frequent genitive phrase *of the LORD*, this coming era is His day (cf. Lk 17.24). A handful of passages about the day of the LORD use the preposition *for*, confirming that the day is not only His day but a day *for Him*.¹ **It will be a day for the LORD’s satisfaction and delight.**

Let us be clear about the Lord who is in view. The day of the LORD is explicitly the day of Yahveh, and therefore the day of God (2Pe 3.12; Re 16.14). However, it is the day of God as specifically brought about and administrated in the person of Jesus Christ: **it is the day of our Lord Jesus Christ** (1Co 1.8; 2Co 2.14; Php 1.6,10; 2.16)! Once Satan and human despots (whom Satan has inspired) have had *their* day, the Lord Jesus will have His.

The day of the LORD will be a day when **the kingdom of the world will be fully restored to Him** (Ob 1.21; Re 11.15), and He alone will be king over all the earth (Zec 14.9). It will be a day for His vengeance upon His enemies and upon the enemies of His people (Is 34.8; Je 51.6; cf. 2Th 1.6-10). In that day, fools will no longer be called noble, nor rogues considered generous (Is 32.1-5). Instead, all the proud and arrogant will be abased, and “the LORD alone will be exalted” (Is 2.11-12). He will be glorified among His people and marveled at by them (2Th 1.10). In that day “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Hab 2.14), and one person will no longer say to another, “Know the LORD,” because everyone will know Him “from the least of them to the greatest of them” (Je 31.34). It will be a day when the once pagan nations will worship Him (e.g., Is 18.7; 19.19,21). Gentiles will help Israelite people return to their homeland and will accompany them on the journey (Is 66.20).

Having returned to their land and no longer wayward and idolatrous, the people of Israel will rebuild Jerusalem *for the LORD* (Je 31.38). They will expand the sanctified area in the city for His temple by many square miles (Eze 45.1; 48.9-12). During that time, the LORD will choose some of the returnees to serve as priests and Levites in temple services now centered on Jesus as the Lamb (Is 66.21).

¹ Is 2.2; 34.8; Eze 30.3; Zec 14.1.

Most wonderful of all, **the day of the LORD will be the day of His wedding celebration** (Is 4.2-6; 25.6; Re 19.7-9), **and the day that He begins to reign over all the peoples of the world *with His bride*** (Is 32.1-4). We will say more about reigning with Christ in the main narrative of *Redemption By Jesus*, but because many ask, “Over whom will we reign after Christ’s return?” we offer here the following table of individuals and groups that our Lord will attend to at His coming:

| Person Or Group | How Dealt With | Scripture |
|---|--|--|
| 1. The Faithful Who Have Died Before Christ’s Coming | Resurrected at the <i>parousia</i> , come with Christ to rule | 1Th 4.13-18; 2Ti 2.11-13; Re 22.3-5 |
| 2. Christians Still Living When Christ Comes | Raptured and transformed at the <i>parousia</i> , come with Christ to rule | 1Co 15.51-52; Re 3.21 |
| 3. The 144,000 Jewish First Fruits | Brought to repentance at the <i>parousia</i> | Zec 12.10-13; Re 7.1-8; 14.1-5 |
| 4. Jewish Diaspora | Protected in the wilderness, then brought to Jerusalem | Is 66.20-21; Re 12.6,14 |
| 5. Armageddon Survivors From Gentile Nations Around Israel | Converted; worship King Yahveh/Jesus; some sent to evangelize | Is 18.7; 19.23-25; 29.17-19; 66.18-19; Je 3.17; Zec 2.11; 14.16-19 |
| 6. Unevangelized Gentiles From More Distant Nations | Accompany Jews to seek Yahveh in Jerusalem | Is 11.10; Zec 8.20-23; cf. Je 16.19; Mic 4.1-3 |
| 7. Children | Enter the kingdom | Mt 18.3; Mk 10.14-15 |
| 8. False Believers (Hypocrites) | Do not enter the kingdom, but sent away by Jesus; gathered out of the harvest and thrown into fire | Mt 7.21-23; 13.24-30,36-43; 24.48-51; 25.31,41-46 |
| 9. Gospel Rejecters | Condemned at the final judgment; suffer God’s wrath | Mt 12.41; cf. Jn 3.36; 12.48; Ro 2.5-9 |
| 10. Antichrist & False Prophet | Thrown into Lake of Fire | Re 19.20 |
| 11. Followers Of Antichrist | Killed and tormented forever | Re 14.9-11; 19.21; cf. Is 29.20; 2Th 2.8-12 |
| 12. Satan | Bound for a thousand years, then briefly released, finally thrown into the lake of fire | Re 20.2-3,7-10 |

From this tabulated summary, we see (in the blue boxes) that five overlapping groups of people will remain on earth after the rapture and the judgments of Christ's *parousia*. The people in these groups, Jews and Gentiles, adults and children, will neither have been born again (so as to be raptured) nor false believers or anti-Christians (so as to be destroyed). They will enter the new era of the day of the LORD as mortals, many of them traumatized by the political, seismic and cosmic upheavals leading up to the *parousia*, but many also feeling a new sense of hope as they breathe the new atmosphere swept clean of all demonic presence. These people will feel utterly bewildered about what had just happened in the heavens and upon earth, and they will desperately want to understand how to live in their new circumstances. They will need and welcome (at least at first) the benevolent government of King Jesus and His glorified saints. **As this government rapidly extends and becomes established over all the earth, the day of the LORD will become *the golden age of our planet*.**

Nevertheless, the teaching of Jesus, and the apostles and prophets, about the day of the LORD makes many people uncomfortable, because one of the Bible's many designations for that day is "the day of judgment."² Who wants to hear or read about judgment? However, to avoid learning about the day of the LORD is to keep ourselves in the dark regarding the climactic scene of our redemption story, in which the Hero defeats and destroys the archvillain and rescues His true love. Willful ignorance about the day of the LORD and its judgments is also to live in denial about our own accountability before God, "for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2Co 5.10; cf. Ro 14.10).

So, let us get some clarity about the matter of "judgment" in the day of the LORD. The Scriptures speak of two kinds of judgment occurring in that day. The first of these is the preliminary, military judgment upon God's enemies and the enemies of His people. This judgment will occur at the *parousia*, the glorious arrival of Jesus, when He will destroy all the antichristian besiegers around Jerusalem *and* imprison the evil spirits that have energized the wicked and constantly deceived the people of the earth (Is 24.21-22). This is a preliminary judgement, in the sense that the wicked people who are killed at this time (with the exception of the Antichrist and his false prophet, Re 19.20) do not yet appear before the judgement seat of God for their final sentencing. They will only be removed from the sphere of the living. Likewise, the evil spirits — including the devil

² Mt 10.15; 11.22,24; 12.36; 2Pe 2.9; 3.7; 1Jn 4.17.

himself — though removed from the sphere of living humanity, will not yet be consigned to their final doom in the lake of fire.

The second kind of judgment that will occur in the day of the LORD, is the final judgment, often called “the great white throne judgment.” The apostle John described a vision of this judgment in Revelation 20.11-15. It is the judgment of the legal tribunal, in which “God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus” (Ro 2.16) and “render to each person according to his deeds” (Ro 2.5-6). Believers who have committed their lives to Christ *before* His *parousia* have nothing to fear from this final judgment, for they will have already been resurrected or translated into immortal bodies to serve as priests and reign with Him (Re 20.4-6). Those who enter the day of the LORD as mortals, however, along with the wicked who died before or at the *parousia*, will have their eternal destiny confirmed at this final judgment.

Let us note that the earlier judgment at the *parousia*, while chiefly military in character, will also have its judicial aspects (Re 20.4). **Both the preliminary and final judgments will have overlapping aspects, since they will both be prosecuted by the same Judge. Appropriately, they will serve as the temporal bookend events of the day of the LORD.** The judgments of the day of the LORD merit our contemplation and further study, but let us now turn our attention back to the period of time between those bookend judgments.

In that intervening time, the LORD will be rewarded with thanksgiving for fulfilling all His promises to Israel (Is 12.1-6). Contrary to some theologies and eschatological theories, God *did not* forever wash His hands of ethnic Israel because of their national failure to embrace Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah, He *did not* replace Israel in His mind and heart with the Christian church, and He *did not* renounce His promises to Israel or spiritually transfer those promises wholesale to the body of Christian believers. It is true that “a partial hardening has happened to Israel” (Rom 11.25), such that “some of the branches” of the Israelite tree “were broken off” by their unbelief (Rom 11.16-18). However, in God’s mind, the rejection of Jesus by many Jewish people was a national “stumble,” *not* a permanent “fall” (Rom 11.11). Instead, God in His wisdom allowed Israel to stumble over Jesus so as to provide an impetus for launching the gospel into the Gentile nations (Rom 11.12). Israel’s corporate blindness will only last until God deems that “the fulness of the Gentiles has come in” (Rom 11.10,25). It is foolish to think

that God replaced Israel with the Christian church because of Israel's sins; *God foresaw the sin and unbelief of Israel* and planned beforehand to "take away their sins" so that "all Israel will be saved" when the Redeemer returns to Zion (Rom 11.26-27; cf. LXX with HB).³ As the apostle Paul emphatically stated, "God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! ... **God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.**"⁴

Now, regarding promises, all the new promises made by Jesus⁵ are of course for the church, for both believing Jew and believing Gentile (2Pe 1.4). Furthermore, the church currently benefits from all the promises of God that have been fulfilled in Christ Jesus (2Co 2.20). However, regarding the many promises made to the people of Israel as *Israelites*, to them "belong [these] promises," *in the present tense* (Rom 9.3-5). Of these many promises to Israel, the ones not yet fulfilled will be kept in the day of the LORD.

Many of these promises have to do with **Israel's national repentance and spiritual restoration**, when the LORD "will remove the iniquity of [their] land in one day" (Zec 3.9). God declared through the prophet Hosea that in a future time, after "the sons of Israel" have remained "for many days without king or prince," they "will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness" (Ho 3.4-5). Through Ezekiel, God promised that He would "put a new spirit" within the regathered dispersion of Israel and "take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in [His] statutes and keep [His] ordinances and do them," with the result that they will at last truly "be [His] people, and [He] shall be their God" (Eze 11.17-20; 36.23-28). This national restoration will commence when the LORD pours out "on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication," at the time when they will look on Him "whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn" (Zec 12.10; cf. Eze 39.29). This will all occur in the day of the LORD when "a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for

³ Paul's statement that "he is a Jew who is one inwardly" (Ro 2.28-29) in no way means that the (predominantly Gentile) church that has been inwardly circumcised is now the true Israel. The words of Paul in context were addressed to Jews who relied upon their outward circumcision, and mean that only those *Jews* who are inwardly circumcised are true Jews.

⁴ Ro 11.1,2, emphasis added.

⁵ See the table listing these promises, in the main narrative of *Redeemed By Jesus*.

impurity,” and when the LORD will remove idols “from the land” with such finality that “they will no longer be remembered” (Zec 13.1-2). This spiritual restoration will extend not only to the removal of false prophets, but even to the removal of “the unclean spirit from the land” (Zec 13.2). In that day the LORD will comfort “those who mourn in Zion, giving them ... the mantle of praise ... so they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified” (Isa 61.3). Furthermore, God will not only pour out His Spirit upon the Israelite nation for repentance, but also for prophetic ministry. The LORD has promised to those “who turn from transgression in Jacob” the following covenant:

“My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring’s offspring,” says the LORD, “from now and forever.”⁶

The promises of Israel’s spiritual restoration overlap with God’s promise to set a new sanctuary in their land, a temple which He will inhabit in their midst forever (Eze 37.24-28). The idea of a future temple, along with restored temple services (Jer 33.16-17), should not disquiet Christian minds, because:

1. As with the first tabernacle, God Himself revealed the design for the future temple, and gave Ezekiel a vision of the glory of God returning from the east to fill His holy house (Eze 43.1-7).
2. God ordained all the temple rituals, making them inherently “holy and righteous and good” (cf. Ro 7.12).
3. The temple rituals of the past never saved those who practiced them, and the sacrifices never took away sin, nor were ever intended to do so in themselves, because “it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (Heb 10.4). When OT passages describe the offering of a monetary fee (Ex 30.15-16), or the sacrifice of an animal (Le 14.21), or the sprinkling of its blood (Le 16.15-17), or the anointing of oil, as having the purpose “to make atonement” (Heb, *to cover* or *expiate*), the “atonement” in view was never something accomplished by the external religious act. The religious act *was always figurative and typological*, pointing the offerer to the cleansing work of the unique Lamb of God. The OT

⁶ Is 59.20-21.

offerings and sacrifices “to make atonement” had efficacy only insofar as the offerer took hold by faith of the Lamb whom “God Himself would provide for the burnt offering” (Ge 22.8). This principle does not change with the sacrifices “to make atonement” that will occur in the eschatological temple of Ezekiel’s vision (Eze 45.15,17). The sacrifices offered in the temple worship after Christ’s return will be *figurative just like the OT sacrifices*, only instead of typological looking forward, they will be commemorative looking backward (like the Lord’s Supper) to the real expiation accomplished by the Lamb of God on the cross.

4. The past temples, their rituals and their sacrifices, were not only typological of future realities, but also didactic, instructing the people of their times about the present realities of sin and righteousness and judgment (cf. Jn 16.7-11). The future temple and its services will likewise serve a didactic purpose for the survivors of the end-time judgments.
5. The anticipatory shadows of the past temples will have given way to the substance, such that the ark of the covenant will neither be remade nor remembered, thanks to the LORD’s unveiled, physical presence, as He sits enthroned in the temple for all people to see (Jer 3.16-17; Eze 43.7).
6. Like the past temples, the future temple will not only serve as a religious center but also as the political center of the restored theocratic government.⁷
7. The future temple, modeled after Eden like its predecessors (Eze 41.18-20), will serve as the symbol of Edenic fellowship and as a promise of that fellowship becoming global and absolute in the new heavens and new earth.

So, the realization of Ezekiel’s temple (Eze 40-48) *after Christ’s return*, will not “rise up as a stench in the nostrils of God,” as Sam Storms affirms. Nor will it be “an egregious expression of the worst imaginable *redemptive regression*,” nor be “tantamount to a denial that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,” nor “constitute a repudiation of the Church as the temple of God”⁸ Neither will that future temple’s sacrifices in any way compromise “the perpetual reality and efficacy” of Christ’s “one unique sacrifice for sins,” as John L. Mackay fears.⁹ The only thing that raises a stench in

⁷ Is 32.1-5; Eze 44.3; 45.7-8,16-17,22; 46.2,4,8-12,16-18; 48.21-22; Mic 4.7-8; Zec 14.9; cf. Ac 1.6.

⁸ *Kingdom Come: The Amillennial Alternative*, pp. 20-21, emphasis Storms’ own.

⁹ *Ezekiel: A Mentor Commentary*, Vol. 1 & 2, Vol. 2, pp. 355-356.

God's nostrils in connection with His temples is outward religiosity without authentic love for God and man, especially when it devolves into an apostate temple culture like those that precipitated the destruction of the first temple in 586 BC, and the second in AD 70. However, such hypocrisy and apostasy do not emerge from God's temples or their services, but from the human heart hardened against the temple's teaching. Our Lord Jesus and his followers loved His "Father's house" in Jerusalem (Lk 2.49; Jn 2.16). Jesus attended temple services throughout His life, and never demeaned the temple as "a denial that [He] became flesh and dwelt among us." After Jesus' resurrection, his apostles who frequented the temple and ministered there, did not decry it as "a stench in the nostrils of God" or as "a repudiation of the Church as the temple of God." On the contrary, Jesus and His followers understood that the temple of their time served holy purposes, including God's intent that it provide an international locus for prayer (Mk 11.17; Ac 22.17). Jesus rebuked only the abuse of the temple's God-ordained purposes. Therefore, let us not balk at the idea of a future temple in Jerusalem, but understand that, just as there were three temples in the time of Jesus, His physical body (Jn 2.19-22), His spiritual body (Eph 2.19-22), and the Jerusalem sanctuary (Ac 5.42), so also in the day of the LORD, there will be three temples, each serving its own holy purposes in God's redemptive plan.

The Lord's promises regarding the future temple interweave with His many **promises to restore and rejuvenate Israel's land and cities**. The Armageddon invasion of Israel and siege of Jerusalem will decimate both the population and the agricultural viability of the land, leaving only gleanings of both (Is 17.4-7; Eze 7.15-16; Joe 2.1-3). However, as described in the main narrative of *Redemption By Jesus*,¹⁰ "the LORD will comfort Zion," in a great reversal of the agricultural judgments and destruction of cities that had befallen Israel in her recent tribulation:

He will comfort all her waste places.
And her wilderness He will make like Eden,
And her desert like the garden of the LORD;
Joy and gladness will be found in her,
Thanksgiving and sound of a melody.¹¹

And in that day

¹⁰ In the section about "The Marriage Supper."

¹¹ Is 51.3; cf. Je 31.5.

the mountains will drip with sweet wine,
And the hills will flow with milk,
And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water;
And a spring will go out from the house of the LORD
To water the valley ...¹²

... the Lord God ...
will cause the cities to be inhabited,
and the waste places will be rebuilt.
The desolate land will be cultivated,
instead of being a desolation
in the sight of everyone who passes by.
They will say, "This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden;
the waste, desolate and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited."
Then the nations that are left round about you will know
that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places
and planted that which was desolate;
I, the LORD have spoken and will do it.¹³

In that day, with war abolished, Israelites will "each ... sit under his vine and under his fig tree, with no one to make *them* afraid" (Mic 4.3-4; Zec 3.10).

In the day of the LORD, the prayers of all those who have prayed for the peace of Jerusalem will finally be answered (Psa 122.6-9). Those who "for Zion's sake ... and for Jerusalem's sake" have not kept quiet will see "her righteousness [go] forth like brightness, and her salvation like a torch that is burning." The nations will see her righteousness and glory, and she will "be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of ... God." Jerusalem will no longer be called "Forsaken," but "will be called 'My delight is in her,'" for the LORD will delight in her "as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride" (Is 62.1-5). In that day, the LORD will "exult over [Jerusalem] with joy ... He will rejoice over [her] with shouts of joy" (Zep 3.16-17). He will "rejoice in Jerusalem ... And there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying" (Isa 65.19). The LORD will "extend peace to [Jerusalem] like a river," and cause "the glory of nations" to flow to her "like an overflowing stream" (Isa 66.12). So will the spiritual watchmen be rewarded who "never keep silent" and "give [the LORD] no rest until

¹² Joe 3.18.

¹³ Eze 36.33-36.

He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in all the earth” (Is 62.6-7). This is the promise that “the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth ... to [Jerusalem] the daughter of Zion, ‘Lo, your salvation comes’ ... And you will be called, ‘Sought out, a city not forsaken’” (Is 62.11-12). And **“the LORD will ... again choose Jerusalem”** (Zec 1.17).

In that day, when the LORD fulfills all these promises, He will be rewarded by hearing Jew and Gentile sing, in the words of Isaiah,

O LORD, You are my God;
I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name;
For You have worked wonders,
Plans *formed* long ago,
with perfect faithfulness.¹⁴

Since the day of the LORD is for Him, how long will it last? Appropriately, aspects of the day of the LORD will continue forever, particularly His supremacy over all creation and His reign with His people. As Isaiah prophesied, “There will be no end to the increase of his kingdom” (Is 9.7), and as the apostle John affirmed, God and the Lamb and His servants “will reign forever and ever” (Rev 22.5). Furthermore, all the essence of the earthly Jerusalem’s glory will survive in greater measure in the holy heavenly city, New Jerusalem, described in Revelation 21. However, since Old Testament and New affirm that the present heaven and earth will be replaced by a “new heavens and a new earth” (Is 65.17; 66.22; 2Pe 3.13), the aspects of the day of the LORD that have to do with this present world’s geography and arrangement of cities and nations will finally come to an end.

So, perhaps we should ask, *how long will the day of the LORD last on this present earth?* We have already observed that the earthly day of the LORD is temporally bookended by the judgment upon Antichrist and the nations at its outset and by the final judgment of all humanity and wicked angels at its conclusion. We have further observed that between the day of the LORD’s beginning and end, that is, between its two delimiting judgments,

¹⁴ Isa 25.1, emphasis added.

1. the demonic army of the heavens, removed from the sphere of living humanity at the *parousia*, will be imprisoned for *many days* to await punishment (Is 24.21-22),
2. the LORD will establish His rule over all the earth; once God installs His Son as King on Mount Zion, Jesus will inherit the nations and will possess and rule them to “the ends of the earth,” *with His overcoming people* (Ps 2; Re 2.26-27),
3. the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,
4. the ideal temple of Ezekiel 40-48 will be established in Jerusalem,
5. and Israel’s land and cities (particularly Jerusalem) will be rejuvenated and rebuilt into a restored Eden.

We expect that these events will take some time. Other details in Scripture, explicitly pertaining to the day of the LORD or evidently occurring between its temporal bookends, imply a lengthy era. For example,

6. The territory of Edom will remain desolate and burn with smoking pitch “from generation to generation” (Is 34.5.17);
7. Water will flow from the threshold of the temple, and form a river that will go east into the Arabah and turn south to flow into the Dead Sea, turning its waters fresh, such that the river and sea will teem with fish, and fruit trees on the banks of the river will bear a crop every month and produce leaves with healing properties (Eze 47.1-12);
8. A highway will be established from Assyria to Egypt, evidently through Israel, so that people from Egypt, Assyria and Israel can travel to one another’s countries and worship the LORD together (Is 19.23-25);
9. “Many nations will join themselves to the LORD in that day” (Zec 2.11; cf. Is 60.3). Nations that had been enemies of Israel, “will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths” (Zec 14.16-19);
10. People will live long, like “the lifetime of a tree,” such that a person who dies at the age of one hundred will be thought to have been cursed, or at least to have died young (Is 65.20,22);
11. Enough time will go by that people will no longer remember the ark of the covenant (Jer 3.16);

12. Joel prophesied that a horde, like the one that will invade Israel at the onset of the day of the LORD, will not appear again “to the years of many generations” (Joe 2.1-2). Joel’s prophecy together with Ezekiel’s description of the Gog and Magog horde invading “in the latter years” a “land that is restored from the sword, *whose inhabitants* have been gathered from many nations” and “are living securely” (Eze 38.8; cf. Rev 20.7-10), imply that massive invasions of Israel, separated by “many generations,” will also bookend the day of the LORD.

By all this we see that *at minimum* the day of the LORD will last for hundreds of years and many generations. However, we can be more precise. We observe that, in parallel with Isaiah’s prophecy of the demonic army of heaven being imprisoned “in the pit (בֹּרֵךְ)” to await their final punishment after “many days” (Is 24.21-22), the Revelation emphatically repeats three times that Satan will be bound in the abyss for “a thousand years” before being briefly released and then given his final punishment (Re 20.2-3,7-10). The Revelation also twice identifies “the thousand years” of Satan’s incarceration as the period of time during which the glorified saints reign with Christ (Re 20.4,6).¹⁵

Now, we have repeatedly noted that the day of the LORD is temporally delimited by two judgments, a primarily military judgment at its outset, and a primarily judicial judgment at its termination. We have also found, in investigating *the duration* of the day of the LORD, that Revelation 20 provides the wonderful detail that Christ and His saints will reign together for a thousand years. However, that chapter also reveals that it is not only two judgments that mark the beginning and end of the day of the LORD, but also the two sieges of Jerusalem *preceding those judgments* (cf. Zec 12-14; Re 20.7-9). More importantly though, we realize that **resurrections also mark the beginning and the conclusion of the day of the LORD.**

Revelation 20.5 tells us that the “first resurrection” occurs at the onset of the thousand year period, and “the rest of the dead [do] not come to life until the thousand

¹⁵ Amillennial commentators have suggested that the number “a thousand” in Re 20 is symbolic, “especially since it appears in an apocalyptic passage.” However, as we explain in Appendix 7 of *Redemption By Jesus*, there is only *one* instance in the entire Bible in which a number is explicitly used symbolically. Otherwise, the numbers in Scripture, even in apocalyptic passages, are intended to be taken literally except in cases of hyperbole. This does not negate the fact that the literal numbers in the Bible are often *allusive* and/or *connotative*, but when a number alludes to something in an earlier passage, or connotes a biblical idea, thing or event, *its fundamental purpose of quantification does not change*; it still specifies a quantity that is intended to be taken at face value.

years [are] completed.” This implies that the resurrection of “the rest of the dead” is the second resurrection. John described this second resurrection as (a) following the final siege of Jerusalem by Satan and the forces of “Gog and Magog,” and (b) as an integral aspect of the final judgement (Re 20.11-15). The final judgment is not for those already resurrected or transformed at the *parousia*, but specifically for those who are dead until the time of this judgment (Re 20.12-13). We read that “death and Hades” give up all their dead for this event. These “dead” implicitly include all the wicked who died prior to or at the *parousia* of Jesus, but also all those who will have died during the thousand years, both wicked and righteous. John’s account emphasizes the fate of those whose names will not be found in the book of life (Re 20.14-15), but we can assume that all the righteous who lived as mortals during the thousand years, whose names *will be found* in the book of life will receive glorified bodies, just as the righteous of the previous ages received at the *parousia*. John doesn’t mention what happens to those still living at the end of the thousand years, but again we can assume that there will be parallel events to the occurrences at the *parousia*: the wicked who are alive at the end of the thousand years will be destroyed in the fiery judgment upon the Gog and Magog invaders, the righteous who are alive at the time will be transformed “in the twinkling of an eye” (cf. 1Co 15.51-52), and “the dead in Christ” will be resurrected (cf. 1Th 4.16).

All of history has been leading up to this moment. At the beginning of time, God hinted at His overarching purpose in creation by emphasizing the search for a suitable¹⁶ helper for Adam (Ge 2.18). Through the progressive revelation of Scripture we come to understand that God has been building¹⁷ a suitable bride for His Son. But in view of the logical impossibility of our heavenly Father building a goddess for His Son, who would become a God-woman by taking on humanity in an incarnation like His, what kind of bride could possibly be “suitable” for our Lord Jesus.

We have come understand that a suitable bride for the human-divine bridegroom, Jesus Christ, would **first** have to be similarly human-divine entity, that is, a human entity, that is in some manner indwelt by the presence of God. This God has accomplished, not by making humans into gods, but by the gift of His own Holy Spirit to live and work within born-again men and women. **Second**, a suitable bride for Jesus would have to be

¹⁶ HB, **נִסְתָּר**; LXX κατ’ αὐτόν.

¹⁷ In Ge 2.22, HB **בִּנְיָ**; LXX ὡκοδομήσῃ; cf. οἰκοδομήσω in Mat 16.18.

conformed to His character, and God has always been working all things together to accomplish this purpose (Ro 8.28-29).¹⁸ Furthermore, let it not escape our notice that conformity to the character of Christ not only includes becoming like him in His moral character, but also in His innately corporate character. In the mystery of the Trinity, Jesus never existed nor acted without reference to His intimate relationship with the other members of the Godhead. Likewise, the bride of Christ must be a corporate but united entity (cf. Jn 17.21), all members together as the spiritual body of Christ, constituting a temple of the Holy Spirit, even as does the physical body of Christ (cf. Jn 2.19-21; 1Co 3.16). **Third**, a suitable bride for God's Son would have to share in His glorious immortality. This is why we mention the matter of resurrection at the end of "the thousand years," and at the end of this excursus about the day of the LORD; **it is the resurrection of the saints to immortality that finally renders the spiritual body of Christ completely suitable as His bride** (cf. Ro 6.5; 1Jn 3.2). The "marriage of the Lamb" comes at the time of the *parousia*, with its contemporaneous rapture and resurrection, *and not before*, because until then the saints — even those already freed from sin in heaven, and already worshipping God in absolute spirit, truth and unity — do not yet share in Christ's glorified immortality.

The reader may be thinking, "Right, the marriage of the Lamb occurs at His *parousia*, but what then of the righteous people who were converted during the day of the LORD, who are apparently *not* resurrected until the end of the thousand years?" Aha! It will be at the moment of that second resurrection when all the elect, the one people of God, will finally be integrated into the one perfectly sanctified, united and glorified bride, a bride still comprised of countless unique individuals, but individuals now free of all distinctions of ethnicity and state of being. The wedding celebration may finally come to its conclusion, and the heavenly Bridegroom may lead His bride — a bride now perfectly suitable for the Son of God in every way — into their everlasting adventure together in a new heavens and a new earth.

¹⁸ In Ro 8.28-29, Paul emphasizes that God is making it possible for Christ to take the position of heir and spiritual leader "among many brethren," i.e. among a massive family sharing His character. Nevertheless, God's conforming people to "the image of His Son" likewise serves to prepare "those who love God" to constitute Christ's bride.

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