

Week 7 · The End of the Age

How the Story Ends, and Who Is Standing at the End of It

Anchor texts – 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 · Revelation 1:7 · Revelation 20–22 · Psalm 82:8 (ESV)

Teaching Pastor Frank with Pastor Sabas Jimenez · United Church Tucson

BEFORE YOU READ: WHERE BELIEVERS DIFFER

The timing of the rapture is a genuine point of disagreement among faithful Christians. UCT teaches a **pre-tribulation** position, and we teach it plainly because you deserve to know what your church believes. But mid-tribulation and post-tribulation readings are held by serious believers who love Scripture as much as we do, and all three are laid out side by side in Movement II so you can see the actual question. What is *not* in dispute is the part that saves you: Jesus Christ is returning bodily, visibly, and in glory, and every knee will bow. Be certain about the outcome and humble about the details.

How to use these notes. These follow Sunday night movement by movement, so you can relive the teaching at home or in a group. Each movement gives you the big idea, the key Scriptures, a plain-language explanation, and a Recap box you can review at a glance. Bolded terms are defined in the Key Terms glossary near the back, and there is a full Scripture index and a set of discussion questions there too.

One instruction, the same as Week 1: read with your Bible open. Seven weeks of this series have been about learning to slow down and actually see what is sitting on the page.

INTRODUCTION · THE PROMISE WE HAVE BEEN BUILDING TOWARD

He Is Coming Back

Seven weeks ago we started a journey into the unseen realm. We learned the structure of the heavens, the beings who fill it, their titles and their roles. We watched a garden of pure communion breached by rebellion. We traced three rebellions across Genesis, and we followed the long war that came out of them. But we did not walk through seven weeks of spiritual warfare so that you would leave here afraid. We did it so you would know, with certainty, that this war has a predetermined outcome. Jesus wins.

The Jesus who is returning

“Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him.”

REVELATION 1:7 (ESV)

The Jesus who returns is not the Jesus of the manger. His mission this time is different. He comes as a warrior, with eyes like a flame of fire, a sword proceeding from His mouth, and a voice like a trumpet. He comes to render a verdict on sin, on every rebellious *elohim*, on every fallen angel, and on the

devil himself. The season of mercy has an end. Ready or not, right with God or not, He is still coming for His bride.

What happens to us

“For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.”

1 THESSALONIANS 4:16-17 (ESV)

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the dead in Christ rise first. Then those of us who are alive are caught up with them. Our bodies are changed from perishable to imperishable. The flesh as we have known it is gone. Sickness is gone. Pain is gone. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

We will see His face. The face we never saw and still believed was real. The face we served and obeyed and wept for and bled for. And we will see the ones we lost in Christ, our fathers and mothers, our brothers and sisters, our husbands and wives, our children. We will recognize them and hold them again, in His presence, forever. This is our hope. Tonight we are not asking whether we win the war. We are asking how God brings it to its final and victorious end.

RECAP

- Seven weeks of the unseen realm were never meant to produce fear. They were meant to produce certainty.
- The returning Christ comes as Judge and King, not as the humble servant of the Gospels.
- The rapture is a rescue, a reunion, and a transformation, all in an instant.
- The war has a predetermined outcome. Jesus wins.

Our Posture Toward the End

Before we look at a single timeline, we have to settle how we are going to look at it. **Eschatology** comes from two Greek words, *eschatos*, meaning last, and *logia*, meaning study. It is the study of last things: death, the afterlife, the return of Christ, and the renewal of creation. How you hold this subject matters as much as what you know about it.

Two ditches on either side of the road

NOT THE DATE-SETTER

- Turns the Bible into a calendar
- Has always been wrong, every time
- Jesus said no one knows the day or hour (Mark 13:32-33)

NOT THE SCOFFER

- Tired of waiting for a promise that has not landed
- “Where is the promise of his coming?” (2 Peter 3:4)
- Reads delay as failure

We are sure of the outcome and humble on the details. We read the timeline for hope and truth, not for fear. The world trembles; the believer lifts his head. The end is a homecoming, not a threat.

“Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

LUKE 21:28 (ESV)

And not an escapist either

There is a third failure, quieter than the other two. It is the believer who uses the return of Christ as a reason to disengage from the world. Jesus closed that door in the Parable of the Ten Minas. The master hands out resources and says, “Engage in business until I come” (Luke 19:13). Pastor Jimmy Evans put it well: plan as though Jesus is not returning for a hundred years, and live as though Jesus is returning today.

Why it feels delayed

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

2 PETER 3:9 (ESV)

The word behind “patient” is **makrothymia**, long-tempered patience. Peter takes the scoffer’s math and flips it. The scoffer reads delay as indifference or failure. Peter reads delay as mercy. Every additional day that history continues is not evidence that God forgot His promise. It is evidence that He is making room for one more soul from every tribe and tongue to come home.

Paul says something similar in Romans 11:25. A partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. The word is **pleroma**, a completed tally, a full quota. There is a number, and God is still counting. Which means right now is the time of grace. Not tomorrow. Not in five years. His mercy is still new every morning, but it will not always be this way.

RECAP

- **Eschatology** is the study of last things, and posture matters as much as content.
- We are neither date-setters nor scoffers nor escapists.
- Delay is not indifference. Delay is **makrothymia**, the mercy of God making room.
- Romans 11:25 says there is a full number still coming in. We are living inside that window.

The Blessed Hope

Most Pentecostal churches, UCT among them, read redemptive history through what is called dispensational theology. A **dispensation** is a season in which God deals with humanity under a particular arrangement. Understanding the frame helps the timeline make sense.

DISPENSATION	SPAN
Innocence	Eden before the fall (Genesis 1-3)
Conscience	The fall to the flood (Genesis 4-8)
Human Government	After the flood, Noah and Babel (Genesis 9-11)
Promise	Abraham to Moses, the patriarchs (Genesis 12 to Exodus)
Law	Sinai to the cross (Exodus to the Gospels)
Church Age (Grace)	Pentecost until the rapture. This is right now.
Millennium (Kingdom)	We reign with Christ for a thousand years

What the word “rapture” actually means

People will tell you the rapture is not in the Bible. Here is the honest answer. The Greek word in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 is **harpazō**, and it means to snatch violently, to seize, to rescue out of harm’s way. When the Latin Bible of the fourth century translated *harpazō*, it used **raptura**. English took *raptura* and gave us *rapture*.

Saying “rapture isn’t in the Bible” is like saying “Trinity isn’t in the Bible.” The English word was adapted. The event and the Greek text are not in question.

Where believers actually differ

VIEW	WHAT IT HOLDS
Pre-tribulation (UCT’s position)	The church is removed before the seven years, before the antichrist, before the wrath. We are not appointed to wrath but to salvation (1 Thessalonians 5:9). Church removed, then the clock starts.
Mid-tribulation	The church is raptured at the midpoint, 3.5 years in. The first half is human and satanic persecution which Christians endure; the second half is divine wrath, from which they are removed. Anchored at the seventh trumpet and the middle of Daniel’s seventieth week (Daniel 9:27; 1 Corinthians 15:52).
Post-tribulation	The church remains through the entire seven years and is caught up at the Second Coming. The rapture and the return are one event: believers meet Him in the air and immediately escort Him back to earth.

INTEGRITY NOTE

These are not the difference between faith and unbelief. They are the difference between three careful readings of the same texts. We teach pre-tribulation. We do not unchurch anyone who lands elsewhere.

The descent and the trumpet

The end of the age does not begin with a political movement. It begins with a signal from heaven. The Lord Himself descends from the high heavens into the realm of the air. There is a threefold announcement: a cry of command, the same voice that called Lazarus out of a tomb; the voice of an archangel, signaling cosmic warfare and royal arrival; and the trumpet of God, which in Israel was blown to assemble the people for a holy gathering (Numbers 10:2).

Paul says it happens in an **atomos**, an indivisible unit of time, translated “in the twinkling of an eye” (1 Corinthians 15:52). Faster than a blink.

1. **The dead in Christ rise first.** Their bodies are raised imperishable and reunited with their spirits, which were already with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:53).
2. **The living are changed.** Those alive at that second do not experience death. Their mortal bodies are transformed and glorified instantly.
3. **Both are caught up together.** Notice the location: in the clouds, in the air. His feet do not touch the earth yet. He meets His bride halfway to escort her home (John 14:2-3).

What sets the clock in motion

Millions vanish. The restraining influence operating through the church is stepped back (2 Thessalonians 2:7). The result is global panic, economic collapse, and an immediate demand for a leader who can offer answers and stability.

CAREFUL HERE

The rapture itself does not technically start the seven-year clock. The clock begins when the antichrist confirms the seven-year covenant with Israel (Daniel 9:27). The rapture is what sets the stage for that covenant to become possible.

What we are doing during those seven years

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb. In ancient Jewish custom a groom betrothed his bride, went away to prepare a home, and returned unexpectedly to catch her away to the feast. The Marriage Supper is the fulfillment of that pattern. We enter as His rescued bride. By the end of the seven years we walk out of it as His army, ready to return and reign with Him.

The Bēma Seat. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil” (2 Corinthians 5:10). This is for church-age believers only. It is not about condemnation. It is evaluation and reward. Works done with eternal impact, pure motives, and Spirit-led obedience survive the fire. Works done from selfish ambition or for worldly applause burn up (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

CROWN	AWARDED FOR
Incorruptible (1 Cor 9:25)	Self-discipline, endurance, mastery over the flesh
Rejoicing (1 Thess 2:19)	The soul-winner's crown, for sharing the gospel
Righteousness (2 Tim 4:8)	Loving and longing for His appearing
Life (James 1:12; Rev 2:10)	Enduring trial and persecution unto death
Glory (1 Peter 5:4)	The shepherd's crown, for faithful leaders

Every hidden sacrifice counts. The private prayer no one heard. The act of forgiveness no one saw. The labor no one applauded. The question the Bēma Seat asks is simple: are you living for applause that burns, or reward that lasts?

RECAP

- **Harpazō** means to snatch out of danger. **Raptura** is its Latin translation.
- Pre-, mid-, and post-tribulation are three readings of the same texts. UCT teaches pre-trib.
- The rapture happens in an **atomos**: dead first, living changed, both caught up in the air.
- The seven-year clock starts at the covenant of Daniel 9:27, not at the rapture itself.
- The Bēma Seat evaluates and rewards believers. It does not condemn them.

The Tribulation and the Antichrist

Last week we named the coming delusion. This is where it climaxes. The figure at the center of it is the physical manifestation of the seed of the serpent we have been tracing since Genesis 3:15.

Who he is

The prefix *anti* does not only mean “against.” It also means “in place of.” He is Satan’s counterfeit Christ. Where Jesus came in His Father’s name and brought peace through sacrifice, the antichrist comes in his own name and offers a fake peace through global control. He does not arrive as an obvious monster. He arrives as a brilliant, charismatic political leader stepping into a panicked, post-rapture world with answers.

TITLE	WHERE & WHAT IT TELLS US
The Little Horn	Daniel 7:8. He emerges out of world politics.
The Ruler Who Is to Come	Daniel 9:26–27. He confirms the seven-year covenant.
Man of Lawlessness	2 Thessalonians 2:3. Defined by rebellion against God’s order.
The Beast	Revelation 13:1. Wild, predatory, demonically empowered.

When he steps onto the stage

Spiritually and politically, his rise begins in the chaos immediately following the rapture. Prophetically, he is revealed to the world when he brokers the seven-year covenant with Israel (Daniel 9:27). Paul is explicit that the man of lawlessness is currently being restrained, and that when the restraint is lifted he is **apokalyptō**, revealed, as if a curtain were pulled back (2 Thessalonians 2:6–8).

What he wants

- **Worship.** His obsession is to sit in the rebuilt temple, exalt himself above every god, and declare himself God (2 Thessalonians 2:4). Satan has always craved the worship meant for the Creator. The antichrist is the vehicle for hijacking it.
- **Total control.** He promises peace and delivers subjugation, rewriting law and controlling the world economy (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:16–17). You participate or you are cut off.
- **Destruction of God’s people.** He is permitted to wage war on the saints (Revelation 13:7). Knowing his time is short (Revelation 12:12), his aim is to drag as many image-bearers down with him as he can.

Stage 1 · The false peace

A charismatic world leader arrives into post-rapture collapse as a master diplomat, guaranteeing an international treaty involving Israel and surrounding nations, granting Israel security and permission to rebuild the temple. To the world this looks like the dawn of a golden age. Wars pause. Systems consolidate. Israel feels safer than it has in centuries. It is a trap. The moment the treaty is signed, the seven-year clock officially begins.

"Through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand... and by peace shall destroy many."

DANIEL 8:25 (NKJV)

Stage 2 · First half: the unraveling and the witnesses

While the antichrist builds his narrative on earth, something is happening in heaven. The Lamb who was slain takes the scroll and begins to break its seals (Revelation 5:1–9). Only He was found worthy. The seals carry divine authority and two kinds of judgment: **passive wrath**, where God removes His restraining hand and lets human ambition, hatred, and greed run to their natural end; and **active wrath**, direct supernatural judgment. By the sixth seal the whole world knows the difference and says so out loud (Revelation 6:16–17).

HORSEMAN	WHAT RIDES OUT
White (6:2)	The antichrist conquering through deception, diplomacy, false peace
Red (6:4)	Peace taken from the earth; hyper-violent war and bloodshed
Black (6:5–6)	Economic collapse and hyperinflation; a day's wage for a day's bread
Pale (6:8)	Death and Hades take a quarter of the earth by sword, famine, plague, and wild beasts

And in the middle of that, God does something extraordinary. He raises up witnesses.

The 144,000. Twelve thousand sealed from each of the twelve tribes of Israel (Revelation 7:4–8; 14:1–5). Before the worst judgments fall, an angel marks their foreheads with the name of God and the Lamb. The seal makes them untouchable, immune to the seal judgments and to the antichrist's persecution, protected until their mission is finished. And they are not sent to hide. Read what happens a few verses later: a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation and tribe and people and language, coming to faith out of the great tribulation.

The Two Witnesses. Operating out of Jerusalem for 1,260 days, called the two olive trees and two lampstands. Fire flows from their mouths against anyone who tries to harm them. They shut up the sky so it does not rain, turn water to blood, and strike the earth with plagues (Revelation 11:5–6). Clothed in sackcloth, they preach repentance and the true Messiah directly into the face of the counterfeit religion taking root in Jerusalem.

DEBATED

Their identity is genuinely unsettled. **Enoch and Elijah** is one view, because they are the only two in the Old Testament taken without dying, and Hebrews 9:27 says it is appointed for man to die once. **Moses and Elijah** is the other, because the miracles match exactly (fire and drought are Elijah's; water to blood and plagues are Moses'), because those two appeared with Jesus at the transfiguration, and because Malachi 4:5 promises Elijah before the day of the Lord. We hold this loosely.

ONE CORRECTION WORTH MAKING

The demonic scorpion-locusts of the fifth trumpet are given power *not* to kill, only to torment, and only for five months (Revelation 9:5). The killing comes at the sixth trumpet, when four bound angels release a two-hundred-million-strong demonic cavalry that takes a third of the remaining population (Revelation 9:13-19).

Stage 3 • The midpoint: betrayal and abomination

In heaven. War breaks out. Michael and his angels against the dragon and his (Revelation 12:7-12). Satan's forces are overwhelmed and he loses access to heaven and to the divine council, where he had stood as the accuser since Job 1:6. John watches him fall. The heavenly voice announces: woe to the earth, because the devil has come down to you in great wrath, knowing that his time is short. Cornered and enraged, he pours everything into the antichrist and fully indwells him.

In the temple. At the exact 3.5-year mark he tears up the covenant, halts the daily sacrifices, enters the Holy of Holies, and sets up an image of the beast that speaks and demands worship under penalty of death. He drops the political facade and declares himself God. This is the **abomination of desolation** Jesus warned about, and it is the specific signal for those in Judea to flee to the mountains (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15-21; Revelation 13:14-15).

In the streets. The two witnesses are killed. Their bodies lie exposed in Jerusalem for three and a half days, burial refused, broadcast globally while the world celebrates and exchanges gifts. They make a holiday out of it. Then God breathes life into them on live camera. They stand. A voice says "Come up here," and they ascend in a cloud while their enemies watch. An earthquake immediately destroys a tenth of the city (Revelation 11:7-13).

In the economy. A second figure emerges, the false prophet, the religious counterpart to the antichrist. He performs signs and wonders to compel worship of the beast and his image, and enforces a mark, **charagma** in Greek, a stamp or brand, on the right hand or forehead. Taking it is not a transaction. It is a vow of allegiance. Refusing it means you cannot buy food, secure housing, obtain care, or hold employment (Revelation 13:11-18).

Stage 4 • Second half: the Great Tribulation

The final 3.5 years bring the bowl judgments: malignant sores on those bearing the mark; all the oceans and then all fresh water turned to blood; scorching solar heat; supernatural darkness over the beast's kingdom; the Euphrates dried to march the armies toward Armageddon; and the greatest earthquake in human history with hundred-pound hailstones (Revelation 16).

Meanwhile God protects a remnant. Israel is carried into the wilderness on the wings of a great eagle. When Satan sends a flood after her, the earth opens and swallows it. She is nourished for 1,260 days, an Exodus pattern, until Christ returns to deliver her (Revelation 12:13-16).

Stage 5 • Armageddon and the Second Coming

The nations gather in the valley of Megiddo to crush Israel and make war on heaven. The sky tears open. Jesus returns visibly on a white horse as Faithful and True, eyes like flaming fire, wearing many crowns, clothed in a robe dipped in blood, named KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. The armies of heaven follow Him in white linen and carry no weapons, because He alone executes the

victory. The beast and the false prophet are captured alive and thrown into the lake of fire. The rebellious armies are destroyed by the word of His mouth (Revelation 19:11-21).

Armageddon is not a long war. King Jesus speaks, and it is over.

RECAP

- *Anti* means “in place of.” He is a counterfeit Christ, not merely an opponent.
- The seven years begin at the covenant of Daniel 9:27 and break in half at the abomination.
- Seal judgments show God removing restraint before He acts in direct wrath.
- Even in the tribulation God raises witnesses: 144,000 sealed evangelists and two prophets in Jerusalem.
- The Second Coming is visible, bodily, and decisive. The word of His mouth ends it.

The Thousand Years

Millennium comes from two Latin words, *mille* (thousand) and *annus* (year). It refers to the thousand-year period named six times in Revelation 20, when Christ physically reigns on earth. This is the fulfillment of hundreds of Old Testament promises that Messiah would rule the nations in justice from David's throne (Isaiah 9:6-7; Zechariah 14:9). And for this series specifically, it is the final answer to the question we raised in Week 2: God wins back the nations He disinherited at Babel, and Psalm 82:8 is fulfilled in front of every eye.

The deceiver removed

An angel with the key to the abyss seizes the dragon, binds him, throws him in, shuts it and seals it (Revelation 20:1-3). The same abyss the Watchers were locked into. The deceiver of the nations is removed from the nations he stole. For a thousand years there is no external demonic temptation on the earth.

Two kinds of people on the earth

This is the detail most people miss, and it explains why sin still exists during a perfect reign.

GLORIFIED SAINTS	MORTAL SURVIVORS
• Raptured and resurrected believers, Old Testament saints, tribulation martyrs • Immortal, sinless bodies • Reigning with Christ; we do not die	• Survived the tribulation, refused the mark, spared at the sheep and goats judgment • Natural human bodies • They marry, have children, and repopulate the earth

The sorting happens at the judgment of the nations (Matthew 25:31-46). Living survivors are gathered before Christ's throne in Jerusalem. Those who aligned with the beast's system are sent to eternal fire. Righteous survivors inherit the millennial kingdom on earth in natural bodies. This is not the Great White Throne. That is a thousand years later.

WORTH KNOWING

The **first resurrection** is a category, not a single moment. Think of a harvest with phases: the firstfruits (Christ, 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23), the main harvest (church-age believers at the rapture, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17), and the gleanings (Old Testament saints and tribulation martyrs raised at the end of the tribulation, Daniel 12:2; Revelation 20:4). All are resurrections of the righteous unto life.

The government of Christ

He rules the whole earth personally and physically from Jerusalem. The throne of David, literally, the promise given to Mary finally and visibly kept (Luke 1:32-33). Jerusalem as world capital, with the nations streaming to the mountain of the Lord to be taught His ways (Isaiah 2:2-4). A rod of iron: perfect justice, immediately enforced, no corrupt court, no crooked ruler, no injustice that outlives the day it happened.

And here is where the Parable of the Minas from Movement I pays off. The saints reign with Him (Revelation 20:6; 5:10). "Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you

shall have authority over ten cities” (Luke 19:17). Our faithfulness and stewardship now directly determine our territory and authority then. Glorified saints serve as kings, judges, governors, and priests under King Jesus. Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? (1 Corinthians 6:2). The nations handed to the powers at Babel now sit, openly, under their rightful King, and it is the saints, not the rebel *bene elohim*, who inherit that rule.

The curse rolled back

- **Nature at peace** (Isaiah 11:6-9). The wolf and the lamb. The child and the viper. The violence written into creation since the fall is undone.
- **War ends** (Isaiah 2:4). Swords into plowshares. Every war memorial becomes a museum.
- **Long life restored** (Isaiah 65:20-22). A person who dies at a hundred is mourned as a child. The Genesis 5 lifespans return because the decay introduced at the fall is cleansed from the environment.
- **The land healed** (Isaiah 35:1-2; Amos 9:13). The desert blossoms. The harvest overtakes the planting.
- **Babel reversed** (Zephaniah 3:9). God changes the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, so all of them call on His name with one accord. Babel did not only divide geography. It fractured language. That is healed too.
- **Jerusalem lifted** (Zechariah 14:10). The city is physically transformed, Mount Zion raised above the surrounding hills, a geographic picture of its authority.

The final revolt

When the thousand years end, Satan is released from the abyss. Understand why. For a thousand years, mortal humanity lived in ideal conditions: Christ ruling directly, no demonic influence, perfect justice, unprecedented prosperity. The release is the final test of the billions born during that reign. He goes out to the four corners of the earth to gather **Gog and Magog**, and they come like the sand of the sea (Revelation 20:7-8).

Millions who lived under the rod of iron gave outward obedience out of necessity while their hearts never repented. Satan taps that hidden resentment instantly. They march across the earth and surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city. There is no battle. Fire comes down from heaven and consumes them. And the devil is thrown into the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet already are, tormented day and night forever (Revelation 20:9-10).

A perfect King. A perfect world. No devil for a thousand years. And people still choose rebellion the moment they are given the option.

Sit with that, because it is the teaching payoff of the whole movement. The problem was never only the devil. The problem is the human heart apart from God. No environment saves anyone. Not a better world. Not better circumstances. Only a new heart. Only Christ.

The Great White Throne

“Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened.”

REVELATION 20:11–12 (ESV)

White for unapproachable holiness. Seated on it is King Jesus, because the Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22). Earth and sky flee from His face. This judgment happens in a cosmic void. There are no mountains to hide under, no lawyers, no appeals, no higher court.

This is the second resurrection, the resurrection of condemnation. Every unbeliever across human history, great and small, is bodily raised. The sea, Death, and Hades surrender every captive. Books recording every thought, word, secret, and deed are opened, and unbelievers are judged by their works against a standard of absolute perfection (Matthew 5:48). But the decisive line is not how good a person tried to be. It is the Lamb's Book of Life. Works determine the degree of accountability. The Book of Life determines destiny.

Then Death and Hades themselves are picked up and thrown into the lake of fire. The final enemy that has haunted humanity since Genesis 3 is permanently removed from God's universe (1 Corinthians 15:26). Anyone whose name is not found in the Book of Life is cast in. This is the **second death**, and we say it soberly, because it is the most solemn warning in all of Scripture.

WHO IS NOT STANDING THERE

Believers do not appear at the Great White Throne as defendants. Church-age saints were evaluated at the Bēma Seat for reward, not condemnation (2 Corinthians 5:10). Tribulation and Old Testament saints were raised and rewarded before the millennium (Revelation 20:4; Daniel 12:2). Jesus promised that whoever hears His word and believes does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life (John 5:24).

RECAP

- The millennium is the visible reclamation of the nations disinherited at Babel. Psalm 82:8 fulfilled.
- Two populations live on earth: glorified saints reigning, and mortal survivors repopulating.
- Faithfulness now determines authority then. The minas parable is literal administration.
- The final revolt proves the problem was never only the devil. It is the heart.
- Two resurrections, two sets of books, one deciding question: is your name in the Lamb's book.

All Things New

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.”

REVELATION 21:1 (ESV)

The atmosphere changes the instant the Great White Throne is finished. The smoke of judgment gives way to restoration, light, and total peace. Evil is permanently quarantined. The old decaying universe has passed. Death itself has been executed. Now, and only now, the story moves into its eternal home.

Not restored. Upgraded.

Human history begins in a garden and consummates in a garden city. God does not abandon His creation project. He completes it. And the end is better than the beginning.

IN EDEN	ON THE NEW EARTH
The serpent entered	Nothing unclean will ever cross the gates (Rev 21:27)
God visited in the cool of the day	God dwells among His people permanently (Rev 21:3)
One tree of life	Twelve crops of fruit, new every month, leaves for the healing of the nations (Rev 22:2)

A few details worth holding onto. “No more sea” is the removal of cosmic chaos and division, not the absence of water, because there is a river of life running through chapter 22. No sun or moon is needed, because the uncreated glory of God and of the Lamb is the light (Revelation 21:23). And the nations bring their splendor into the city (Revelation 21:26), which means human culture is redeemed rather than discarded.

The New Jerusalem

Watch the direction of travel. The city comes *down* out of heaven. We do not evacuate earth. God brings heaven to the new earth and dwells with us. If someone tells you this earth is not your home, they have the direction backwards. This permanently heals the division between God’s realm and man’s realm that broke in Genesis 3.

- A perfect cube, on a scale that stretches like Maine to Florida and rises into space
- Constructed of gold so refined it is transparent like glass
- Twelve gates, each carved from a single pearl, standing open forever
- Twelve foundation layers of precious stone, inscribed with the names of the apostles
- No temple, because God and the Lamb are its temple

What we will actually be doing

- **Reigning and governing** (Revelation 22:5). Stewarding the new creation alongside Christ.

- **Creating and cultivating** (Revelation 21:26). Redeemed culture, art, architecture, science, invention.
- **Feasting and fellowship** (Matthew 8:11). Real meals and unhindered community with saints from every era.
- **Exploring and learning** (Ephesians 2:7). Unlocking the limitless mysteries of God and His resurrected universe.
- **Seeing His face** (Revelation 22:3-4). Direct, face to face, in everything we do.

The arc of this series, in one line

Eden interrupted, Week 1. Eden contested, all seven weeks. Eden consummated, tonight.

The center of the new Eden is not a place. It is a Person. No temple, because He is the temple. No sun, because He is the light. The Lamb who was slain is the center of everything forever (Revelation 21:22-23). Every question we have asked for seven weeks about powers and principalities and rebellion answers to one name.

The invitation

The nations are being reclaimed. The only question left is which side of that reclamation you are standing on. Two resurrections. Two books. One question: is your name written in the Lamb's book of life.

I told you every tear would be wiped away. But look at who does the wiping. Not an angel. Not a servant. God Himself. And you cannot wipe a tear off somebody's face standing across the room. He has to come close enough to touch you. So hear me. The tear you cried at that graveside, the one nobody saw, the one you cried in your car before you walked in here tonight. He does not pretend it never happened. He does not tell you it did not hurt. He will come close one day and wipe those tears Himself.

Matthew 25 gives us ten virgins. All ten were waiting. All ten had lamps. All ten looked identical from the outside. Five were ready and five were not, and nobody could tell which was which until the cry went up at midnight. And the oil could not be borrowed. "Go rather to those who sell and buy for yourselves." Nobody can be ready on your behalf. Not your mother's faith. Not your grandmother's prayers. Not the fact that you were raised in this church.

The most frightening words in Scripture are not in Revelation. They are here. Not "you were too sinful." Not "your works were insufficient." **"Truly, I say to you, I do not know you."** Readiness is relationship.

The door is open now. Come home to the King before the King comes.

RECAP

- The New Jerusalem comes down. We do not evacuate earth; God moves in.
- Eden is not merely restored. It is completed and improved.
- Eternity is active: governing, creating, feasting, exploring, worshiping.
- The center of the new world is a Person, not a place.
- The oil cannot be borrowed. Readiness is relationship.

Key Terms

Eschatology

From Greek *eschatos* (last) and *logia* (study). The study of last things: death, the afterlife, the return of Christ, and the renewal of creation.

Harpazō

Greek, 1 Thessalonians 4:17. To snatch violently, to seize, to rescue out of harm's way. Translated "caught up."

Raptura

The Latin translation of *harpazō* in the fourth-century Latin Bible. English took it and gave us *rapture*.

Atomos

Greek, 1 Corinthians 15:52. An indivisible unit of time. Rendered "in the twinkling of an eye."

Makrothymia

Greek, 2 Peter 3:9. Long-tempered patience. God's deliberate window of mercy before the end.

Pleroma

Greek, Romans 11:25. A completed tally or full quota. The full number of the nations still coming in.

Dispensation

A season in which God deals with humanity under a particular arrangement. The Church Age is the sixth; the Millennium is the seventh.

Apokalyptō

Greek, 2 Thessalonians 2:6. To reveal, as a curtain being pulled back. Used of the unveiling of the man of lawlessness.

Charagma

Greek, Revelation 13:16. A stamp, signet, or brand. The mark of the beast. Not a transaction but a vow of allegiance.

Abomination of desolation

Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15. The antichrist desecrating the rebuilt temple and declaring himself God at the midpoint of the seven years.

Bēma Seat

2 Corinthians 5:10. The judgment seat of Christ, for church-age believers. Evaluation and reward, never condemnation.

Millennium

From Latin *mille* (thousand) and *annus* (year). The thousand-year physical reign of Christ on earth, named six times in Revelation 20.

First resurrection

A category rather than a single event. Firstfruits (Christ), main harvest (the rapture), and gleanings (Old Testament and tribulation saints). All are resurrections unto life.

Second death

Revelation 20:14. The lake of fire. Eternal, conscious separation from the presence and goodness of God.

Gog and Magog

Revelation 20:8. Prophetic shorthand for the rebellious nations gathered by Satan after his release at the end of the millennium.

REFERENCE · EVERY PASSAGE WE TOUCHED

Scripture Index

Genesis 3:15; 5 (lifespans) · **Numbers** 10:2 · **Job** 1:6 · **Psalms** 82:8 · **Isaiah** 2:2-4; 9:6-7; 11:6-9; 35:1-2; 65:20-22 · **Daniel** 7:8, 25; 8:25; 9:26-27; 12:2 · **Amos** 9:13 · **Zephaniah** 3:9 · **Zechariah** 14:9, 10 · **Malachi** 4:5 · **Matthew** 5:48; 8:11; 24:15-21; 25:1-13; 25:31-46 · **Mark** 13:32-33 · **Luke** 1:32-33; 19:13, 17; 21:28 · **John** 5:22, 24; 11:43; 14:2-3 · **Romans** 11:25 · **1 Corinthians** 3:12-15; 6:2; 9:25; 15:20, 23, 26, 52, 53 · **2 Corinthians** 5:8, 10 · **Ephesians** 2:7 · **1 Thessalonians** 2:19; 4:16-17; 5:9 · **2 Thessalonians** 2:3, 4, 6-8 · **2 Timothy** 4:8 · **Hebrews** 9:27 · **James** 1:12 · **1 Peter** 5:4 · **2 Peter** 3:3-4, 8-9 · **Revelation** 1:7; 2:10, 26-27; 5:1-10; 6:1-8, 16-17; 7:2-14; 9:5, 13-19; 11:3-13; 12:6, 7-16; 13:1-18; 14:1-5; 16; 19:11-21; 20:1-15; 21:1-27; 22:2-5, 17

GO DEEPER · HOME GROUPS

Reflection & Discussion

- 1 We named three failed postures toward the end: the date-setter, the scoffer, and the escapist. Which one is closest to how you have handled this subject, and what would it look like to move off it this week?
- 2 Peter says delay is mercy, not indifference. How does reading the passage of time as *makrothymia* change the way you pray for people who are not yet saved?
- 3 “Plan as though Jesus is not returning for a hundred years, and live as though He is returning today.” Where are you out of balance, and in which direction?
- 4 Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 slowly. Which detail in that passage gives you the most comfort, and why that one?
- 5 UCT teaches a pre-tribulation position, and we laid the other two views out honestly. Why does it matter that we can hold a conviction firmly and still treat other readings with respect?
- 6 The Bēma Seat evaluates motive, not just output. Name one thing you are doing right now that would survive that fire, and one that probably would not.
- 7 The antichrist arrives as a solution, not as a monster. What does that tell us about how deception actually works on people who are frightened?
- 8 God raises up the 144,000 and the two witnesses in the middle of the worst judgment in history. What does that say about God’s heart even during wrath?
- 9 A perfect King, a perfect world, no devil for a thousand years, and people still rebel. What does the final revolt settle about the human heart, and about what we actually need?
- 10 The city comes *down*. How does it change your view of this world, and your body, to know that God’s plan is to move in rather than to evacuate?

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- 11 Eternity is described as active: reigning, creating, feasting, exploring, worshiping. Which one of those surprises you most, and what does that reveal about what you assumed heaven was?
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- 12 The oil could not be borrowed. Whose faith have you been quietly leaning on, and what is one step toward making that relationship your own?

LOOKING BACK

Seven Weeks, One Name

This is the end of the series. We began with a filter that kept us from seeing what was on the page, and we finish with a King on a white horse and a city coming down. Along the way we met the divine council, three rebellions, the adversary, the demons, the loyal host, and the coming deception. Every one of those threads runs to the same place. If you take one thing home from seven weeks in the unseen realm, take this: the Lamb who was slain is the center of everything, forever.