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The Big Picture: The Present Age and the Ages to Come



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #66 ~

There’s no doubt that God wants us to see the big picture, to know His overall purpose when it comes to the future of the world, to the end-times and the rapture, and to the next age, and the age after that. In the past three years, God has been opening up my eyes to many passages that give us this perspective, this mountaintop view of what God has in store for the Jews, the church, and for our own personal lives. It’s imperative that we see what God is now doing in the world, and realize that we are an important part of His perfect plans. The passage that best gives this big picture perspective is 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, for in these few verses God speaks about this age, and the

two ages to come.

It was about 2000 years ago, during this present age, that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, becoming the first person to ever receive a new, glorified body. But when will believers be made alive, when will our salvation be complete, when will we be glorified? Verses 22-23 tell us, *"As in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in His own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming."* This clearly says it's at Christ's 2nd coming, at the time of the rapture, that all believers from all time, will be resurrected. And the fact that the Jews are back in their land means we now live in the end-times, in the very last part of this age, and so it won't be long before Christ's return, and our salvation will be complete and we will be glorified.

Then what? Verses 24-28 tell us about the next two ages. First, there's the kingdom age, when Christ will be King and reign for 1000 years (Revelation 20:6). This will be a most magnificent age, for Christ will be ruling with a rod of iron, abolishing all other rule and authority. *"The Lord Most High is to be feared, a great King over all the earth… that Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations"* (Psalm 47:2, 67:2). During this good age, all those glorified at Christ's coming, along with a great multitude of Jewish believers, will be reigning with Him. Christ will perfectly rule over an imperfect and repopulated world. All people on earth will submit to Him, or else there will be just and immediate consequences. *"Every knee will bow… and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* Philippians 2:10-11

As you know, we now live in an evil age, on an earth controlled by the devil, in a world filled with wickedness and corruption. That's why I truly long for the next age, this extra-long period of time when Christ is powerfully leading and wonderfully blessing, when many are getting saved, when there's quick and perfect justice, and when there's finally world peace. But there will still be death. Verses 25-26 say, *"He* (Christ)

must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death." Revelation 20:7-10 describes the last battle against Satan and sinners on earth, one that takes place at the very end of this 1000-year kingdom age. *"Fire came down from heaven and devoured them."* Finally, both the devil and death will be totally and forever defeated. *"The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire… death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire"* (Revelation 20:13-14). Can you imagine being with all the other angels and saints, as we are joyfully shouting and celebrating the resounding and glorious victory of Jesus Christ over death and the devil? Hallelujah!!!

"Then comes the end" of this 1000 years, *"when He* (Christ) *hands over the kingdom to God the Father."* The transition, from this kingdom age to the next age, is beautifully described in 1 Corinthians 15:24, 27-28. Picture this divine and loving scene between the Father and Son, *"when all things are subjected to Christ, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all."*

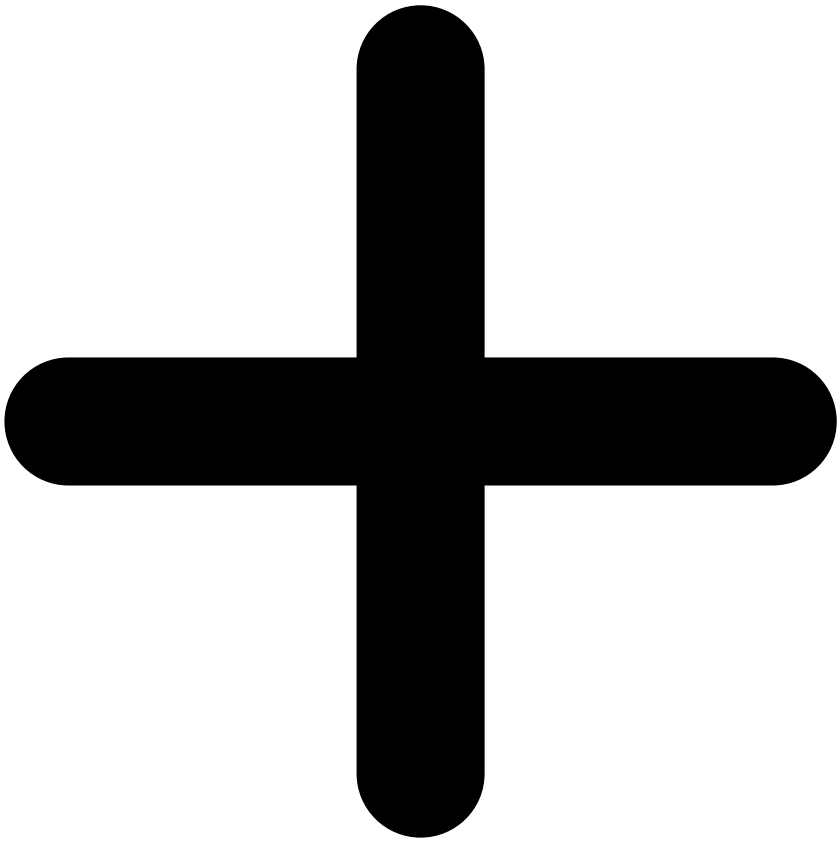
That brings us to the next age, the final era, the eternal kingdom age. Revelation 21:1 says, *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth."* Our relationship with God in our new home is described in verse 3, *"Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people and God Himself will be among them."* In verse 5, God joyfully tells us, *"Behold, I am making all things new."* My soul is humbled and touched as I think of the great love God has for us, that we will be with Him and one another, forever and ever. *"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him."* 1 Corinthians 2:9

I am so thankful God has chosen me to live for Him during the last years of this age. I am greatly motivated by the fact that now is my time to serve my Savior. *"We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in*

them." There's only a few years left, and our life on earth will be over and we will wonderfully and quickly leave this earth. Remember our hope, that God *"raised us up with Christ, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus"* (Ephesians 2:5-10). Do you see it? There's this age, and two more ages to come, the millennial kingdom and then the eternal kingdom.

P.S. – Here is a message that I gave this past Sunday to our church, which I know many found very helpful: Encouraging the Discouraged.

P.P.S. As you know, there are many charts on this blog site, and these are specifically designed to help you see the big picture. One article in particular, Charting the Future with Prophecy Charts, has been written to help you see the importance of these charts, and how they will help you more clearly see the big picture perspective God wants you to have.



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