

Session 2: Biblical Theology

I. The New Heavens and a New Earth

Behold, I will create *new heavens and a new earth*. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. ¹⁸ But *be glad and rejoice forever* in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. ¹⁹ I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of *weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more*. (^{NIV} Isaiah 65:17-19)

Then I saw *a new heaven and a new earth*, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away... ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them... ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be *no more death or mourning or crying or pain*, for the old order of things has passed away." ⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, "*I am making everything new!*" (^{NIV} Revelation 21:1-5)

A. Restored Creation Theology

Repent therefore... ²⁰ that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until *the times of restoration of all things*, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets *since the world began*. (^{NKJV} Acts 3:19-21)

I tell you the truth, at *the renewal of all things*, when the Son

of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (^{NIV} Matthew 19:28)

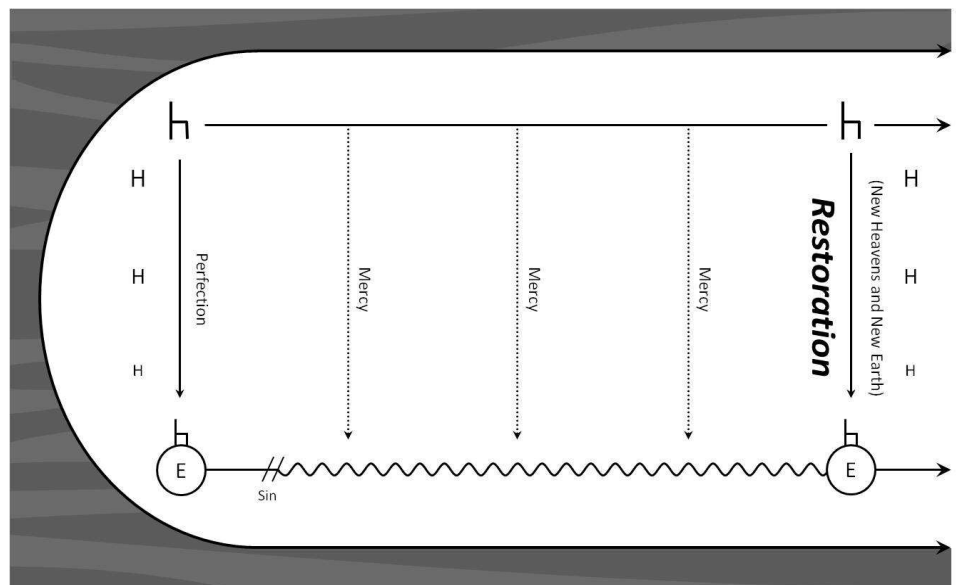


Fig. 2A – Overview of Biblical Theology

B. Restored Creation Embodied in the Resurrection

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For *the creation was subjected to frustration*, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that *the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay* and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has

been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, *the redemption of our bodies*. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. (NIV Romans 8:18-24)

- On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; ⁸ *he will swallow up death forever*. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth... ⁹ In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and *he saved us*. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; *let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation*." (NIV Isaiah 25:7-9)
- As a woman with child and *about to give birth* writhes and cries out in her pain, so were we in your presence, O LORD. ¹⁸ We were with child, we writhed in pain, but we gave birth to wind. We have not brought salvation to the earth; we have not given birth to people of the world. ¹⁹ But your dead will live; *their bodies will rise*. You who dwell in the dust, *wake up and shout for joy*. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead. (NIV Isaiah 26:17-19)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope *through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*, ⁴ and into an *inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade*-- kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ *In this you greatly rejoice*, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials... ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with *an inexpressible and glorious joy*, ⁹ for you are receiving the goal of your faith, *the salvation of your souls*... ¹³ Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you *when Jesus Christ is revealed*. (NIV 1 Peter 1:3-13)

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of *the gospel* I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand... ³ that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that *he was raised on the third day* according to the Scriptures... ¹⁴ If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith... ¹⁹ If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. ²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, *the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep*... ³⁰ And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? ³¹ I die every day-- I mean that, brothers... ³² If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." (NIV 1 Corinthians 15:1-32)

C. The Holy Spirit as a Sign and Deposit of the Resurrection

This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. ⁴ God also *testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit* distributed according to his will. ⁵ It is not to angels that he has *subjected the world to come*, about which we are speaking... (NIV Hebrews 2:3-8)

It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit,⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age,⁶ if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance... (Hebrews 6:4-6)

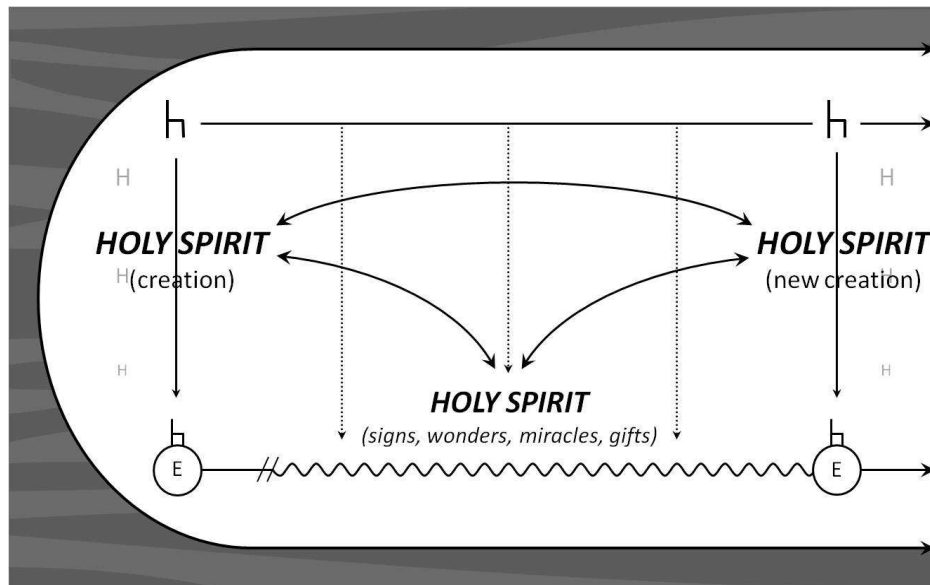


Fig. 2B – The Historical Nature of the Activity of God's Spirit

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:11-14)

For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens...⁴ For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.⁵ Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. (2 Corinthians 5:1-5)

II. The Day of the Lord

- A. Centrality of the Day of the Lord** (cf. Is. 13:6, 9; Ez. 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14; Am. 5:18; Ob. 1:15; Zeph. 1:7, 14; Zech. 14:1; Mal. 4:5; Mt. 7:22; 26:29; Lk. 10:12; 21:34; Jn. 6:39f, 44, 54; 7:37; 11:24; 12:48; Acts 2:20; Rom. 2:16; 13:12; 1 Cor. 1:8; 3:13; 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; Eph. 4:30; Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 1:10; 2:3; 2 Tim. 1:12, 18; 4:8; Heb. 10:25; 1 Pe. 2:12; 2 Pe. 1:19; 3:10, 18; Rev. 16:14)

Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty.⁷ Because of this, all hands will go limp, every man's heart will melt...⁹ See, the day of the LORD is coming—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger—to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it.¹⁰ The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light.¹¹ I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless...¹³ Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the LORD Almighty, in the day of his burning anger. (Isaiah 13:6-13)

See, *the day is coming*, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; *the day that comes shall burn them up*, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch...⁵ Lo, I will send you the prophet Elijah before *the great and terrible day of the LORD comes*. (NRSV Malachi 4:1-5)

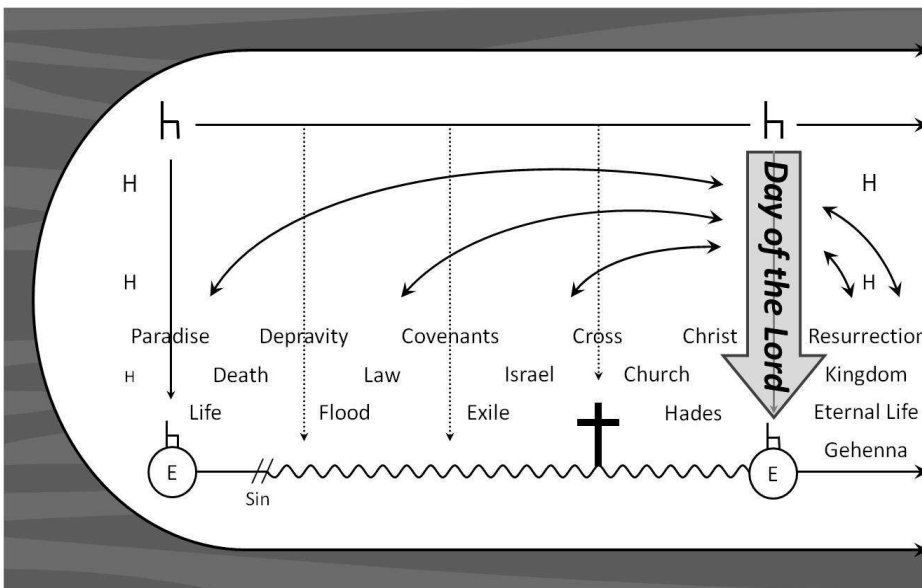


Fig. 2D – The Day of the Lord as the Unifying Theological “Linchpin”

Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as

you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.⁸ He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless *on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ*. (NIV 1 Corinthians 1:7-8)

If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw,¹³ his work will be shown for what it is, because *the Day will bring it to light*. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. (NIV 1 Corinthians 3:12-13)

In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy...⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion *until the day of Christ Jesus*. (NIV Philippians 1:4-6)

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and *in view of his appearing* and his kingdom, I give you this charge:² Preach the Word...⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me *on that day*—and not only to me, but also to all who have *longed for his appearing*. (NIV 2 Timothy 4:1-8)

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more *as you see the Day approaching*. (NIV Hebrews 10:25)

But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, *kept for the day of judgment* and destruction of ungodly men...¹⁰ *the day of the Lord will come like a thief*, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up...¹³ But according to His promise *we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells*. (NASB 2 Peter 3:7-13)

- B. The Day of Wrath** (cf. Ps. 2:5; 21:9; 79:6; 110:5; Prov. 11:4; Is. 13:9, 13; 30:30; 34:2; 63:6; 66:15; Lam. 1:12; 2:22; Hab. 3:12; Mic. 5:15; Zeph. 1:15, 18; 2:2f; Mt. 3:7; Lk. 3:7; Rom. 2:5-8; 5:9; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2:16; 5:9; Rev. 6:17; 11:18; 16:14; 19:15)

The Lord is at your right hand; he will crush kings on *the day of his wrath*.⁶ He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth. (NIV Psalm 110:5-6)

*The great day of the LORD is near-- near and coming quickly...*¹⁵ *That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin...*¹⁸ Neither their

silver nor their gold will be able to save them on *the day of the LORD's wrath*. In the fire of his jealousy *the whole world will be consumed*, for he will make a sudden end of all who live in the earth. (NIV Zephaniah 1:14-18)

But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for *the day of God's wrath*, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. (NIV Romans 2:5)

Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,¹⁷ *for the great day of their wrath has come*, and who can stand? (ESV Revelation 6:16-17)

- C. The Day of Judgment** (cf. Ps. 9:19; 82:8; 83:18; 96:10ff; 98:9; 110:6; Is. 10:3; 26:9f; 41:1; 66:16; Jer. 50:27; Joel 3:2, 12; Mt. 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:36, 41f; Lk. 10:14; 11:31f; Acts 24:25; Rom. 2:16; Heb. 6:2; 9:27; 1 Pe. 2:12; 2 Pe. 2:4, 9; 3:7; 1 Jn. 4:17; Jude 1:6, 15; Rev. 11:8)

The earth reels like a drunkard, it sways like a hut in the wind; so heavy upon it is the guilt of its rebellion that it falls-- never to rise again.²¹ *In that day the LORD will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below.*²² They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days.²³ The moon will be abashed, the sun ashamed; for *the LORD Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders, gloriously.* (NIV Isaiah 24:20-23)

The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of *the great and dreadful day of the LORD...*^{3:2} I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There *I will enter into judgment against them...*¹² Let the nations be roused; let them advance into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there *I will sit to judge all the nations* on every side. (NIV Joel 2:31-3:12)

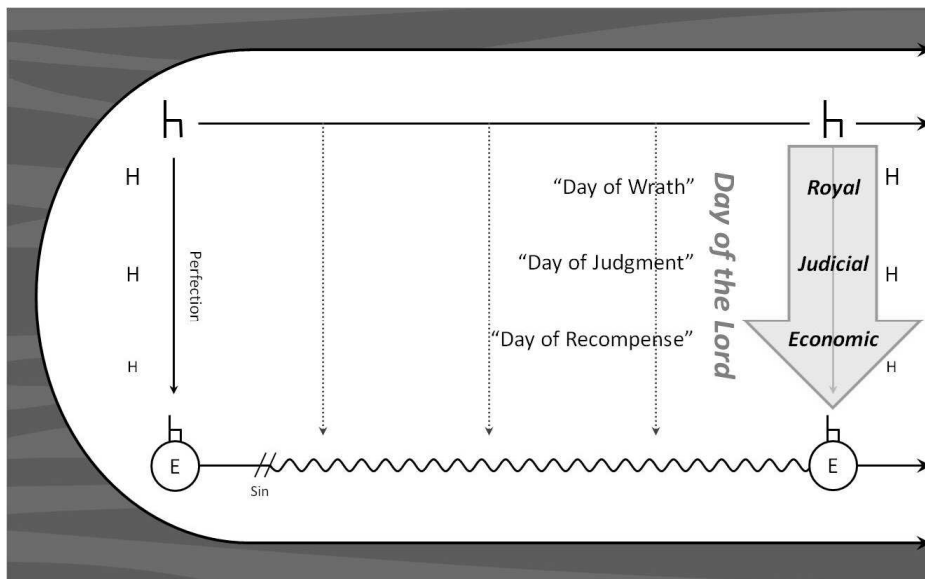


Fig. 2C – Primary Characteristics of the Day of the Lord

But I tell you that men will have to give account *on the day of judgment* for every careless word they have spoken. (^{NIV} Matthew 12:36)

And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home-- these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains *for judgment on the great Day*. (^{NIV} Jude 1:6)

- D. The Day of Recompense** (cf. Ps. 28:4; 94:2; 103:10; 137:8; Is. 3:11; 34:8; 35:4; 59:18; 61:2; 63:4; 66:6; Jer. 46:10; 51:6; Lam. 3:64; Joel 3:7; Ob. 1:15; Mt. 12:36; 16:27; Lk. 16:2; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 2:6; 12:19; 14:12; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 4:12; 10:30; 1 Pe. 1:17; 4:5; 2 Pe. 2:13; Rev. 2:23; 20:12f; 22:12)

Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; ⁴ say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; *your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.*" (^{NIV} Isaiah 35:3-4)

The LORD looked and was displeased that there was no justice... ¹⁷ He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head; he put on *the garments of vengeance* and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak. ¹⁸ *According to what they have done, so will he repay wrath to his enemies and retribution to his foes; he will repay the islands their due.* (^{NIV} Isaiah 59:15-18)

For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will *repay each person according to what he has done.* (^{ESV} Matthew 16:27)

God is just: *He will pay back trouble* to those who trouble you ⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is *revealed from heaven* in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will *punish* those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be *punished with everlasting destruction* and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power ¹⁰ *on the day* he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. (^{NIV} 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10)

Behold, I am coming soon, *bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done.* ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." (^{ESV} Revelation 22:12-13)

- E. This Age vs. the Age to Come** (cf. Mt. 12:32; Mk. 10:30; Lk. 18:30; 20:34; Rom. 8:18; 1 Cor. 1:20; 2:6ff; 3:18; 2 Cor. 4:4; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 1:21; 1 Tim. 6:17; Tit. 2:12; Heb. 6:5)

Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, *either in this age or in the age to come...* ³⁶ I tell you that men will have to give account *on the day of judgment* for every careless word they have spoken. (^{NIV} Matthew 12:32-36)

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. ¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives *in this present*

age,¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope-- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. (NIV Titus 2:11-13)

Just as you [Gentiles] who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their [Jews] disobedience,³¹ so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you.

³² For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all. (NIV Romans 11:30-32)

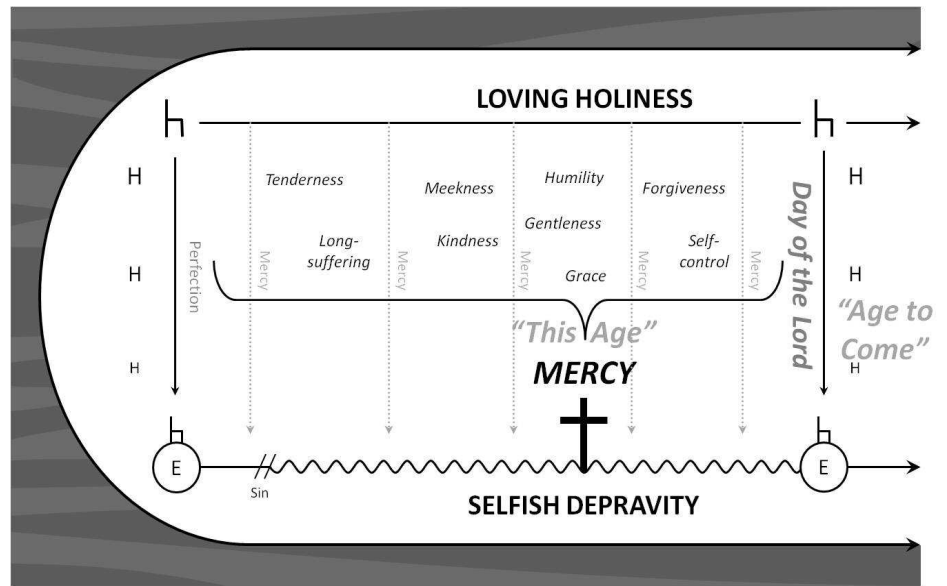


Fig. 2E – The Cross as the Defining Feature of “This Age”

F. Temporal Judgments vs. Eternal Judgment

About this time Jesus was informed that Pilate had murdered some people from Galilee as they were sacrificing at the Temple in Jerusalem.² "Do you think those Galileans were worse sinners than other people from Galilee?" he asked. "Is that why they suffered?"³ Not at all! And you will also perish unless you turn from your evil ways and turn to God.⁴ And what about the eighteen men who died when the Tower of Siloam fell on them? Were they the worst sinners in Jerusalem?"⁵ No, and I tell you again that unless you repent, you will also perish." (NLT Luke 13:1-5)

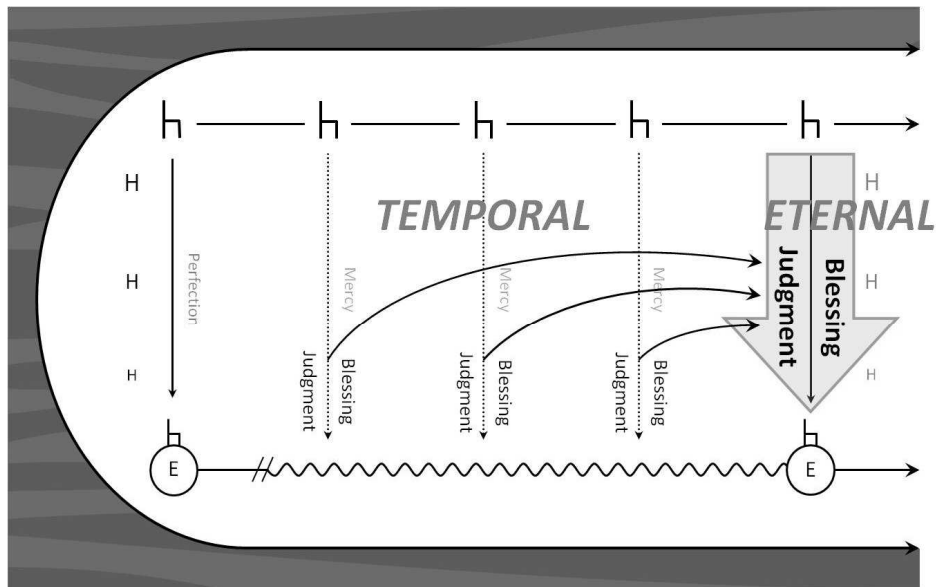


Fig. 2F – Relationship Between Temporal and Eternal Judgments and Blessings

III. Christoplatonic Theology

A. Escape to Immateriality → Monasticism

Having sketched, then, so far as we could understand, these three opinions regarding the end of all things, and the supreme blessedness... we must suppose that an incorporeal existence is possible, after all things have become subject to Christ, and through Christ to God the Father, when God will be all and in all; or that when, notwithstanding all things have been made subject to Christ, and through Christ to God

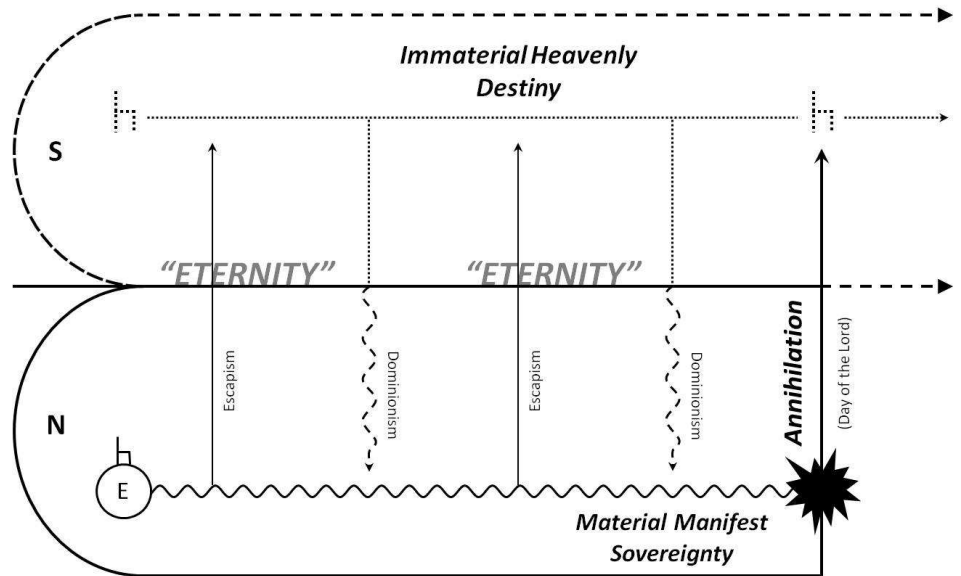


Fig. 2G – The Redemptive Framework of Christoplatonism

(with whom they formed also one spirit, in respect of spirits being rational natures), then the bodily substance itself also being united to most pure and excellent spirits, and being changed into an ethereal condition in proportion to the quality or merits of those who assume it (according to the apostle's words, "We also shall be changed"), will shine forth in splendour; or at least that when the fashion of those things which are seen passes away, and all corruption has been shaken off and cleansed away, and when the whole of the space occupied by this world, in which the spheres of the planets are said to be, has been left behind and beneath, then is reached the fixed abode of the pious and the good situated above that sphere, which is called non-wandering (απλανής), as in a good land, in a land of the living, which will be inherited by the meek and gentle... which is called truly and chiefly "heaven," in which heaven and earth, the end and perfection of all things, may be safely and most confidently placed.¹

B. Dominion of Materiality → Christendom

Therefore the Church even now is the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of heaven. Accordingly, even now His saints reign with Him... It is then of this kingdom militant, in which conflict with the enemy is still maintained, and war carried on with warring lusts, or government laid upon them as they yield, until we come to that most peaceful kingdom in which we shall reign without an enemy, and it is of this first resurrection in the present life, that the Apocalypse speaks in the words just quoted [cf. Rev. 20:1-6]. For, after saying that the devil is bound a thousand years and is afterwards loosed for a short season, it goes on to give a sketch of what the Church does or of what is done in the Church in those days, in the words, "And I saw seats and them that sat upon them, and judgment was given." It is not to be supposed that this refers to the last judgment, but to the seats of the rulers and to the rulers themselves by whom the Church is now governed.²

¹ Origen, *On First Principles* 2.3.7 (ANF, 4:274-75); emphasis added.

² Augustine, *City of God* 20.9.1-2 (NPNF1, 2:430); emphasis added.