

CHAPTER 5: THE EMERGING SECOND CIVILIZATION

2289 BC-AD 2015

(Representing the five-based dimension, 5 = Heh, "the other side")

What hope does humanity have? What's a covenant?
What does hope have to do with Israel?
Is God finished with Israel? How does the church fit in?
Are the heavenly rewards the same for everyone?

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The plan of God is like a railroad with two rails that run through what I call the *Zayin* age, following the insights of the Hebrew Alphabet Number System. The destination of that railroad's passengers can only be the station found at one end of the line or the other. There is one station you definitely do not want to get off at. However, you could

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choose successfully and end up in the king's palace, which is represented by the Hebrew letter, *Heh*. Read this chapter to learn more.

After the Flood

The number eight (8 = *Cheth*) means "a new beginning." Four males and four females survived the Flood to begin the human family all over again:

Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands. Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

"But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man.

"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man. As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it."
(Genesis 9:1-7)

God promised that He would never again destroy the world with water, and He placed a rainbow in the sky as a sign of His covenant.

The First Covenant

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."

And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I

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bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.”

So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.” (Genesis 9:8-17)

Following the Flood, humanity’s standard of living was drastically reduced. Much of the advanced technology was lost, and people had to struggle with inferior tools of softer metals because iron was no longer available. Over a thousand years would pass before iron was re-invented.

The average human lifespan also decreased. Though Adam had lived to be 930 years old, man’s life expectancy quickly dropped after the Flood to average seventy-five years. A number of scholars believe that the loss of the denser atmosphere that had shielded the humans and animals from the damaging radiation of the sun greatly accelerated the aging process.

After the Flood Noah’s family settled within the mild temperate zone near what was later known as Babylon. This became the cradle of humanity’s modern civilization. It was a fertile land covered with dense forests and thousands of clear, fresh-water lakes. The animals that were saved on the ark reproduced at a phenomenal rate there. It was a perfect place to start a new civilization.

I cannot help but mention another example of where our educated evolutionary bias blinds most of us to the obvious. When Noah’s descendants settled in what is today Iraq, I previously described it as filled with dense forests and many lakes. Obviously, Iraq’s climate has changed dramatically. The country today is mostly a sandy desert so dry that not even grass or weeds grow.

The Bible records some description of several early civilizations in the Middle East. It includes many details of the early environments. Modern science can’t muster witnesses to substantiate the theories of evolution without presenting some evidence by people who lived in these earlier periods of human history. Unless we accept the testimony of those who lived in these earlier periods of human history, we would have only unsubstantiated speculations about something we can only theorize about from scattered measurements of accessible natural phenomena

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such as sediments, rocks and radioactivity, which are subject to more than one interpretation.

For example, the Bible relates many stories about a mighty warrior king named David who lived about 1000 BC in a land not far from Iraq. He knocked heads with his neighbors, the Philistines. One time when the battle was not going in his favor, he hid 20,000 of his soldiers in a "forest." It takes a rather large number of big, dense trees to hide an army of 20,000 men and their equipment!

A thousand years later in the same region, Jesus walked into the countryside to feed five thousand people with just two fish and five loaves of bread. The account of this miracle mentions that the people settled down in deep grass. The climate in this area had changed so much that the forests had disappeared leaving only grass as the predominant vegetation. The Israelis started replanting the forests in the 1900s. In fact so many trees have now been planted that the climate of that small nation has already been positively impacted from the new forests' biological presence: it now receives more rain.

If there are some scientists who want to establish an accurate model to plot future climatic changes, I suggest they apply trigonometry to the data the Bible provides. They can utilize the sinus-cosine function to the globe, which is a circle, and then create a half circle for plotting these functions from the equator. Measurements past a 45 degree cosine/sine function will reveal an acceleration of the mean climatic changes in the future. A lot of money is spent trying to determine the causes for climatic changes. These studies usually end up blaming those changes on polluted air without looking at the obvious first.

The Bible is a fantastic tool because it gives us reference points to project future climatic changes. A computer could figure such things out in just a few hours. But the public has been blind-sided by what we are taught in the university. We would rather believe the lie of evolution than accept what God's Word has proclaimed since ancient times. Their analytical problems come from the non-existing millions of years that evolution theorizes early man required to genetically drift away from his ape-like cousins. But a false premise never results in accurate scientific facts.

God's Promises to Abraham

As the human population increased after the Flood, God appointed a special man for a special purpose. The Lord made a covenant with Abraham, a direct descendent of Shem who was a survivor of the Flood. Shem had passed on to Abraham whatever written records might have

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existed as well as oral stories about creation and early man, the commandments of God and the early history of settlement after the Flood. They would have spoken and written in an ancient form of Hebrew, which made possible an accurate preservation of Scripture for thousands of years.

God told Abraham (then called Abram) to move with his family from the land of Ur of the Chaldeans to an area of the Lord's choosing. Because Abraham believed God and emigrated to this unknown land, the Lord made an unconditional covenant with him that the land he walked over would be his forever. God promised to multiply Abraham's descendants like the stars of heaven. He also promised that royalty and the Messiah would come from Abraham's bloodline.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said:

"I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."

Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.

I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God." (Genesis 17:1-8)

God gave the ancient land of Canaan to the people of Israel as an eternal inheritance. At the end of the Apocalypse He will settle the present conflict in the Middle East over the land according to the contract He made:

God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her." (Genesis 17:15-16)

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In exchange for these generous blessings Abraham's descendants were given the task of becoming lights to all the nations of the world, which included preserving the oracles of God in order to pass them on.

At their exodus from Egypt God separated Israel from the surrounding pagan nations that were immersed in cults of depravity and darkness. Those government and religious leaders worshiped idols and condoned a lifestyle of oppression and slavery. Many sold out to ancient forms of humanism, godlessness, lawlessness, prostitution and perverse thinking. In contrast Israel was to live a life of piety and holiness. Their society was to condemn evil, demonstrate personal cleanliness and exhibit self-control in sexual matters. Through moral living and inspired ritual, they were to worship the true God of the universe.

Israel failed miserably in the tasks God gave them. Although hundreds of individuals—including prophets, political leaders and scribes—carried on what God wanted to accomplish, most of the nation forgot about their Lord. However, even though most of her historical neighbors have vanished from the face of the earth, Israel continues to exist to this day - only because God had made an unconditional covenant with Abraham.

The Nation of Israel

Satan has repeatedly tried to destroy Israel because he wants to prove that God is fallible and/or unable to fulfill His promises to mankind. For thousands of years the children of Israel were dispersed among many cultures, but in a genuine miracle, the Jewish State rose up again in 1948 in the same geographic area where Abraham had camped.

Much turmoil still exists in and around Israel today, and the country is heading toward the culmination of prophecies made thousands of years ago. Around the world, there is much hatred toward the Jews.

From God's perspective, however, it does not matter if Israel is hated or treated with indifference. What matters is God's predetermined plan. Israel's prophecy is the key. God made an everlasting covenant with Israel that separates them from all other nations. Hosea 1:10-11 says the Israelites will be "like the sand on the seashore, which cannot be measured or counted. In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.'"

The people of Judah and the people of Israel will soon be reunited. They will not be governed by a democracy, but by a resurrected King David who belongs to firstborn-the saints of the five-based dimension.

Israel's survival as a nation can only be seen as a miracle. The descendants of Jacob have survived world powers that eliminated many

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surrounding nations. Over 6 million live in their ancestral homeland, and an even larger number of Jewish people still live outside Israel. The prophet Ezekiel predicted that God would help Israel for His holy name's sake:

This is what the Sovereign Lord says: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Sovereign Lord, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes. (Ezekiel 36:22-23)

Although Israel did not follow His laws, God swore by Himself to keep His covenant with Israel forever. The enemies of Israel will someday battle against the Supreme Power of the universe. The outcome is predictable: utter defeat against the enemies of Israel. Israel will survive despite unbelievable odds because of God's special promises:

This is what the Lord says, He who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—the Lord Almighty is his name: “Only if these decrees vanish from my sight,” declares the Lord, “will the descendants of Israel ever cease to be a nation before me.”

This is what the Lord says: “Only if the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth below be searched out will I reject all the descendants of Israel because of all they have done,” declares the Lord. (Jeremiah 31:35-37)

Israel is the key to future prophecies, especially regarding the coming Apocalypse. Why did the nation of Israel disappear for such a long time, becoming foreigners in every country around the globe? The answer can be found in the Scriptures:

Again the word of the Lord came to me: “Son of man, when the people of Israel were living in their own land, they defiled it by their conduct and their actions. Their conduct was like a woman's monthly uncleanness in my sight. So I poured out my wrath on them because they had shed blood in the land and because they had defiled it with their idols.

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“I dispersed them among the nations, and they were scattered through the countries; I judged them according to their conduct and their actions. And wherever they went among the nations they profaned my holy name, for it was said of them, ‘These are the Lord’s people, and yet they had to leave his land.’ I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone.” (Ezekiel 36:16-21)

Why has Israel come back after 2,555 years to reclaim their land? Again, the answer is found in the Bible. The God of the universe said to Israel:

I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols.

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God. I will save you from all your uncleanness.

I will call for the grain and make it plentiful and will not bring famine upon you. I will increase the fruit of the trees and the crops of the field, so that you will no longer suffer disgrace among the nations because of famine. Then you will remember your evil ways and wicked deeds, and you will loathe yourselves for your sins and detestable practices. I want you to know that I am not doing this for your sake, declares the Sovereign Lord. Be ashamed and disgraced for your conduct, O house of Israel!

This is what the Sovereign Lord says: On the day I cleanse you from all your sins, I will resettle your towns, and the ruins will be rebuilt. The desolate land will be cultivated instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass through it.

They will say, “This land that was laid waste has become like the Garden of Eden; the cities that were lying in ruins, desolate and destroyed, are now fortified and inhabited.” Then the nations around you that remain will know that I the Lord have rebuilt what was destroyed and have replanted what was desolate. I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it.

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This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Once again I will yield to the plea of the house of Israel and do this for them:

I will make their people as numerous as sheep, as numerous as the flocks for offerings at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts. So will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the Lord. (Ezekiel 36:24-38)

Any nation that hates Israel will only be allowed to cause trouble against the descendants of Abraham until the day the Messiah returns the second time in power and glory. The Jews will then repent of their misplaced unbelief. They will rebuild Jerusalem, the capital city of the world, and the new temple will become the only "holy place" in the world to truly worship the supreme God of the universe.

In Revelation, the last book of the Bible, John states that he was taken into heaven, where he was given visions and was told to write them all down. John was the last living witness of Christ's life on earth. His book became the last words of God in His holy Word: they provide absolute assurance that the future events prophesied will come to pass. The book of Revelation says some fascinating things about the future of the nation of Israel:

A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. (Revelation 12:1)

The woman is identified as Israel, the nation created by twelve families or tribes. Out of her was born the Messiah:

Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.

She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to His throne. The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great

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dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. (Revelation 12:3-9)

The “war in heaven” is the five-based Apocalypse that takes place and ends in heaven before the Apocalypse on the earth ends. After he is cast out of heaven Satan and his angels will rage against Israel and the truly godly people among the Christians, who are the brother servants of the God of Israel as represented by the other rail of the railroad track.

Following his heavenly defeat, the enraged Satan will make war against Israel and against all followers of Jesus Christ who obey God's commandments. This will occur during the earthly Apocalypse, ending in the battle of Armageddon, the war that will end the second civilization of this age. (See the 7,000-Year Table of Human History.)

Blessings and Curses for Israel

God's word to the Jews is still applicable to our times:

If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all His commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God. (Deuteronomy 28:1-2)

When we obey the Lord, we unlock doors of divine knowledge and blessings. We access wisdom far superior to that available in our highest institutions of learning. We can then influence the surrounding culture at the core level of society, the family. We will set in motion great blessings and benefit for a nation that fears God the Almighty. The American education system under God's rule will function again to raise well-balanced children rather than the recent generations of confused young people who make up the gangs and drug addicts that fill up our prisons to over capacity.

However, if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all His commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you. (Deuteronomy 28:15)

The Christian Church

The concept of the Christian church was hidden throughout the Old Testament. During that time, God appointed certain individuals to represent Him, who dedicated their lives to His service. Their battles with good and evil built up character that will last forever because it will carry on in their resurrected lives to the future. They were light and salt on this earth; they proclaimed that human existence does not end in death but that we can attain life eternal by faith in the Son of God, Jesus.

Even ancient cultures knew this truth. Their faith required trust in something they could not see. Trusting God opened them up to insights and special revelations from the Lord. As thousands of years rolled on, God assigned individuals (and later, a nation) to teach His oracles to humanity. Israel's history records God's revelation of himself to humanity. In the fullness of time Jesus the GodSon came and made atonement for sin so that the GodFather, who is holy, could accept sinful man . . . even those who belonged to God prior to His coming.

After the Jewish religious leaders rejected the Messiah and ignored God's new revelation through Jesus Christ, the LORD appointed another group of people to carry on His oracles and mission of salvation until He returns again to sanctify and change the hearts of the descendants of Jacob through the indwelling of His Spirit as He has promised.

The body of believers who belonged to God before Christ came was originally called "the saints." This name was changed in the apostle Paul's time. Paul explained the mystery of "the church." In his letter to the Ephesians he wrote about the body of Christ, which is the true church. This mystery was not made known to man in any prior generation:

Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 3:2-6)

Though the oracles were previously passed on only by one nation, Israel, God revealed Himself through the apostles Jesus appointed. This

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change caused some confusion, and Paul recognized it. He stated that the Gentiles (People who were not born Jewish.) were fellow heirs, members of the same body and partakers of the same promises. In his letter to the Ephesians he wrote about the body of Jesus Christ, the church:

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom His whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. (Ephesians 3:14-15)

Paul explained that the family of heaven now had a new name; from that time on, it would be known as "the church." The purpose of the church is to proclaim the wisdom of God, not only to people on earth, but also to the principalities and powers in heaven.

Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to His eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. In Him and through faith in Him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. (Ephesians 3:8-12)

In this verse Paul mentions receiving information intended for the powers in heaven (*Heh*, 5 = "the other side"). The angels have no foreknowledge of the outcome of the church. Only after Satan is cast out from heaven and after the saints take the positions that Lucifer's angels previously occupied, will the faithful angels fully understand God's plan. They have longed to comprehend the mystery of the eternal God being born as a human baby, a mystery that was kept secret for thousands of years.

In our time Christians often classify New Testament saints and Old Testament saints as two separate groups. This distinction is a leftover from Paul's day. From God's perspective there is only one group that has eternal life. In eternity the angels will call all redeemed mortals "the firstborn:"

But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. (Hebrews 12:22-23)

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What is this "church of the firstborn"? The answer is found in Paul's letter to the Hebrew Christians:

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. (Hebrews 11:1-2)

To be incorporated into the church of Jesus Christ, we must do one thing: believe what God has said. Nothing more and nothing less. There is only one way we can receive divine approval and be incorporated into God's church: by faith. This has not changed for thousands of years. It goes all the way back to Adam:

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (Hebrews 11:3-10)

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In verse 3 we read that God is the Creator. In verse 6 we are told we must believe that he exists. Verse 7 says that Noah's faith made him an "heir of the righteousness." Verse 8 tells us that when we obey God's message, we will be incorporated into the church. Faith is the door (*Daleth*) to enter into God's blessing of eternal life (*Teth*).

These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect. (Hebrews 11:39-40)

Old Testament believers were sealed until the time when the atoning blood of Jesus Christ was revealed. Therefore, they are members of the same body as we are today.

Most Christians believe that the church started 2,000 years ago at Pentecost with a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit gave the new believers, many of whom had also seen the resurrected Jesus, new hope and a burst of zeal and power in their newfound faith. This enabled them to continue their struggle despite persecution from the cruel Roman occupation forces and the religious establishment of their day.

The gift of the Spirit at Pentecost was not meant to create a two-party system in heaven that distinguished between old believers and new ones. Many Christians sometimes treat Old Testament believers as inferior. They feel that New Testament Christians are more enlightened by their belief in the gospel so they tend to believe that New Testament Christians are some how a more privileged or superior classification of saint. This misconception is not biblical: it comes from a combination of wishful thinking and a misapplication of Scripture.

In fact this sense of spiritual superiority expresses the fleshly side of human nature that we are supposed to keep under control. It has caused division among Christians and murderous persecution of the Jewish people throughout the centuries. This kind of spiritual arrogance has left many grievous black marks in the history of Christianity and has contributed to the loss of many souls.

The railroad cannot function with only one rail. The church is imbedded on two rails according to the plan predetermined by God before creation: hence we cannot exclude one from the other. Christians must reprogram their thinking along this line, because they will continue be a stumbling block to those who are weak and searching for God by perpetrating these ancient mistaken notions. Hopefully the Apocalypse

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will correct this wrong thinking for many Christians. Why not heed the message now and become fruitful as the last days close upon the earth?

By introducing the concept of "the church" Jesus and Paul revealed something that had been hidden throughout the ages. In retrospect we can see that it existed all along beginning with Adam. Just because the word "*church*" came into common use after the resurrection does not mean that the invisible body predetermined before creation has not always existed. "Church" is just another name for the body of saints. Even Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, preached this.

You should search the Scriptures for yourself because there are many more verses that apply here. I am not a biblical authority, and the Word of God needs no defense. The Lord asks us to repent and pray before we try to refute someone who is born again because he or she is saved by the same precious blood that cleanses us from our own sins.

If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:29)

Every member of the family of God has different talents, and each will have a job to do in the kingdom according to his or her use of those talents. What we share in common is that we were pardoned from our sins by the One Savior and Mediator between God and humanity – Jesus. We are also born of the same Holy Spirit into His body. At the resurrection of the saints the invisible church since Adam will become visible and will be seen by the whole world. In John's gospel Jesus told a story that illustrates the position and relationship of the hidden church:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me, you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. (John 15:1-11)

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Owning a vineyard has taught me a few lessons that apply here. When a vine has matured, buds from another vine can be grafted on. These buds grow into fruit-bearing branches and produce grapes. Christians are the buds that have been grafted onto the vine of Israel for centuries to build the church of the living God. (Romans 11)

About 2,000 years ago God initiated the outward sign of the Christian church by pouring out His Spirit over the first congregation in Jerusalem on the biblical feast day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:1-47) Letters followed to various churches, in which the apostles explained the plan of salvation for all peoples. Observing rules and regulations cannot save. Anyone accepting the provision Jesus Christ made for sin can secure salvation. Failing to receive that gift will mean facing the white throne judgment on the Last Day. The soul who forfeits God's mercy will be thrown into the lake of fire like useless vine cuttings.

For the past 6,000 years God has been gathering believers in Paradise, a special place on the other side. The first harvest will end at the return of Jesus Christ when all true believers will be resurrected to live in a newly formed universe. During a thousand-year reign of peace, unbelieving Israel will be grafted back onto the vine to produce fruit for the glory of God. This is called the *Spatlese* in German, meaning "the later and sweeter harvest."

This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 3:6)

In the gospel of Matthew Jesus told a story about a property owner who planted a field to grow vegetables. One of his helpers reported that there were thistles, weeds and other choking vegetation growing in the field. The property owner gave orders not to disturb the field but to let everything grow together so that no good plant would be in danger of being damaged. At harvest time the gardener gave orders to burn all the weeds and thistles and gather the good fruit in a special barn. He then invited his friends and neighbors to a feast to celebrate the abundance of the garden. The celebration was followed by a marriage of the king:

Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

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“The owner’s servants came to Him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’

“‘An enemy did this,’ He replied.

“The servants asked Him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’

“‘No,’ He answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’” (Matthew 13:24-30)

This parable indicates a judgment day at the end of the seven years of trial upon the peoples of the earth known as the Apocalypse. God will replace our present civilization with a new one, using specially trained people to shape a society with good government and just laws. Each person will contribute to this unique civilization operating free from the influence and presence of Satan.

The Family of God

God will appoint five groups of redeemed human beings to become the building blocks for the new eternal dimension. They will be well trained by their experience from living in an evil world. Because the universe is complex, different skills are necessary to make a future government work. God’s plan uses mortals who have been redeemed being made perfect in Christ. In their spiritual transformation they will receive bodies suitable to live on the other side (*Heh* = heaven).

These resurrected mortals will be best qualified to snuff out any upstart of rebellion in a future age on earth or the expanding universe because they lived during Satan’s domain and suffered exposure to horrible injustices, pain, trials and in some cases, ghastly death. The election process of these individuals started before the foundation of this earth with God’s initial planning.

The following Bible verses tell of five distinct groups within the family of God. Each group is appointed for a special purpose so that they have different job descriptions, but all belong to one body, the church.

If you want to know who these people are, I will identify them as the Bible records them. That way it is not a philosopher’s or some religious professor’s wild imagination prettied up as speculation and presented as facts. Let’s see what the Bible reveals:

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1. The Body of Christ
2. Jesus Christ's Entourage
3. Temple Servants and Overseers of God
4. Multinational Saints
5. Worthy Human Beings

Often, when Scripture has five of something, one of the five is elevated over the other four. The Hebrew Alphabet Number System taught me that principle. This is similar to your hand, which has four fingers and a thumb. The thumb represents God (1 = "the eternal God"), and the four fingers relate to "this world in this time." Together they work perfectly; eliminate the thumb and you will be handicapped.

The Old and New Testaments are thousands of years old. Since the time they were written, languages have changed. Translators try to keep up with changing definitions by assigning meanings to certain words, but those definitions were correct only in context of that time period. Looking back, we can now more accurately identify these terms. And by overlaying the Hebrew numbering system, we can gain further insight into the eternal concepts sanctioned by God, who invented the system to help us understand His Word.

The Body of Christ

The body of Christ is referred to in Scripture by five different names. These names have a special preference in the order of God's administration:

1. Saints (Romans 1:7; Romans 8:27; Revelation 5:8; 8:3; 11:18)
2. Holy Ones (Daniel 7:21; 7:18; 7:25; 7:27)
3. The Elect (Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:27)
4. Heirs of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:17; Ephesians 3:6)
5. The Firstborn (Psalm 89:23; Hebrews 12:23; Colossians 1:18)

These five names for the body of Christ plus the five names given to the previous group together equal ten subdivisions. In the Hebrew numbering system ten (*Jod*) indicates "a higher level," "law" or "responsibility." Some groups are selected for a higher purpose than others. That does not mean the others are inferior, only that they will have different jobs in the kingdom of God.

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are

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Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:26-29)

The group of five known as the body of Christ will govern the universe under Jesus Christ. Their rule will begin at the end of the Apocalypse with the restoration of Israel and continue to the end of the thousand-year reign of peace for all nations on earth. Presently the heavenly government from the past rebellious structure is in place, which permits evil to have a voice because Satan is the "god of this age." (2Corinthians 4:4)

But the true God, who revealed himself in his dealings with Israel, will soon bring about a new governmental structure that will be run by reconciled and resurrected saints—human beings who have learned righteousness from their experience of evil. They will remember the injustice and persecution they suffered on earth, and their revulsion of sin will safeguard the future system from evil so that God will never again be dishonored.

As they were disputing among themselves over who was going to be the greatest next to the Lord in the kingdom of heaven, Jesus explained to his disciples that the future governing body would be different. It will express itself as a servant system. (Mark 10:42-45)

To rule with Christ as a true servant requires unique training and experience. If you want to belong to this special group of rulers in the coming kingdom, God can begin your preparation right now. All you have to do is get involved in the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul, the famous teacher of the Jewish and Christian faith, gave the following advice to Timothy:

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: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. (2Timothy 4:1-5)

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America is presently insulated from much of this suffering, but in other countries (like Africa, Indonesia, China and the Islamic nations) many believers who confess their faith are being killed and tortured.

The early Christians went through severe persecution and suffering. In the end times believers will not have it any easier than the Christians did in the first century of the church age. During the Apocalypse, the body of Christ will go through horrible times. In some cases their own families will turn against them and cause them to be executed. Jesus told his disciples that this would be one of the signs of the last days:

They will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. This will result in your being witnesses to them. But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves.

For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. All men will hate you because of me. But not a hair of your head will perish. By standing firm you will gain life. (Luke 21:12-19)

Matthew records Jesus' warning this way:

You will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.

Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:9-14)

Most American believers today hope to be raptured before the Great Tribulation begins (pre-tribulation) or at least before it gets too bad (mid-tribulation). However, trials are necessary to prepare us to rule the new universe.

God will be with His followers so they can steadfastly endure until the end. When they stand before ungodly courts to be judged, the Lord will place words in their mouths to defend the faith and boldly proclaim the Good News.

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His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him.

Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time. (Daniel 11:31-35)

As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom. (Daniel 7:21-22)

Some believers will be tortured before they are executed. But through their testimony, many of the abusers and evil judges will be converted and even be persecuted themselves for their newfound faith.

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him. For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life.

And who is equal to such a task? Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God. (2Corinthians 2:14-17)

The Bible says that the time of Jesus' Second Coming is unknown to unbelievers and will come unexpectedly. However, Jesus used parables to indicate that when we see the signs, we are to lift up our eyes for the moment has come. Today, the Holy Spirit is telling many believers that the time for His coming is near. Many voices are proclaiming that we are closer to that juncture of Scripture than in any time of history.

The Second Coming of Christ will bring closure to the number of people who are deemed worthy of belonging to this group. There will be a partial resurrection of the dead at the beginning of the thousand-year reign. A much larger group will be resurrected on the last day at the second resurrection occurring at the end of the thousand-year reign.

Jesus Christ's Ambassador Entourage (Prophets)

The second special group of redeemed human beings is seen under the altar in heaven. They were slain on earth because of the Word of God and the testimony they maintained.

In heaven they will be dressed in white and told to be patient because there will be more martyrs coming to join them. They will always be close to the Lord accompanying Him wherever He goes. They will glorify God at the throne and altar. They will praise God, love Him, adore Him and be used on important occasions to honor his presence:

When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"

Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed. (Revelation 6:9-11)

As representatives of a consular special group they will become judges in the future world. They will pass down laws from God's throne to the mortals living on earth. Because of their suffering and resisting evil unto death, they will be most qualified to rule and administer justice in the new millennium. The office of Judge will be held in high esteem. It is symbolized by a throne from which the judges perform their duties.

I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.)

This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:4-6)

Temple Servants and Overseers of God after 2018

The third group is composed of 144,000 servants redeemed from the earth. God will specially appoint these people from the twelve tribes of Israel, and an angel will seal them for their protection through the terrible time of the Apocalypse called Jacob's Trouble:

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree.

Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel. (Revelation 7:1-4)

The nation of Israel will go through a time of spiritual purification and will ultimately accept their Messiah and convert as a nation. These "first fruits to God and the Lamb" will have the name of the Father and the name of Jesus written on their foreheads:

Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. (Revelation 14:1-2)

They will stand before the throne and sing a new song, which no one else has known:

And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. (Revelation 14:3)

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These people have not defiled themselves with women; they have kept themselves pure. No lies will be found in their mouths; they are blameless:

These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb. No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless. (Revelation 14:4-5)

They will appear at the time of the triumphal coming of Jesus Christ and stand with Him on Mount Zion. Also, these saints will be instrumental in establishing the New Israel, rebuilding Jerusalem and a new temple, instituting a new concept of worship and helping restore the monarchy.

Multinational Saints

(Cheth Age 2008-2015)

The fourth group will be a great multitude representing people from every nation, tribe and language. They will wear white robes and be presented before the throne to Jesus the Lamb. Their robes will have been made white in the blood of the Lamb. They will hold palm branches in their hands and proclaim a special celebration in Heaven:

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9-10)

Many angels, in the midst of twenty-four elders and the four living creatures, will surround the multinational saints who come out of the Great Tribulation:

All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"

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Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?"

I answered, "Sir, you know."

And he said, "**These are they who have come out of the great tribulation**; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in his temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; He will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (Revelation 7:11-17)

These saints will stand before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple. Never again will they hunger or thirst or suffer from scorching heat. Jesus, glorious in His resurrected body at the center of the throne, will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Worthy Human Beings

(Zayin – Teth Ages, 4004 BC-AD 3018)

A fifth group of people the remaining people from the 1,000-year period will appear at the end of the thousand-year period (AD 3018). They will be divided into two sections. Those who are found worthy will receive eternal life in the new heaven; those who are not will end up in the lake of fire, which is the second death.

All humans who have lived on earth for the previous 7,000-Years will stand before the Great White Throne. The earth and the sky will flee from His presence with only the time dimension remaining. The Book of Life will be opened. Hades will be emptied, and the departed ones will appear before the throne one by one. There will be two stages to this procedure:

1. Each person will be judged according to what he has done as recorded in the books.
2. If anyone's name is not found in the Book of Life, he will be thrown into the lake of fire, which is the second death.

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Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened.

Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.

Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15)

The Book of Life contains the names of all human beings who are covered under the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. I believe this includes:

- All aborted and premature babies
- All children under the age of accountability of recognizing evil
- All human beings who lived in a time without the knowledge of God, but who have not violated their conscience by doing evil
- Everyone who has accepted Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior and Lord.

There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered.

Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. But you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. (Daniel 12:1-4)