


TIME SERIES NO.9



A WESTGATE MONOGRAPH

NO.9 ZION or HEAVEN

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INTRODUCTION

This monograph is No.9 in the present series. It links the new *experience of heaven to the new body* we shall receive when we get there. I believe God gives new for old.

The earthly reconstructionists have had a field day tinkering with the concept and theology of this ageing planet much like Jehovah Witnesses do. Both insist this world is our permanent homestead repaired and tweaked for eternity whereas as we read in scripture it must pass away and be destroyed by fire and an utterly new one replace it. That world relates to the unseen dimension and is eternally linked with the New Jerusalem.

As the old decaying seed differs from the new corn and yet has lineal linkage with it in our case through the guarantee of the Holy Spirit by whose operation this life is prepared for the change when Jesus comes so far as affects believers at that time. If “This house of our earthly tent dissolves we

have a building of God not made with hands”. When Paul speaks thus he is not referring to a little house in heaven but our new eternal bodies. The Reformers like Lazarus’ sister are content to wait for completion (and remember that immortality and incorruptibility go hand in hand with completion) until the last day. Believers in the Rapture naturally differ for their wait ends with the rapture 1000 years before the last (earth)day judgment of which both Mary and the Reformers speak. It seems a pity to part company with such august company but we shall meet again somewhere don’t know when one glad day.” to misquote Gracey Fields and why miss the Bridal Feast? The key is “I know whom I have believed”.

Scribbler Bob Westgate August 2013

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LET’S TALK ABOUT HEAVEN

This monograph contests the theory developed over a half century ago by Jehovah Witness teaching that *this earth is the eternal paradise of God*. The concept incredibly circulates today as the profound belief of many who call themselves evangelical believers. No, no! that’s not taught in the bible. This world will pass away. It will be destroyed by fire. There is a better world that’s coming by and by. There is singing up in heaven such as we have never heard. Heaven is a beautiful place filled with glory and grace. So fix your eyes on Jesus and look for a city that has foundations whose builder and maker is God. Sing these good old words to yourself when you long for a sight of the king in a land that is fairer than day.

“This earth is not my home I’m just a passing through,
My treasures are laid up way beyond the blue.
The Angels beckon me from heaven’s open door
And I don’t feel at home in this world any more.
O Lord you know I have no friend like you

If heaven's not my home then Lord what will I do
The angels beckon me from heaven's open door
And I can't feel at home in this world any more.

1. OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN!

Is there any fundamental evidence that God the Father will set up His throne on earth and evacuate the "heaven of heavens" where HE presumably has dwelt eternally?

Does the "Kingdom of Christ" in any future shape require the abdication of the Father in favour of the Son's earthly kingdom or is development in the opposite direction theologically & eschatologically biblical orthodoxy?

2. SPACE AND TIME

Is the world utterly and only the space-time continuum that can be measured by the dimensions we are familiar with? Is your mind open to the 90+% of the universe about which we have no readable data and concerning which scientists can now tell us that it may have as many as 10 dimensions? Will there be time and sequence in heaven? Will there be space for you (and me) there?

3. THE END WILL COME!

Paul wrote to the Corinthians and said, "Each *in his own turn*: Christ, the first fruits; then, those in his PAROUSIA (**1Cor.15.23**). Then the end (*τελος*) will come, when *He hands over the kingdom to God the Father* after He has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For He must reign until he has put all His enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death for "He has put everything under His feet. Now when it says 'Everything' has been put under Him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When He has done this then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all." (**1 Corinthians 15.24ff**)

4. SUNBURN!

"Neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat!" NEVER AGAIN says scripture will these saints who appear to have come up to heaven during distressful times on earth - NEVER AGAIN will they hunger or thirst - nor the sun beat on them or any scorching heat. I hear the sweet scripture words of welcome homecoming - "They serve Him day and night in His temple". Saints reigning with Christ will exercise this ministry from the New Jerusalem. While the earth continues beneath these glorified ones are so glad to have reached "the further shore". They "came out of great tribulation" reside within the "Gates of the New Jerusalem" - the City of God.

We cannot interpret this by saying they will be back on earth to sunbathe - because scripture categorically says "they will not". We cannot say their mission is to descend to this earth to live there for ever. We cannot say they will co-mingle in their trillions with earth's procreating peoples. We cannot say they are going to be touched by the sun - for a new type of light shines upon them and the city of God has neither sun or moon (**Revelation 21 23-24**) It would appear by simple mathematics that when after the millennium ALL NATIONS walk in that new light NO NATIONS walk in the sunlight!

5. WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SUN?

On this topic do check out **Isaiah 60.19-20 Psalm 72.17 and Psalm 89.36** for yourself.

6. WHERE DO WE GO WHEN WE DIE?

Jesus said the thief would enter Paradise with Him. Some speak of a not prolonged stay in "Purgatory" and others say "I have friends in both places!"(meaning Heaven and Hell). Is heaven still on the cards as a destination after death? To which place should Christian ministers point the minds and souls of men and women grappling with eternal issues? Years ago the Jehovah witnesses held out to those who read Watchtower literature the hope of a "Paradise earth"-this very metal ball in its "new spring". But our friends who have passed to their reward are not surely going to thread their way around these streets and hedgerows once more? Are they going to say "We've been here before?" Where are they now? They are with Christ! Indeed! And where is He? Interceding at the throne! And where is the throne? It is not good enough to escape this question by supplying a second throne. There is only One God and one throne. Where then is the throne? Scripture says "Heaven is thy throne!" God's throne is firm and is a heavenly throne. **In 2 Corinthians 12.2** the apostle Paul speaks of being caught up to the "Third heaven" and hearing words. Where did those words come from? They came from the throne of God. So the physical heavens we know about, the heavens that space research has spent a small fortune to investigate, hold no information on this dimension of reality. That heaven is not subject to nuclear dissolution-this one is set to swallow its dwarfing stars and planets. So we are not about to cede to "new thought" that this higher realm is in any hurry to abdicate in favour of our solar system.

7. THE FATHER'S HOUSE

That glorious place is extensive enough to house *all the ransomed church of God*. It has "**many rooms**"(**John 14.2**).

The place which Christ is gone to prepare in the Father's house has been settled upon us long ago. The apostles certainly had rooms in readiness some 2000

years ago. The "final touches" of Christ are such as we would expect any host to make prior to the arrival of along awaited guest.

RESURRECTION SEMINAR

WHAT WILL BE BE LIKE AFTER WE DIE?

1. Did Job say "In my flesh shall I see God" or "Without my flesh shall I see God"? Job 19.26

The Hebrew reads *hwl a hzha yrvmw* The NIV has "In my flesh"(text) and "Apart from my flesh (footnote) If you look at the Hebrew you will see the huge "M" which can signify "separation". Understandably with much affliction Job could well desire to be without his body but after recovery he could aspire to see the LORD - in what seems a long "before its time" authentic faith view of resurrection. In the sense that the unchanged body formed after Adam's image cannot look upon God we are compelled to think Job must either mean "without my body"" and in a spiritual condition or was he speaking though unawares *through the Holy Spirit* about the "changed body united in form and flesh" to Christ's which he would one day possess? Isaiah and Peter consent to this that "all flesh is as grass - man's glory withers and his flower falls off but the active effect of the word of God - namely "**new life**" and "**resurrection**" preached in the gospel endures into eternity.

2. MARY'S LAST DAY IDEA REVOLUTIONISED

Mary said "I know my brother shall be raised again in the circle of the resurrection-in the circle of the last(earth) day"
αναστησεται (εν) τη αναστασει (εν) τη εσχατη ημερα Here are two (bracketed) circles in the text - the circle of resurrection and the circle of the last day. But the question is "Are they concentric?" Let us follow what Jesus said in reply!

(a) I am the resurrection and the Zoe(springtime) life. **John 11.25**. After death's winter Christ is the hope of perennial spring.

(b) The one who believes into me (as the Resurrection & Life) and also may die - will live a Spring like life. The LORD is saying that Spring time has entered and eternal life along with faith.

(c) And everyone who lives thus renewed and believes into me shall not die at the end of his span or eternally.

The LORD asks Mary if she believes this. She replies "I have always believed it" She believed in "eternal life" and she believed in Resurrection - but the nicety of "after death resurrection" vis-a-vis a resurrection state beginning at "the (earth's)last day" is not clarified for her till Lazarus steps out of the grave. Jesus taught that "*The Father constantly raises the dead*" so even OT saints

continue new life in Abraham's bosom. Jesus who shares the QNUMA unity of Godhead has the QUM(resurrection) powers that inhere within God's fundamental existence. The "firstfruits" era brought Sheol life to a close for saints and opened Paradise to all.

3. WHAT IS THE FATHER'S WILL?

(1) **Will anything be lost ἀπολεσῶ ἐκ αὐτοῦ from him whom the Father gives to the Son?**

Christ will raise him up in the circle of the last day. The idea of "loss" is indeed tmesis or "cutting off" but the regular use as in Homer and Xenophon is of "slipping away in death" (in such sense it is used four times by Homer and four by Xenophon). So we cannot slip from Christ or He from us in battle or in death or by ruin or whatever. The truth taught here is echoed in **Romans 8**.

(2) **THE BODIES OF THE WICKED RISE FOR A DAY.**

The Father's will as Jesus taught it was that through His mission the one who ""sees the action" of Jesus life and death or ""consulting" Christ as the oracle or Word should believe into him and should have hold of eternal spring-like life. Such have the LORD'S undertaking that they shall be raised at the (earth's)last day. Gods will is that we experience the eternal life without pause or intermission and this in face of the intrusion of death.

Jesus speaks twice in this context of the **last day** and once later in **John 11**. *This day concludes the History of salvation and equally the history of this earth!*

What Christ is saying includes indeed all who "seek the Lord" till that very moment will be raised: all the prediluvians like Enoch; all the "righteous" of the OT era; all the "saved" of the church age together with all who "seek and remain faithful" to the LORD in the millennium will also be raised at the last day of this earth's lifespan. This *entire circle* of resurrected ones will be complete - this is *the last day-* but there is a still more solemn aspect concerning those whose names aren't in the Lamb's book of life! The power of resurrection stretches back to the first day man looked to the coming Messiah till **the last day** when God will call. The Father who first spoke those lovely words "Adam where art thou?" in the Garden of Eden is spoken of *in the prophets* as "teaching men" of salvation (**Isaiah 54.13**) - and **continues to draw men** in the NT era as the Great Fisherman. This *second resurrection* referred to in **Revelation 20.5 & 12** brings all human beings who are identified only by their Adam nature as "corpses" or "the dead" without union to Christ in judgment - those raised from death in the tomb or grave and Hades and the sea *in the old Adam form(after the temporary similitude of Lazarus resurrection)* who were never united to Christ and they are judged in

accordance with the damning record of their deeds and suffer under "the second death". These "spiritually dead" were not written in the book of life. The brevity of judgment to damnation derives from "not being written" and "having no Spirit designed works of faith".

The Westminster Fathers scramble for a text!

None but the Father's sons who share union and fellowship with His Son firstborn from the dead shall receive spring-like life in Glory. Again in **John 6.65** it is clearly written "No-one can come to me unless it is given to him by the Father. The gift is given to those who love the Son and God's universal command is "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God". The "Abba Father" relationship of the righteous is begun in answer to love through repentance and faith. **Romans 8.15 & Galatians 4.6.**

We must conclude that the Father's will straddles the entire history of the present earth and His will is that none should perish but that all should come to repentance and exercise saving faith. **2Peter 3.9** The alternative is to refuse to love the truth - **2Thessalonians 2.10**. To persist in such rejection of God's love is wickedness. In this the grandeur of **John 3.16** is fully displayed. By His act of redemption and substitution for the repentant God is justified and the attendant records of *the books and the book of life* show His sovereign will, His great mercy & patience and reveal the will & works of sinful men.

The 1647 Catechism of the Protestant Orthodox Fathers met in the *Westminster Assembly of Divines* in questions 4-39 tell us what we are to believe in 11 separate connections - the last of which concerns *the benefits of salvation after this life*. The brief dogmatic statement runs "**The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory and their bodies being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection**" The proof text for the soul's state are **Rev.21.27 and Luke 23 14**. These are perfectly fine. *The proof text for the incomplete bodily state of the glorified saints is 1Thessalonians 4.14 "Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him". This text with the greatest respect does not prove that the graves are the holding depositary nor does it go any distance to explain how these saints can be given their body from heaven which is eternal in which we then come perfected from heaven(if the "rest in the grave" theory holds) to be made more perfect by contact with the "bare grain" of earth dust, indeed Paul said it is foolish to think that is raised!(1Corinthians 15.36)*. The artistic picture of bodies with souls materialising from the graves as portrayed by artists may stir imagination but when set alongside **Matthew 27.52, Mark 16.5, Luke 24.4, 1Cor.15.37, 2Cor.5.4, Hebrews 11.40 and Psalm 139.15** it is plainly mere imagination. In fact the Greek text in 1Corinthians 15.52 reads "The dead in the circle of Christ *"shall have been raised"* long previously. So the texts of the Orthodox fathers fail to demonstrate their theory.

(3) HOW IS CHRIST SAVIOUR OF THE BODY? Ephesians 5.23

By putting His Spirit within He gives earnest or guarantee of our resurrection. By Union with Christ comes our resurrection itself after the image of Christ - we shall be like him! **Romans 6.5**

(4) WILL OUR LOWLY BODIES PERSIST AS OF NOW? Philippians 3.12

We shall have our bodies(cf Job19 26-27) featuring both “withs” and “withouts” as this text concedes. The Hebrew reads “With my flesh” and “without my flesh” just as easily insisting that Job shall have flesh of his own but it shall not be the corruptible flesh. There will be a happy deficit of weakness and sinful appetites. There will be a reconfiguration of the digestive system. The flesh clothing will be of an incorruptible sort and suited for the eternal state for as our Lord said ***flesh and blood unchanged cannot inherit*** the kingdom of God. Hence at the rapture living saints are “changed”. This body will not do, will not last, will not go there any more than the vaunted old ford car. We must be like Christ who was first seed and form from heaven. There are factors in God’s provision demonstrated on the Mount of Transfiguration by the appearance of Moses & Elijah that attest the preservation or substitution of this body in quite glorious eternal form and shape hereafter.

(5) WILL WE HAVE A BONE STRUCTURE? Ephesians 5.30-32

Christ said "A (pure) Spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see me have! **Lk24.39** We will have both after the sort of Christ. Scripture says "we are members of His (Christ's) body and of His bones". There is a "cementing" or "damasking" in marriage which entails the leaving of FATHER. There is in becoming a member of the "called out" believing people of God a mystery by which we "unite" to Christ. Union with Christ is no mere theory - it entails participation with Christ so far that "our bodies are under His Lordship" as we are raised to newness of life in Him and our Resurrection bodies are united to him not Adam - whilst the parental DNA (SPERMA) that governs family connection is no mystery to Him for He made DNA even as our days are in His book **Psalm 139 13-16**. Like Christ we will have bones **Luke 24.39**. We will remain human in the perfect sense of possessing a Spirit with which to worship the LORD a soul with which to think and decide and feel and a body suited to our "eternal state" adapted to life in the third heaven or paradise, to the new heaven and earth and the city of God and if God should so will to the millennial earth in the same way as the young men at the tomb turned up in strategic situations within the resurrection scenes after the resurrection of Jesus.

(6) WON'T OUR BODIES BE THE SAME? Philippians 1.21 1Corinthians 15 51-52

He, Christ, shall change our lowly bodies. These bodies are compared to a "carpet". They are bodies which are very comfortable on the one hand but they are lowly and they will presently end up under foot. Things of this sort like unsavoury salt were considered useless - the AV. has "vile". **Philippians 1.21.** Paul proclaims a "spiritual" body. Jesus likened it to an "angelic body"(1Cor.15.54, Matthew 22.30 with Mark12.25).

Paul makes no exceptions - we must all expect change - it will come in an indivisible iota of time - it will come as the eye quivers in death - it will come when the church is raptured.**1 Thess.4.17.** We will not **all have died** - for some will be changed when Jesus comes but we will all **"be changed"** **ALASSO.** We must give this body for another as we give this world for the next. The word is associated with "going to a new place" and "taking a new position". Euripides speaks of "changing rooms" and Plato speaks of "changing cities" under this concept. It is a word built on the root idea "other" or "different".

(7) WHAT ABOUT MOSES & ELIJAH? Deut 34 5-8

Moses died by the kiss or mouth of the LORD. *yy yp l [bawm xra yy db[hvm mv tny* He died in Moab. We take it that he died in the arms of God. This was one of the most remarkable deaths ever died. As to Moses burial place in the Beth Peor ravine it was never found despite widespread searches into the time of Phineas and Joshua there was no trace of Moses' body or burial. Scripture says "God buried him" It does not say angels buried him. The last reverent acts in respect of Moses were wrought by his LORD. However we are told that Michael the arch angel disputed with Satan over the body of Moses (**Jude 9**) This dispute is understood by Clement, Origen and Didymus from their knowledge of a document called the "Assumption of Moses" to have arisen because Satan contested the right of burial by reason of Moses committing murder (**Exodus 2.12**) and he supposed that as ever he had authority to accuse. The phrase "The Lord rebuke you" is prophetic of the determination and authority Jesus demonstrated both in His ministry and resurrection over death and the tomb. This authority relates to the innate authority of the Son of Man and is to be noted in its non-appropriation when Satan tempts our Lord in respect of the "stones" of Mount Qarantel and seeks unsuccessfully to subsume His directive power over angels at the pinnacle of the temple and His unrivalled sovereignty over the earth in its great future critical days. The same **Presence of the LORD** that changed Moses from one degree of glory to another is changing us through the LORD the Spirit into exactly the same Christ likeness. We who are now changed by mirrored glory will be the more

substantially changed when time comes for our permanent entry into the presence of our LORD **2Corinthians 3 17-18**.

NOBODY EVER CAME BACK TO TELL US

- (1) **CHRIST AROSE , ASCENDED & RETURNED**
- (2) **PLUS YOUNG MAN(OR MEN) AT THE TOMB**
- (3) **MANY AROSE AFTER HIS RESURRECTION**
- (4) **ELIJAH HAS BEEN BACK** Mal. 4.5 & Matthew 11.14 **Elijah has already stood on the mount of transfiguration with Jesus and the 3 apostles. Like the young man at the tomb he was used as witness to the resurrection.** As for Elijah's departure from Elisha his glorious chariot took him aloft in every increasing circles - he was raptured or caught away. His understanding of what would happen was not perfect - for he was unsure if he would be seen during the ascent. Like Enoch he was taken as he lived.
- (5) **TWO WITNESSES THAT STAND BEFORE GOD WILL COME IN THE LAST DAYS** We are told in scripture that "in Adam all die" **1Corinthians 15.22** but it is not urged that "all have died". There can be little doubt that Enoch (The prediluvian prophet) and Elijah (the prophet of the early Theocracy) have not yet died.

TRIBULATION MINISTRY -THEN THE KINGDOM WE PRAY
FOR WILL COME ON EARTH

ELIJAH TO PREVENT DESTRUCTION

The last verses of the Old Testament read "I will send you Elijah the prophet before **the Great and Dreadful faces** of the coming day of the LORD. "He will turn the heart of the fathers to the sons and the heart of the sons to their fathers lest when **I myself** come I cause a curse HARAM - utter destruction - to smite the earth". The Apocalypse also tells of the ministry of "an angel of the sky" in those halcyon days.

(A) We can see with clarity that John the Baptist fulfilled the first office heralding Christ whose "Great day" was ostensibly related to bearing the curse. Jesus alluded to John being the immediate fulfilment in connection with the first face of the LORD'S coming but in face of His return in a dreadful day the hope of Israel is a mighty re-awakening like that which Elijah formerly attempted through the school of the prophets and by miracle and sign.

(B) In **Revelation 11** we are told that in the troubled times after full three and a half years of proud international supremacy over Jerusalem and prior to the seventh trumpet of Revelation two witnesses will appear for three years and six months less 15 days. They are unnamed but in **Zechariah 4.14** they are

described as "**two shining ones**" who minister before the LORD of all the earth. These "prophets" **Revelation 11.10** who are described by an Angel to Zechariah as ministering in OT time before the LORD will be commissioned to return to earth and their ministry of containment of evil by **meteorological signs** prepares for the ushering in of the Messiah. They are killed by the Anti-Christ and their "corpses" will revive and be raptured prior to the long expected imminent coming of Messiah. This prompts one of the songs of the Apocalypse which declares under the symbol of the ark in heaven that Christ is there and coming soon for the golden era of the AION or OLAM or MILLENNIUM **Revelation 20 4&7** on earth.

BEHOLD I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW

WHAT'S NEW ABOUT HEAVEN?

Solomon said "There is nothing new *under the sun*" **Ecc.1.9**. By the way it was Solomon also who gave us the preacher's theology "Hell and Destruction". That biblical statement is about newness "under the sun" is consummate wisdom and will **not** be invalidated. Nevertheless in the heavenly dimension where He "works" indefatigably for us God has prepared a "New Heaven and New Earth" **Revelation 21.1-5**. At its epoch and following the passing away of the **former earth and heavens** as a dimension all that remains real with the exception of the lake of fire **Rev.21.8** is found there. The saints have been going there and will finally all "appear before God" there. Scripture says "I make all things new". This does not read "I am repairing all old things" Much play has been made on the Greek word *καίνα* quite unnecessarily trying to turn it into a term for changing what is or exists by reform, repair or renewal. That is not the effect of the word. Like **Ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη** (The New Testament) it is "new" but more important it is the "**common**" **home of God and man and angels** (excepting only the devil and the fallen and unredeemed) and that's what really is going to be new at its final unveiling. The Greek word shares with **νεος** the notion of *de novo* indeed it is the preferred word for "spanking new" because **νεος** means "fresh" or new as in "new moon" which is really the old moon in a new or fresh phase. **KAINOS** is the term employed for "newly invented" by Euripides and Plato. Xenophon speaks of Cyrus as introducing little that was really "new". Thucydides speaks of a "new war; Demosthenes of "new suffering" or "pain"; **ANTIPHO** the orator highlighted the "newest needs" rather than the newest frauds. In **BUTTMANN'S** *catalogue of irregular verbs* the word is finely analysed in its associations and those include the notions of "newly close to" (**ENENOTHOS**) and "new and clean from defilement" (**KATHAROS**). The term **KAINOS** is the obvious choice to describe a world that has never been before; a world without undertones and

over layers of curse, sin and corruption where saints **live close to the LORD** who loved them and gave Himself for them. **Galatians 2.20**

In the **Apocalypse 21.1** we read "The first heaven and the first earth" had "passed away" Now in Peter and mighty whistling of the heavens ROIZEDON is in earlier time-prior to the millennial coming of Christ(2Peter3.10). In the Hebrew writer we read of a final "SAILING"(Hebrews 12.26) of things that are changed as if they are mere products with no power to keep themselves in place PEPOIEMENON but mere boats running to shipwreck. The verb "POIEO" as opposed to "PRASSO" (which gives an object power to control itself) indicates their own weakness when not supported by the creator - who looses them and replaces them. Thus the apostle John concurs absolutely with his fishing partner in his eschatology.

A NOBLE AND RIGHT QUEST

It is written in Hebrews that Father Abraham sought a "city that has foundations" whose builder and maker is God. (**Hebrews1.10**). Abraham's vision was prompted by the shaky and obviously unreliable nature of earthly cities (cf Sodom & Gomorrah). Abraham was searching for that which endures for ever. Abraham's quest is answered by the eternal city described in the **Apocalypse 21.14** and **19-20**. This city had gates named after the seed of Abraham and foundations named after the seed of Christ's ministry - the apostles.

THE CITY OF THE HEBREW WRITER

In **Hebrews 12** the "church of the first-born" is the citizenry and the "heavenly Jerusalem" is the city metropolis of which they are denizens. In the same chapter the final shaking of the earth (including the earthly Jerusalem is predicted. This is not the Olivet cleavage predicted by Zechariah at the arrival of Christ immediately prior to the millennial reign of Christ. There is also a huge quake of tribulation proportions confirmed in at least three of the prophets – **Joel, Haggai, and Isaiah**. The "shaking" impacts and consolidates the earth for Christ's CHILION or L'OLAM reign but even this does not fulfil the terms of the Hebrew writer-there is a "final shift" of **all that is created** - even the heavens (**v26**) so that the bartering or transposition of the seen for the unseen may occur(12.28). This is brought about by God who is described as the "glorious" TECHNITES (systems technician) and DEMIOURGOS (peoples' craftsman and magistrate) of the new city-who has it ready even as the writer speaks.

THE CITY OF THE FUTURE

What more do we know of this city? In the **Apocalypse 21 1-2** it is seen "descending" though there is no statement about docking with this earth. In

Isaiah 65.17 & 66.22 it is described as a "new creation" which the LORD invites the prophet to behold Him building. The OT saints and later the church appear to be privileged to see the new world which the LORD is engaged in preparing taking shape as early as when HE spoke to Isaiah [*cf hv[present participle]*]. God promised that these "new heavens" would endure and minister as long as the name Israel and *the seed (singular referencing "Christ")* endures. The former earth will *not even be remembered*, compared or *come up on the heart as a desire* so beautiful and perfect will the "descending heavens" be. The special feature of these heavens is that the citizens will be watching as the city is developed in the heavenlies- "**Behold me making**" is what the prophet says. Man could not watch the original world take shape but those in heaven can see the New Heavens taking shape. In this glorious "Beulah"(Married" or "Bridal") city God took account of the martyrs of the Lamb in the very foundations. It may well have been reaching a full development as Christ spoke (Remember He said "In my Father's house are many mansions") for the foundations are named for the martyr apostles and the gates for the sons of Israel (Revelation 21.14). Isaiah also records *the earthly Jerusalem's rebuild (Isaiah 65 18-19)* and the joys of long life and children playing and the wildest beasts living cheek by jowl with innocent children-but here there is still **death(qua sin) (v20)** which defines it over against the New Jerusalem though it becomes the more immediate home for an age of those who remain on earth and is the subject of a large part of these two chapters.

PETER AND THE CITY OF THE HEAVENS

The apostle **Peter** tells us of the procession of History in the **third chapter** of his second **letter**. He begins with the day of creation (1)ARCHES KTISEOS (**v 4**) and goes on to the overlooked deluge of Noah's days (2)KATAKLUSTHEIS **v6** from which he proceeds to the day of the Patriarchs or fathers (3)PATERES **v4** and so to the era of David and the prophets (4)PROPHETON **v2** and to that of our Lord and His teaching apostles (5)APOSTOLON **v4** enveloping the church age after which he reaches the day of the Lord (6)HEREMA KURIOU **v10(the millennium)** and finally concludes earth's history in the last day of the (7)VISITATION of GOD in judgment. After all of this creation is renewed in DAY EIGHT-the start of a new week (8) HEMERA AIONOS **v.18**

THE DAY OF CHRIST:FAIR WARNING 2 PETER 3.10

If you will please do the spadework of comparison - which I began to do before either the NIV or the Greek UBS came out in 1966 - you will find a vital difference between **2 Peter 3.10 & 12**. It is the difference of a millennium. The former time -when Christ rules - is introduced and recognisable as a time when nuclear fission will be discovered and probably

used in a limited way in warfare. This entails the end of the 2nd war and the Ezekiel war of Ezekiel 38-39. The text says "the elements" STOICHEIA or atoms etc. will be loosed burn and be "**discovered**" EURETHESETAI (in MSS Sinaiticus Vaticanus and Koredethi) prior to this event.

IT IS TO BE TAKEN THAT THIS IS THE END OF OUR PLANET? 2PETER 3 12

Further investigation will reveal that in **the day of God** and the visitation of wrath the heavens will go afire and be loosed and the elements have passed into liquid or gas TEKETAΙ having burned up. Peter adds with great effect that we **MUST** expect and look for a "New heavens and a New earth" in exact corroboration with the word of the prophet **Isaiah 65.17 & 66.22**. These are the final "home of righteousness" to which settlers "move" KATOIKEO and settle and serve as ministers. Jesus affirmed "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my word shall never pass away"(**Mark 13.3, Luke 21.33**)

FISHERMEN APOSTLES AGREE LET THE CHURCH AGREE

In the **Apocalypse 21.1** we read "The first heaven and the first earth" had "passed away" Now in Peter and mighty whistling of the heavens ROIZEDON in earlier time - prior to the coming of Christ - and in the Hebrew writer we read of a final "SAILING" of things that are changed as if they are mere products with no power to keep themselves in place PEPOIEMENON but mere boats running to shipwreck - the verb "**POIEO**" as opposed to "**PRASSO**" (which gives an object power to control itself) indicates their own weakness when not supported by the creator - who looses them and replaces them. Thus the apostle John concurs absolutely with his fishing partner in his eschatology.

THE CITY AND TIME AHEAD

To conclude comments on this eternal city which is the centre of the eternal state it is essential to make the following observations:

(1) There are two descents of the city in **Revelation 21**. The first is at the outset of Christ's rule on earth and the other when the camp of the saints is encircled at the subjection of all things to the Father. (a) In **21.1-5** we are reading about the descent at the New Jerusalem **fully dressed** in the context of the departure of heaven, earth and sea at the inception of the "eternal state" when there will be **no more death**. (b) In **21.10** the descent and "docking" of the city from the presence of God in the skies during "the "Great high mountain" (millennial) kingdom of God on earth that succeeds all earthly rule is consolation after the "seven bowls" or plagues and the vision is shown to John for his comfort. Nations still walk in its light during the millennium but in that period it will have intercourse with saints and angels will man its gates

which can still be described and understood in terms of earthly directions(N-S-E-W). As in Revelation 22 the eternal city New Jerusalem continues beyond the life of the sun and moon into eternity LEALAM ALAMIN (Aramaic of 22.5). William Kelly who did extensive work running to 2000 pages on Isaiah, Hebrews, Daniel, Matthew and Revelation would qualify as the best informed Englishman ever to approach this subject and his "Lectures on the Second Coming" of the Lord Jesus Christ were published by *Morrish* and may still be obtainable in antiquarian stores or through Amazon.

(2) As Kelly observes on account of the "passing away" of the old heaven and earth the city would disappear from the scene of convulsion. Then with *the new earth dawning to view* the heavenly city comes down and takes its permanent place in the new heavens and settles as metropolis of the new earth.

(3) What is vital to the integrity of scripture is that the cataclysm at the end of the millennium is contrasted with the continued peace of the eternal city (which is both a massive and uniquely mobile city capable of transitioning) and from its heavenly throne the new heaven and earth is directed to location and begins to function as a new three dimensional (*qua* "spatial") world of superior grandeur and design. (cf **Hebrews 11.10**)

(4) The eternal city is simply named "Jerusalem" in the Millennial context for it supremely deserves the title. It is the city to which Abraham aspired and to which Bunyan's pilgrim travelled. We are not precisely advised of the exact locale of the eternal city during the millennium but can assume its visibility from earth. In it's eternal schema it would appear for the first time ever to represent a solidarity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and the Angels and the Saints of Old Testament and New Testament eras with the banishment of death which remained until the judgment of the Great White Throne when it is consigned to the Lake of Fire after which in the ultimate act of the Apocalypse the Lord who makes **all things new**. The "reign" of Christ (**Daniel 7.18 & Revelation 22.5**) matches His abiding with "just men made perfect(ie complete humans with body soul and spirit)" (**Hebrew 12.23**). Daniel sees this reign as involving "for ever" ALAM or the "aion" of the millennium. John in the original Aramaic of Revelation 22.5 says "And Marya(the Lord) is their king for ever". There is no such thing as an *eternal reign* over this earth. The Greek "They shall reign for ever" (meaning eternity) is at odds with the Aramaic original which simply reads "The Lord shall be king". Much hymnody leans on this verse for the purpose of humanity in heaven. That purpose is not secured by one verse-it is bad theology and has n support as I say in the early Aramaic scriptures.

(5) Dwight Pentecost writing on **Revelation 21 and 22** (In his Ph.D thesis titled "Things to Come") urges upon us that "when the occupants of the city are described they are to be seen *in their eternal state* and when the occupants of the earth are described they are to be seen *in the millennial age*. At the rapture or catching away the saints of this church age appear before Christ to give account and receive reward and thereafter join in the marriage supper of the lamb.

(6) In the ultimate eternal state within this city and world of glory "His servants shall serve Him. There will be:-

- (1) Fellowship **1Corinthians 13.12 1John 3.2 John 14.3 and Revelation 22.4**
- (2) Rest **Rev 14.13**
- (3) Full knowledge **1Cor 13.12**
- (4) Holiness **Rev 21.27**
- (5) Joy **Rev 21.4**
- (6) Service **Revelation 22.3**
- (7) Abundance **Revelation 21.6**
- (8) Glory **2Cor 4.17 Colossians 3.4**

A SHORT RECAP

1. THE EARTH WE INHABIT IS HEADED FOR A FIERY END

Professor Tom Wright who is notable for his diligence and theological output denies the "going away" or "end" of this old earth outright. Such unequivocal denial I urge upon him discounts the accuracy of scripture in **2Peter 3.12** and **Revelation 21.1** - both of which texts in the clearest manner tell us of the "passing away" of the old earth and the manner of it - by fire" stated categorically several times when our Lord spoke laying this foundational fact emphatically before us when He said "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my word shall not pass away".

(a) Peter in the plainest terms tells us in **2Peter 3.10** that the heavens will rush and whistle being loosened and the "elements" of earth air fire and water (given by Empedocles in 444BC as the root elements - Democritus gave us the smaller "ATOMA" as he called it in 380 BC or thereabout) will continue burning when they have been loosened by fire. This is classed in the verse as radical *discovery* of things in the earth. The discovery of the atomic process is a mighty sign of the return of Christ - the **day of the LORD**. This burning and breaking of the atom we have witnessed in the 20th century. God's peremptory solution for the righteous spares them this wrath of the first devastation by the Rapture.

(b) In **2Peter 3.12** Peter *next* tells us of the **day of God** when the kingdom of Christ during the millennium ends; the holy city draws away. The wrath of

heaven will visit the present physical heavens which will be loosed or perish once and for all in a **melt down** that will **cause to flow** (as liquid or air **2Peter 3.12**) and bring to naught the earth that is now in a larger engulfing destruction and conflagration where the atmosphere burns out. The solution to this fiery finish is the "New Jerusalem". Saints abide in the new heaven and earth. Thus both "days" have a PAROUSIA - the second an EVACUATION - when the camp of the saints is surrounded. (**2Peter 3.4 & 3. 12**). The first of these concerns us and is termed the RAPTURE (and it is further explained in 2 Thessalonians 4.16) - the second is the withdrawal of the millennial saints from the present earth to their eternal home (to and from which they may transition in any case during the millennium). This city *the New Jerusalem is the permanent home of the righteous* when the "first earth & heaven pass away"(It is further elucidated in **Rev 21.1**) - for "earth and sky had fled from his presence" **Rev.20.11** for "*they will perish...they will wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed as vesture He shall fold them up - but YOU remain the same and your years will never end.*" Hebrews1.11-12. and Psalm 102.26

THERE IS A HEAVENLY BODY AWAITING

To rise again after dying could easily become confused as it does in *evangelical (scholastic) theology* with "appearing on this old earth as an inhabitant after one has died." That is not what scripture teaches. When we die we depart to be with Christ and when we see Him we are like Him. We live again and **not** as "naked spirits" in heaven. Paul would not be content with this view *that follows Phaedo* and abandons the whole concept of body till Christ comes for His Church. It is not a thorough biblical approach. Paul said "We groan longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed **we will not** be found naked." Paul describes this body we receive on entering our reward as not as a "SCHEME"(tent) but as an OIKIA ACHEIROPOIETON (*a house not made with hands*). Note (1) it is *eternal* so it does not change at the rapture. Note (2) it is given "*when this house is dissolved*" i.e. at dust to dust. Note(3) it is further described as an OIKETERION - a beloved and *fixed* dwelling. Note(4) for no period subsequent to our death will we be naked spirits but ENDUSAMENOI "*enrobed once for all* (aorist) with our heavenly body. Paul so preferred the thought of this estate he seemed to say "Heaven here I come".

There's a land that is fairer than day

And by grace we can see it afar

For the Father waits over the way

To prepare us a dwelling place there.

HALLELUJAH *Scribbler Bob Westgate August 30 2013*