

Regality Throughout

The Present Heavens and Earth
The New Heavens and Earth

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men...

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein [‘on account of which’] the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Peter 3:3-7, 10-13).

In the preceding verses, reference is made to four different periods of *TIME* relative to "the heavens and the earth." *Three* reference the *PRESENT* "heavens and earth," *FROM* the "*TIME*" of their creation *TO* the "*TIME*" of their destruction (vv. 4-7, 10, 11); *and one* references the *NEW* "heavens and earth" (vv. 12, 13).

And references to "the day of the Lord" and "the day of God" appear in connection with *the destruction of the present heavens and earth and the creation of a new heavens and earth* (vv. 10-13).

In verse six, "the world that then was," *refers to the heavens and the earth FROM the "TIME" of their creation in Gen. 1:1 (v. 4) TO the "TIME" of their restoration in Gen. 1:2b-19.*

In verse seven, "the heavens and the earth, which are now," *refer to the heavens and the earth FROM the "TIME" of their restoration in Gen. 1:2b-19 TO the "TIME" of their destruction in II Peter 3:10-12.*

(To properly understand that "water" covering the earth in vv. 5, 6 is a reference to "water" covering the earth in Gen. 1:2a, *NOT* "water" covering the earth during the Noachian Flood [as often taught], note vv. 4-7 together.

BOTH "the heavens" and "the earth" are in view throughout vv. 5-7, with *BOTH* referenced in the two destructions [one destruction by "water" (vv. 5, 6), the other destruction by "fire" (v. 7)].

BOTH are seen in the destruction by "water" in Gen. 1:2a, *BUT* this is *NOT* the case in the destruction by "water" during Noah's day [Gen. 6-8]. The earth *ALONE* is in view [more specifically, those on the earth].

Aside from the preceding, a septenary structure is seen in the way Peter opens his second epistle in chapter one and closes it in chapter three.

In chapter one, this septenary structure is seen in Peter's reference to events that he, James, and John had experienced while on the Mount with Christ in Matt. 17:1-5 [vv. 10-18]. These events occurred "after six days," on the seventh day.

In chapter three, this septenary structure is seen occurring during "TIME" covered by "the heavens and the earth, which are now" [v. 7], covering the "TIME" extending FROM the restoration of the heavens and the earth [Gen. 1:2b-19] TO the "TIME" of the destruction of the heavens and the earth [vv. 10-12].

This "TIME," according to chapter one, lasts for seven days [vv. 10-18], and each of these days, according to chapter three, lasts for 1,000 years [v. 8].

NOW, note what attempting to align the destruction by water in vv. 5, 6 with the Noachian Flood does to the septenary structure in chapter three, introduced in chapter one.

There would be NO septenary structure in chapter three, leaving v. 8 contextually meaningless and the whole chapter out of line with vv. 10-18 in chapter one.)

Then note II Peter 3:10-13, which takes the reader into "TIME" at the end of the present heavens and earth, then into "TIME" beginning a new heavens and earth.

In verses ten and eleven, "the day of the Lord" refers to "TIME" during the last 1,000 years of the present heavens and earth's existence (the Messianic Era), "the heavens and earth, which are now."

In verses twelve and thirteen, "the day of God" refers to "TIME" beyond "the day of the Lord," to "TIME" beyond the destruction of the present heavens and earth, to "TIME" associated with "the new heavens and the new earth."

(Note the reference in II Peter 3:12 to “the day of God,” followed by the destruction of the present heavens and earth.

The way that the KJV text is worded leaves an individual with the thought that the heavens and earth are destroyed within “*TIME*” referenced by both “the day of the Lord” in v. 10 and “the day of God” in v. 13.

But, not so!

This destruction occurs at the end of “the day of the Lord,” with “the day of God” beginning after this destruction and having to do with the new heavens and new earth.

Note the textual correction of v. 12 on p. 1 of this article, separating “the day of God” from any connection with the destruction of the present heavens and earth at the close of “the day of the Lord.”)

As previously stated, the first two of the three preceding divisions of “*TIME*” in II Peter chapter three are associated with the present heavens and earth (both “the world that then was” and “the heavens and the earth, which are now”), with the last division of “*TIME*” associated with “the new heavens and the new earth.”

And proper distinctions *MUST be made* between these different divisions of “*TIME*.” Everything *MUST be kept* within that which Scripture has revealed about them, within correct Biblical parameters.

The preceding short study from II Peter chapter three succinctly covers, from a different frame of reference, what this article is about. And from here we’ll move on into the Day of the Lord, then into the Day of God, and see where, in a final, ultimate respect, Deut. 6:23 could apply to man, the heavens, and the earth.

Note this verse from Deuteronomy:

“And he brought us *OUT* from thence, that he might bring us *IN*, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers.”

God, “in the beginning,” at the time He created “the heavens and the earth” — “the world that then was,” subsequently referenced as “the heavens and the earth, which are now” — *KNEW* that He would one day *DESTROY* this creation, followed by the creation of “a new heavens and a new earth.”

BUT, numerous things would occur between the destruction of one creation and the bringing into existence of another. *And God, in His omniscience, knew EVERYTHING about ALL of these things BEFOREHAND.*

God knew FROM “the beginning,” in Gen. 1:1; Job 38:4-7, that *the FIRST RULER* whom He placed over this earth (Lucifer/Satan) would act after a particular fashion, necessitating his being replaced.

God knew FROM “the beginning” that He would ultimately *NOT ONLY* create man *to RULE* the present heavens and earth in the place of the disqualified *RULER BUT* would, one day, *bring man OUT OF the present heavens and earth in order to bring him INTO a new heavens and earth, with REGALITY at the center of EVERYTHING* (cf. Heb. 10:9).

Isaiah. 46:9, 10; 55:8, 9, relates God’s explanation of the whole of the preceding:

“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

And, with the preceding in mind, let's look at *REGALITY during the last age of "the heavens and the earth, which are now."*

Then, we'll look at *REGALITY during the unending ages of the new heavens and new earth.*

The Heavens and the Earth, Which Are Now

Scripture at the outset, beginning both Testaments, *provides a FOUNDATIONAL BASE for ALL which follows.*

And ALL which follows MUST be built on this FOUNDATIONAL BASE!

THIS is the SINGULAR beginning POINT and continuing WAY, set forth in the opening verses of each Testament, which Scripture has provided as FOUNDATIONAL for correct Biblical interpretation!

BUT, practically the whole of Christendom has taken an alternate way, resulting in that which exists.

Had they built on the provided foundation, they would have known that *EVERYTHING* throughout the 6,000 years of Man's Day moves toward a seventh 1,000-year period, the Lord's Day. And, as well, they would have known that this Divinely, septenary structured "*TIME*" has *BOTH* a beginning and an end.

BUT...

THEN, properly understanding Scripture's septenary structured "*TIME-LINE*" is inseparably connected with properly understanding *HOW olam* (O.T.), *aion*, and *aionios* (N.T.) are used in Scripture.

These are the words translated "eternal," "forever," and "everlasting" throughout Scripture.

BOTH — Scripture's septenary structure and Scripture's use of *olam*, *aion*, and *aionios* — *have to do with "TIME," having beginning and ending points, NOT with eternity.*

And with Scripture introduced by a septenary structure (having to do with “*TIME*”), the subsequent use of *olam*, *aion*, and *aionios* (also having to do with “*TIME*”) *could ONLY* have been a natural outflow of the former.

These three words, referring to “*TIME*,” with beginning and ending points, are words used in complete agreement with Scripture’s own pre-announced subject and structure.

These words can be used to reference the beginning and end of any number of different things (one’s life span, different time periods covering the complete existence of the present heavens and earth, etc.).

And the SAME thing (though an unending array of ages) continues beyond the present heavens and earth in the new heavens and new earth.

And these words are used in Scripture almost exclusively to reference an age, or ages (through the singular and plural use of *aion*, or a double plural use of *aion*).

To translate any one of these three words in an “eternal” respect would be out of line with the way that they were used when the two Testaments were written, out of line with the way that each Testament is introduced, and out of line with the way that they are used in different texts and contexts throughout Scripture.

When *olam*, *aion*, or *aionios* are mistranslated “eternal,” “forever,” or “everlasting,” all types of mistakes in Biblical interpretation begin to develop.

And this would be easy to understand, for building on error *can ONLY* result in more error, with the end result, after one fashion, seen in Matt. 13:33 or Rev. 3:14-21.

(Neither the Hebrew text of the O.T. nor the Greek text of the N.T. has a word for “eternal.” Both texts use words having to do with “time.”

For more information on the preceding, refer to the author’s article, “Aion and Aionios.”)

Mistranslating and/or misunderstanding these words is a main reason *WHY* individuals often fail to see a proper separation between things having to do with the present heavens and earth and things having to do with the new heavens and earth.

These individuals, understanding things in the sense of “eternal” rather than “age-lasting,” see and refer to rewards received or loss experienced by Christians at the judgment seat as “eternal rewards” or “eternal loss.”

And, in conjunction with the preceding, they sometimes take the last of the several ages associated with the present heavens and earth — the millennial age, the age toward which *EVERYTHING* associated with “the heavens and the earth, which are now” moves, the age in which rewards or loss would be realized — and see this age as the first of the unending ages associated with “the new heavens and new earth.”

Thus, for those seeing things in this manner, it becomes quite natural to see the realization of rewards or loss *NOT ONLY* beginning with the millennial age *BUT* continuing throughout all of the ensuing, unending array of ages.

This is how far afield some have taken things, resulting in no small part from the mistranslation of words having to do with “age” and “age-lasting,” *NOT with* “eternity.”

1) *A Proper Perspective on Christ's Kingdom*

Though Christ's kingdom, once established (millennial, the concluding age associated with the present heavens and earth), *will have NO end* (will continue to exist throughout the endless cycle of ages associated with the new heavens and new earth), there is a marked distinction between the kingdom as it will exist during the millennial age and as it will exist during the following, endless ages.

Relative to Christ's kingdom, once established, *having NO end*, note Luke 1:32, 33 and Rev. 11:15:

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms ['kingdom'] of this world are become the kingdoms ['is become that'] of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever."

(The word "forever" in Luke 1:33 is a translation of the plural form of *aion* in the Greek text, preceded by a preposition and definite article [*eis tous aionas*]).

The literal translation would be, "with respect to [or, 'unto'] the ages" [referring to "time" beginning with the millennial age and continuing throughout all of the ages associated with the new heavens and new earth].

The words "forever and ever" in Rev. 11:15 are a translation of a double use of *aion* in the Greek text. Both words are plural and articular, with a preposition preceding the first word [*eis tous aionas ton aionon*].

A literal translation would read, "...He will reign with respect to [or, 'unto'] the ages of the ages" [that is, His kingdom, once established, will exist *NOT ONLY* throughout the millennial age *BUT* throughout the endless array of ages associated with the new heavens and new earth which will follow.

Material comprising the remainder of this article will deal with marked differences in the way that the kingdom will exist during the millennial age and the way that the kingdom will exist during the unending array of ages associated with the new heavens and new earth.)

2) Rewards or Loss, Millennial or Eternal?

The Millennial reign of Christ will be *the LAST* of the ages associated with the present heavens and earth. *And NEITHER this age NOR Christ's reign as it is seen associated with this climactic age, will EVER be repeated.*

Miss Christ's millennial reign by having been found "wanting" at Christ's judgment seat and *you will have FOREVER missed the things associated with this climactic age.*

Note Heb. 2:1-5 in this respect:

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will?

For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak."

The first part of verse three in the preceding quotation inseparably connects the "salvation" presently being offered to Christians — *NOT* just "salvation," *BUT* "so great salvation"— with the "salvation" previously offered to the Jewish nation in the gospels, then re-offered to this nation in Acts, as seen in the latter part of verse three and in verse four.

("So great salvation" in v. 3 was introduced in the previous chapter as *an inherited salvation* [v. 14]. *And reference to this salvation, in turn, had been preceded by seven Messianic quotations introducing and establishing the subject matter of the book* [vv. 4-13].

And chapter two, continuing with *this salvation* from chapter one, referring to it as “so great salvation,” does so in the first of five major warnings in the book regarding *this salvation*. And this sets the stage for the remaining four major warnings, *which deal with this SAME salvation*.

And to avoid any possible mistake regarding *this salvation*, the writer goes on to connect *this salvation* with that “which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him” [2:3].

Thus, clearly stated, *THIS has to do with the salvation associated with the heavenly sphere of the KINGDOM, offered to, rejected by, and taken from Israel*.

Note the reference to the “signs,” “wonders,” “miracles,” and corresponding work of the Spirit in connection with this salvation as it was offered to Israel in the gospels and Acts [v. 4].

THEN, note that THIS is the SAME salvation presently being offered to Christians, though apart from signs and all that is involved therein.)

This “so great salvation” has to do with the HEAVENLY sphere of the KINGDOM (cf. Eph. 1:3-14; 6:10-18; Heb. 3:1), offered to, rejected by, and taken from Israel in the gospels (Matt. 21:18-43).

It has to do with the reason that the Church was called into existence (to be the recipient of that taken from Israel, to produce “the fruits thereof” [fruits having to do with the kingdom], which Israel had failed to do).

It has to do with that re-offered to Israel in Acts, though once again rejected by Israel.

And it has to do with that also offered to the Church in Acts, to the Church alone beyond Acts (I Peter 2:9-11).

THEN, it has to do with the HEAVENLY sphere of “the world to come” (v. 5), which will be governed from both HEAVENLY and EARTHLY spheres, NOT by angels BUT by MAN.

And NOTHING about the OUTWORKING of ANY of the preceding can occur outside of Christ's MILLENNIAL reign.

NOTHING can occur before Christ's MILLENNIAL reign, and NOTHING can be carried over into ages associated with the new heavens and new earth which follow Christ's MILLENNIAL reign.

And so it is with inseparably related rewards and loss.

They have to do with realizing or NOT realizing "so great salvation." And they, inseparably associated with realizing or not realizing this salvation, CANNOT be carried beyond the age to which this salvation pertains, as introduced by the immediately preceding seven Messianic quotations (1:4-13).

a) *He Must Reign Until...*

Christ's MILLENNIAL reign is for a revealed PURPOSE, made necessary because of that introduced in Gen. 1:2a, with the end result of this reign seen in I Cor. 15:24-28.

Note these five verses from I Corinthians:

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all ['that God may be all things in all of these things']."

And Christ, as David in I, II Samuel, MUST have a contingent of faithful individuals to occupy the throne with Him, aiding Him in bringing to pass that stated in the preceding verses from I Corinthians.

And these faithful individuals *will NOT* just rule with Him. Rather, they will occupy the throne with Him, as co-heirs, realizing “so great salvation.”

And though Christ’s reign will continue beyond His millennial reign, in the new heavens and new earth, the preceding beginning facet of His reign *is NOT* something which will be carried over into and continued in the new heavens and new earth.

This beginning facet of His reign has to do with realizing “so great salvation” *in the HEAVENLY sphere of the KINGDOM associated with the PRESENT heavens and earth.*

This beginning facet of His reign *HAS to do with THAT seen in I Cor. 15:24-28, and it will END when THAT seen in these verses HAS BEEN brought to pass.*

b) Reward Passages

The “time” when the preceding will be realized —*MILLENNIAL, NOT also during the ages beyond, in the new heavens and new earth* — is made quite clear in the seven overcomer’s promises in Rev. 2, 3.

Note three of these promises:

1a) To “the Church in Smyrna”

“He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death” (Rev. 2:11b).

The promise that *those who overcome “shall NOT be hurt of the second death”* clearly implies that *those who do NOT overcome WILL “be hurt of the second death.”*

This promise would be meaningless apart from the implied presence of this negative counterpart.

And the overcomer’s promises in Rev. 2, 3 have to do *SOLELY with the saved, with those forming one of the seven Churches in these two chapters, NOT with the unsaved.*

(Actually these two chapters in Rev. 2, 3 have to do with “the judgment seat of Christ,” which, again, *has to do SOLELY with the saved.*

For material on Rev. 2, 3 having to do with “Christ’s judgment seat,” refer to the author’s book, *I Know Thy Works.*)

On the previously quoted verses, I Cor. 15:24-28 (*ref. p. 12*), Christ’s millennial reign will result in “all enemies” being placed “under His feet” (vv. 24, 25).

And “the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (v. 26).

Following this, following “all things being placed under Him” (climaxed by that seen in Rev. 20:7-10), the kingdom will be “delivered up...to God, even the Father...that God might be all things in all of these things” (vv. 24, 28).

THEN, the present heavens and earth will be destroyed, with a new heavens and earth subsequently brought into existence (II Peter 3:7, 10-13; Rev. 21:1ff).

Note Rom. 8:13 relative to “death” in I Cor. 15:24-26 and Rev. 2:11:

“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

And with “death” done away with at the end of the Millennium and, consequently, *NOT* existing in the new heavens and new earth (Rev. 21:1, 4), the overcomer’s promise to those in the Church in Smyrna *can clearly be seen as millennial ALONE.*

(A common interpretation of Rev. 2:11b looks upon the statement as a “litotes.” Such an interpretation [in reality, man’s reasoning] results from *NOT* understanding *HOW* a Christian could possibly be “hurt of the second death,” which is associated with “the lake of fire” in Rev. 20:14; 21:7, 8.

For information on this matter, refer to the previously referenced book by the author, *I Know Thy Works.*)

2a) To “the Church in Thyatira”

“And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father” (Rev. 2:26, 27).

One day the Lord Jesus Christ is going to receive a kingdom:

“The kingdom of the world” will become “the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign forever and ever” (Rev. 11:15b, ASV; cf. Ps. 2:1ff; 110:1ff; Dan. 7:9-14).

Satan and his angels will be put down, and Christ, with His co-heirs (His bride), will move in and take over the government.

THEN, the overcomer’s promise given to Christians in the Church in Thyatira will be fulfilled during the ensuing 1,000 years, during the LAST age associated with the present heavens and earth.

The main thrust of the matter leading into and including this overcomer’s promise centers around two world kingdoms — *the present kingdom of Satan, and the coming kingdom of Christ.*

A Christian allowing himself to be overcome by the things of the present kingdom *will be DENIED participation in the things of the coming kingdom.*

BUT, a Christian overcoming the things of the present kingdom will be GIVEN “power over the nations” in the coming kingdom.

Concerning the Christians’ present activities in relation to one kingdom or the other, there is a specific promise in Rev. 2:23b concerning recompense, *whether negative or positive:*

“I will GIVE unto EVERY ONE of you ACCORDING to your WORKS.”

Christians involving themselves with the present kingdom of Satan will be recompensed accordingly (vv. 20-23).

And Christians looking out ahead to the coming kingdom of Christ, refusing to involve themselves in the present kingdom, will ALSO be recompensed accordingly (vv. 24-28).

The TIME for the rendering of a “just recompense” to every Christian, according to the context and overall message of Revelation chapters two and three, will be at the future “judgment” of Christians — the judgment seat of Christ.

The ISSUE, as in I Cor. 3:11-15, will be “WORKS,” with a view to EVERY Christian being revealed as EITHER one who has overcome OR one who has been overcome.

And the OUTCOME has been CLEARLY made known.

(Note that each of the seven epistles to the seven Churches in Rev. 2, 3 is structured EXACTLY alike — “I know thy works,” followed by a statement concerning these works, then an overcomer’s promise.)

Christians revealed to have overcome will be given “power over the nations,” while Christians revealed to have been overcome will be denied such power (Rev. 2:26, 27).

That the overcomer’s promises are NOT ONLY millennial in their scope of fulfillment BUT are ALSO connected with REGAL positions as co-heirs with Christ in the kingdom is further made plain by the message to the Church in Thyatira.

NO such scene as that depicted in verses twenty-six and twenty-seven exists during the present dispensation preceding the Millennium; NOR will such a scene exist during the unending cycle of ages following the Millennium.

And that which is true of the overcomer’s promise here is equally true of ALL seven of the overcomer’s promises throughout chapters two and three.

3a) To “the Church in Laodicea”

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne” (Rev. 3:21).

The promise that the overcomer will one day be allowed to sit with Christ on His throne *comprises the PINNACLE toward which ALL of the overcomer’s promises move.*

The Son is *presently* seated with His Father on His Father’s throne (Ps. 110:1). *BUT*, at the end of Man’s Day — for the duration of the Millennium, when the Lord’s Day will exist on earth — Christ will sit *on His Own throne*; *and it will be during THIS “time” that the overcomer’s promise in Rev. 3:21 will be fulfilled.*

Following the Millennium, after all things have been brought under subjection to Christ, *the kingdom will be delivered up “to God, even the Father.”* At that time the Son will also Himself “be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all [‘...that God may be all things in all of these things’]” (I Cor. 15:24-28).

The Son’s throne will then cease to exist as a separate throne, *and there will be ONE throne* — “the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Rev. 22:1, 3).

Thus, *THIS* seventh overcomer’s promise, as *ALL* of the promises, *CAN ONLY* be *MILLENNIAL* in its scope of fulfillment.

ALL have to do with Christians occupying future positions as co-heirs with Christ *in His MILLENNIAL kingdom.*

ALL point to and find their fulfillment in Christians exalted, with Christ, to the place for which they were called into existence.

Thus, *ALL* have to do with *the FULL and COMPLETE OUTWORKING*, 6,000 years later, in the present heavens and earth, of that seen in Gen. 1:26-28.

The New Heavens and New Earth

Little is revealed in Scripture about the new heavens and new earth. Scripture concerns itself with the present heavens and earth, *FROM the "time" of their creation TO the "time" of their destruction.*

Reference is made a number of times in Scripture to "ages" beyond the present 6,000-year age and the future 1,000-year Messianic Era (1,000-year Messianic Age), and the closing two chapters of Revelation provide insight into conditions during the course of these ages.

But, time and conditions during the ages beyond the future Messianic Era *are simply NOT part of the overriding subject matter dealt with throughout Scripture.*

And differences in regality exercised/which will be exercised in the present heavens and earth are markedly different than regality which will be exercised in the new heavens and new earth.

Nonetheless, the larger and climactic picture seen in Deut. 6:23, *being brought OUT in order to be brought IN*, is seen in man ultimately being removed from the present heavens and earth to be placed in the new heavens and earth.

And the whole of the matter regarding man in the new heavens and earth will be for purposes far greater than seen for man in the present heavens and earth.

And within God's foreknowledge and sovereign control *of ALL things*, He could *ONLY* have had the new heavens and earth in mind when He created the first heavens and earth in Gen. 1:1, along with all ensuing events pre-known as well.

And, correspondingly, the mandate given to man at the time of his creation in Gen. 1:26-28 would *NOT ONLY* have a fulfillment in the present heavens and earth *BUT* in the new heavens and earth as well.

1) All Things Made New

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

And he said unto me, It is done” (Rev. 21:1-6a).

Revelation chapter twenty-one moves beyond the Millennium into the beginning of the unending cycle of ages which follow. And the first six verses of this chapter provide the complete story, succinctly stated, of God bringing different things to pass, with ensuing conditions; and this introduces *HOW* things will begin and continue for man in the “new heaven” and on the “new earth.”

This is seen in the text itself, along with the manner in which the passage closes in the first part of verse six.

Note the words, “It is done [*lit.*, ‘It has been done, completed, brought to pass’]” (v. 6a).

These three words are the translation of one word in the Greek text, a verb in the perfect tense, indicating that the matter *has been brought to completion in past time and exists during present time in a finished state.*

This, for example, is the same verb tense used of Christ's finished work at Calvary in John 19:30 ("It is finished [*lit.*, 'It has been finished']"), or of the Divinely finished work in man's salvation in Eph. 2:8 ("For by grace *are ye saved* through faith [*lit.*, 'For by grace *you have been saved* through faith']")."

In the perfect tense usage in the preceding respect, NOTHING can either be added TO or taken FROM that which exists in a finished state.

The consummation of the whole of the matter throughout Man's Day and the Lord's Day, throughout 7,000 years, *will have been brought to pass.*

God's redemptive work throughout man's 6,000-year day will be *past*, the Son's 1,000-year reign will be *past*, and *the Son will have delivered the kingdom up to His Father*, "that God might be all things in all of these things" (I Cor. 15:24-28).

And the manner in which conditions will exist in that day, seen in Rev. 21:1-5 immediately before the announcement is made that it has all been brought to pass (v. 6a), *is the way that these conditions will exist throughout the endless ages to follow.*

(Note the structure of Rev. 21, 22, which is in complete keeping with the way that the first twenty chapters of the book were structured. And, as well, this would be in complete keeping with the way that all Scripture has been structured.

Material in the two chapters logically divides itself into four parts, and each part presents a succinct format of the subject involved.

As previously stated, Rev. 21:1-6a presents the complete picture of that which lies beyond the destruction of the present heavens and earth.

Then, Rev. 21:9-22:5 presents commentary material for that introduced in Rev. 21:1-6a.

Lying between these two parts [Rev. 21:6b-8] is a section which has to do with the overcomer promises in Rev. 2, 3, providing commentary on these promises [note reference to "the second death" (v. 8; *cf.* Rev. 2:11b)].

Then, just as Rev. 21:9-22:5 provides commentary for the opening verses [Rev. 21:1-6a], the section which follows Rev. 21:9-22:5 [22:6-21, ending the], provides commentary for the verses following the opening section [Rev. 21:6b-8].

God, throughout His Word, has an affinity for FIRST providing information, THEN providing commentary on that information.

Thus, Scripture ends in Revelation EXACTLY the SAME way Scripture began in Genesis, in the SAME ORDERLY MANNER.)

2) Regality

REGALITY in the new heavens and new earth, is seen in the last five verses of the commentary section on the opening verses in chapter twenty-one, in Rev. 22:1-5:

“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

The central KEY to understanding what is being revealed is understanding different things about the tree of life, beginning in the opening chapters of Genesis.

1a) The Tree of Life

“The tree of life” is mentioned nine times in Scripture, in three different books — three times in Genesis (2:9; 3:22, 24), four times in Proverbs (3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4), and twice in the Book of Revelation (2:7; 22:2).

BUT, WHAT was the ORIGINAL PURPOSE for the tree of life (seen in Genesis), which will be realized yet future (seen in the Book of Revelation)?

The tree of life was one of the numerous trees in the garden in Eden. And Adam, with Eve, was commanded to eat of all these trees, with the exception of one.

They were commanded NOT to eat of “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:9, 16, 17).

Adam, the first man, had been created for the specific purpose of assuming RULERSHIP over the earth, and the fruit of the tree of life was singled out as a specific provision for man as he exercised this rule.

An evident connection between man’s rule and his partaking of the tree of life can be seen by noting the appearance of this tree at three different times:

In the beginning when man was in a position to rule.

The absence of this tree during the entire period when man finds himself separated from this position (aside from the tree being referenced in Proverbs).

And the reappearance of this tree in the Book of Revelation when man will be brought back into a position to rule (cf. Gen. 1:26-28; Rev. 2:26,27).

The period during which man has been barred from eating of the tree of life BEGAN following Adam’s fall, resulting in his disqualification to rule.

And this period will END following the issues of the judgment seat, at which time man will once again find himself in a position to eat of this tree, for man will THEN find himself in the same position which Adam occupied before the fall (cf. Rev. 2:7).

Adam, following the fall, was driven from the garden to prevent his partaking of the tree of life.

Adam could not be permitted to eat of this tree in a fallen condition, for had such occurred, Adam, in a fallen

state, would have realized that which fruit from this tree was meant to provide.

Thus, *NOT ONLY* did God remove Adam from the garden, *BUT* “Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way,” were placed at “the east of the garden...*to keep the way of the tree of life* [to prevent fallen man from re-entering the garden and partaking of this tree]” (Gen. 3:22-24).

Studying Gen. 3:22-24 apart from the context and related Scripture could lead one to believe that the purpose for the tree of life in the beginning, in Genesis, was to provide perpetuity of life for Adam in his unfallen state.

However, such *could NOT have been* the case at all. “Death” *did not* enter into the picture until *after* Adam’s sin (Gen. 2:15-17; 3:6ff; cf. Rom. 6:23), at which time he was barred from the tree of life.

Adam had lived *in an undying state* prior to his sin, as he continued to live *in an antithetical dying state* following his sin; and to say that the tree of life was given to Adam in his unfallen state to provide perpetuity of life, preventing death, *CANNOT possibly be correct*.

NOR could it possibly be correct to say that the tree of life would have had anything to do with providing physical life (keeping Adam alive physically) following the fall.

A tree can produce *ONLY* “after its kind” (Gen. 1:11, 12).

In this respect, *fruit* from the tree of life simply *could NOT have produced ONE result before man’s fall and ANOTHER following man’s fall.*

In Rev. 2:7, partaking of the tree of life has been promised to the overcomers from among *those already possessing unending life.*

Consequently, in this passage, the tree of life *can have NOTHING* whatsoever to do with perpetuity of life; and it is the same in the Genesis account when man was first brought on the scene to rule and reign.

The tree of life in both Genesis chapters two and three and Revelation chapter two appears in a different setting entirely.

The tree of life reserved for Christians in Rev. 2:7 is associated peculiarly *with a provision for those who will rule and reign as co-heirs with Christ.*

And viewing Adam's position in the Genesis account — *created to rule and reign*, in possession of an unending life, with the fruit of the tree of life at his disposal — the same thought concerning *regality in connection with the tree of life* would have to hold true.

Thus, Adam in a fallen state, *NO longer in a position to rule and reign*, could NOT be allowed to eat of the tree of life, for fruit from this tree would provide "life" in relation to REGALITY, evidently providing the necessary wisdom and knowledge (cf. Prov. 3:13-20).

This whole overall thought concerning the tree of life in Scripture *would have to hold true*, for that seen relative to this tree in Revelation chapter two is drawn from that which was first seen relative to this tree in Genesis chapters two and three.

The fruit of the tree of life *WAS in the past* (seen in the Book of Genesis) and *WILL BE in the future* (seen in the Book of Revelation) a *PROVISION for the RULERS in the KINGDOM.*

This is a FACT which MUST be recognized.

And, in that coming day, in Rev. 22:1-5, fruit from the tree of life *WILL BE* for "the healing of the nations" (v. 2).

The Greek word translated "healing" is *therapeia*, from which the English word "therapy" is derived. This is a medical term which has to do with *RESTORATIVE healing.*

In that day, God will *RESTORE ALL of saved mankind to the original place which man occupied at the time of his creation.* And, consequently, *the whole of saved mankind, with REGALITY in view, will have access to the tree of life.*

During the preceding Messianic Era, the tree of life will have been made available to overcoming Christians (Rev. 2:7), those ruling and reigning as co-heirs with Christ.

And this tree will probably be made available to certain others at this time as well, others occupying regal positions with Christ in His reign from the heavens over the earth (e.g., certain O.T. saints, believing Jews during the gospel and Acts periods, Tribulation martyrs [Matt. 8:11, 12; Rev. 20:4-6]).

But following the Messianic Era, in the unending cycle of ages, this tree is seen being made available *to the nations of the earth*, something which would have been completely out of place during the Millennium.

And this will be an evident end result of Christ's rule with a rod of iron during the Millennium, along with Israel's evangelistic endeavors during this time.

Man was created in the beginning *to rule and reign*. And though only a part of saved mankind will have been brought back into a position to occupy the throne at the beginning of the Millennium (with the tree of life made available to them at this time), at the end of the Millennium the whole of saved mankind will be brought back into this position (with the tree of life made available to them at this time as well).

2a) *In That Day*

Scripture makes a sharp distinction between the reign of Christ and His co-heirs during the Millennium and their continuing reign during the unending ages which follow.

The former lies within the scope of and rests upon the foundation beginning both Testaments—the first thirty-four verses of Genesis and the first sixty-two verses of John.

And this foundation has to do with two things. *It has to do with 7,000 years of TIME and the PRESENT heavens and earth.*

To teach that rewards and or loss extends beyond the Millennium into the unending cycle of ages which follow *is to build APART from Scripture's provided foundation at a "TIME" beyond the "TIME" associated with the foundation.*

In short, it is to commit mayhem concerning any correct teaching pertaining to the “*TIME*” when rewards and/or loss will be realized.

Though dealt with apart from any continuing rewards and/or loss from Christ’s millennial reign, the activity of Christ and Christians in this continuing reign is not revealed in so many words, but Scripture does present enough information that a number of observations can be made.

3a) *Extent of Christ’s Rule*

The rule of Christ itself in the new heavens and new earth will no longer be limited to the immediate heavens and earth. Rather, it will extend *out into the universe*.

Christ will be seated upon a throne from which there will be an administration of power and authority *throughout the universe* — “the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Rev. 22:1, 3).

And the Christians’ continuing rule “with Christ” (Rev. 22:5), or others having access to fruit from the tree of life, would have to be of a like nature, for the power *will NO longer* emanate from *Christ’s throne* (“*My throne*” [Rev. 3:21]), *BUT from “the throne of God and of the Lamb.”*

In this respect, the rule by Christ and His co-heirs *over the earth* during the Millennium *can ONLY* be extended to a rule *over worlds throughout the universe* following the Millennium, with others occupying this position as well.

4a) *Millennial and Eternal Blessings*

The wiping away of all tears at the conclusion of the Millennium and the fact that the overcomer’s promises are millennial *ONLY* in nature *would clearly indicate that distinctions which existed during the millennial age between overcoming and non-overcoming Christians will NOT exist during the unending cycle of ages beyond the Millennium.*

Aside from the statement, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5) and the tree of life providing "healing of the nations" (Rev. 22:2), Scripture does not deal with the matter.

And the position(s) which man (all of saved mankind) will occupy in this universal rule *is unrevealed*, though, as previously seen, it appears evident that man's rule in that day *will be of a universal nature* since power will emanate from "the throne of God and of the Lamb."

The OUTWORKING of ALL of THIS is something yet to be revealed.

Concluding Remarks

Man was created in the beginning for *REGAL purposes*, as seen in Gen. 1:26-28. And man was to exercise this regality *in a NATURAL body, a body of flesh, blood, and bones.*

And, in keeping with the way that it all began, during the Messianic Era, both Israel and the Gentile nations will populate the earth *in NATURAL bodies.*

In other words, both Israel and the nations will be present on earth during the Millennium *in NATURAL bodies, one (Israel) ruling over the other (the nations).*

Now, *HOW* will all of this be seen during ages beyond the Millennium, during ages having to do with the new heavens and new earth?

We have specific information pertaining to the matter concerning Israel. And the nation's place in the matter, in line with the statement pertaining to the nations in Rev. 22:2, should be understood accordingly.

We know from Luke 1:33 that the Jewish people will dwell on *NOT ONLY* the millennial earth *BUT* the new earth in natural bodies of flesh, blood, and bones.

And the nations, seen the same way during the Millennium, *could ONLY* be seen after the same fashion during the ages following, on the new earth.

And there would be a *quite LOGICAL reason* for Israel and the nations continuing to exist *in NATURAL bodies* throughout these unending ages.

But first, note Luke 1:33, establishing the matter:

“And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.”

(The word “forever” is a translation of the plural form of *aion*, preceded by a preposition and definite article [*eis tous aionas*] and should literally be translated, “with respect to [or, ‘unto’] the ages.”)

Christ, *NOT ONLY* during the millennial age *BUT* throughout the unending ages to follow will reign over “*the house of JACOB,*” *NOT “the house of ISRAEL”* (cf. II Sam. 7:4-17).

(In a “spiritual” respect in that day, Christ *WILL* reign over “the house of Israel,” *but THAT’S NOT HOW the matter is seen in Luke 1:33. As seen in THIS verse, He will, as well, reign over “the house of Jacob,” the natural man.*

By way of analogy, note the Jewish nation in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob today. They are referred to as “the nation of Israel.” *BUT*, in reality, in their present unbelieving state, they are “the nation of Jacob.”

The nation awaits that day when they will, in truth, be “the nation of Israel.” Though, still, in another respect, they will remain “the house of Jacob.”)

BUT, WHY would there be a continued existence of Israel and the nations in natural bodies throughout the unending ages associated with the new heavens and new earth?

And the answer to that is quite simple. It will be for the SAME reason that man was originally created in a natural body.

Man was created *for REGAL purposes* which involved the present heavens and earth (Gen. 1:26-28; 9:1, 2; 22:17, 18).

And man was created in a natural body, male and female, capable of procreation (Gen. 1:27, 28), *NECESSARY to fulfill the reason for his creation.*

Note the Adamic Mandate given at the very beginning, at the time of man's creation, regarding the matter:

*"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish ['fill'] the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion [Heb., *radah*, 'rule'] over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:28).*

The heavens and the earth had been restored (Gen. 1:2b-19), *and man (the man and woman together) had been created to RULE the restored domain.*

BUT, they could NOT immediately rule!

They, in complete keeping with one facet of the typology in I, II Samuel, had to PROCREATE and BEGIN filling the earth.

Then their offspring had to PROCREATE and CONTINUE filling the earth; then their offspring had to PROCREATE and CONTINUE filling the earth; and...

And THIS was to continue UNTIL the earth had been filled with like-minded individuals relative to the reason for man's creation in the beginning.

THEN, they were to SUBDUE the existing powers (Satan and his angels) and RULE the earth from both heavenly and earthly spheres.

ALL of THIS is seen in God's command to Adam and Eve in Gen. 1:28.

(For additional information on the preceding, refer to the author's article, "The Adamic Mandate.")

This REGAL PURPOSE for man's creation remained the SAME following the fall and ruin once again of the previously restored domain over which man was to rule. And this REGAL PURPOSE remained/remains the SAME throughout Man's 6,000-year day.

And the PURPOSE for man's creation, existence, will NEVER change.

During the unending cycle of ages, referencing *unending "TIME"* in the new heavens and new earth, Christ's "servants" (evidently including the saved nations from Christ's millennial reign) will "serve" Him, reigning "forever and ever" [*eis tous aionas ton aionon*] (Rev. 22:3-5).

The question would be, "Reign over WHAT?"

And the answer would be quite evident!

They will reign from a throne (the power coming from this throne) which, unlike Christ's throne during the Millennium (having to do with a rule from the heavens over the earth), *will be a throne having to do with UNIVERSAL power and authority — "the throne of God, and of the Lamb."*

Man will evidently rule, *NOT just on the new earth BUT out in the heavens beyond the new earth and its associated heavens.*

And, with God's throne on the new earth, in the new Jerusalem resting on the new earth, the new earth will occupy *its place in the HEAVENS, with God and His Son ruling FROM this place in the HEAVENS OVER the ENTIRE UNIVERSE.*

And, again, it appears evident that man will have a part in this rule,

And that's where Israel and the nations, in natural bodies, capable of procreation, would enter into the matter.

The size of the physical universe and man one day having a part in the government of this universe *could ONLY stagger one's imagination and move FAR, FAR beyond anything that he has ever known or ever will know on this present earth.*

The universe is immense; its size is beyond descriptive words.

(There are an estimated two hundred to five hundred billion stars/suns in our own galaxy. And astronomers, with the powerful telescopes available today, have been able to see revolving planets around many of these stars/suns, forming solar systems similar to our own.

This is all part of God's universe — a very minute part, as a grain of sand on a seashore — which God governs from His place in the heavens.

This governmental rule occurs through angels acting under established laws, *with their actions seen as the Lord's actions*.

And Job 1:6-2:7, along with the structured government of Satan's kingdom [e.g., Dan. 10:12, 13, 20; Eph. 6:12], provide the extent of Revelation that we have concerning the structure of this government.

It appears that Lucifer/Satan was assigned just one planet, within one solar system; and possibly a limited rule of this nature would be true of all other ruling angels.

BUT, we're NOT told!

NOR are we told what part man will one day occupy in all of this!

What we do know is that angels, under God, presently rule the different parts of the universe. And, as well, we know that man is destined to one day have an unrevealed part in this government.)

As well, there is the possibility that God has been expanding and continues to expand His universe, creating new galaxies, more angels, and appointing new rulers.

We're not told, one way or the other!

But, with man one day having a part in the government of a possibly expanding universe, procreation among those comprising Israel and the nations could continue throughout the endless ages *and NEVER exceed the need for rulers in the universe*.

Again, there are a lot of knowns and unknowns about ALL of this.

BUT, there is a Divine REASON for the WAY that it all began in Gen. 1:1 and developed from that time throughout the different ages and dispensations in the present heavens and earth, culminating in an unending array of ages in “the new heavens and new earth.”

And, if truth be known, plans and purposes regarding the whole of the matter could ONLY have existed BEFORE the creation of “the heavens and the earth” in Gen. 1:1, even BEFORE the creation of the physical universe or any part of this universe.

That existing from time immemorial is ONLY a millennium and some unknown number of years away. And MAN, a latecomer in the universe, finds himself having a part in the whole of the matter.

Exercising REGALITY over the earth, “so great salvation,” with God’s Son during the Millennium...

THEN, realizing REGAL promises and blessing of a universal nature during the unending ages beyond...

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet...

O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!” (Ps. 8:3-6, 9).