



All ages are finite and were created (Heb. 1:2) of which Scripture speaks of two principle ages: the present age and the age to come (Matt. 12:32; Eph. 1:21). Every age has a beginning and an end; hence one age ends before another begins. This age is characterized as "this present evil age" (Gal. 1:4) during which Satan is the ruler (Jn. 12:31; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4) with his subordinates (Eph. 6:11-12; 1 Cor. 2:6, 8). The end of this age and the beginning of the next age coincides with Christ's Parousia (Rev. 11:15ff.; 19:11--20:6; cf. 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8; Jas. 5:7, 8; 2 Pet. 1:16; 1 Jn. 2:28), inaugurated by the Seventh Trumpet (Rev. 11:15-19; cf. 1 Cor. 15:51-52). Christ's return is "the blessed hope" which Paul anticipated (Tit. 2:13; cf. 1 Jn. 3:1-3).

When Jesus returns to establish His kingdom, the "many", all of which are His, will be resurrected (Dan. 12:2; 1 Cor. 15:23; see also 2 Cor. 4:14; Phil. 3:20ff; Col. 3:4; 2 Thess. 1:10; 2:1; Rev. 19:1--20:6) with an imperishable, spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:42) on the "last day" of the present age (Dan. 12:13; Jn. 6:40, 44, 54; 11:24). Those still alive at His coming will be "caught up" and not experience death (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-52). Regardless, all receive an imperishable, spiritual body. Afterwards, Christ judges all who are His with two possible outcomes, either "everlasting life" or "disgrace and everlasting abhorrence" (Dan. 12:2-3; Matt. 16:27; 2 Cor. 5:10; Jn. 5:28-29; Acts 24:15-16; 1 Jn. 2:25-29; cf. Matt. 10:1-39; 18:1-35; 22:1-14; 25:1-30; Mk. 10:17-45; Lk. 13:22-30; Rom. 2:4-16; 14:10-12).

Satan is cast into the abyss for 1000 years (compare Rev. 20:3 and 7). It is from this period of time that the phrase "millennial kingdom" mistakenly arose. It is improper to speak of Christ's kingdom lasting only for a thousand years, for His rule extends into the ages (Dan 7:14; Lk. 1:33; Heb. 1:8; Rev. 11:15), after which time He delivers the kingdom to the Father, "so that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:24-28). After the 1000 years, Satan is released "for a short time" (concurrent with Christ's continuing reign) during which he deceives the nations again (Rev. 20:7), commencing the Great Tribulation (Bowls of Wrath; Rev. 16:1--18:24). Subsequently, Christ casts Satan into the Lake of Fire where he and the "beast" and "false prophet" are tormented "into the ages" (Rev. 19:20; 20:10).

Sometime after the initial thousand year reign of Christ, another resurrection occurs, it too having two possible outcomes: “And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:11-15). This resurrection and subsequent judgment is different from that of Revelation 20:4-6. This group represents “the rest” (Rev. 20:5) which “the many” of Daniel 12:2 excludes. The resurrection paradigm presented in Daniel 12:2-3 concerning “the many” is only that which the authors of the New Testament possibly could have known until the Apostle John records another in Revelation 20:11-15. Until that time, the New Testament only speaks of one resurrection of the dead (Jn. 5:25-29; 11:24; Acts 23:6; 24:15; 2 Tim. 2:18). Even Apostle Paul did not write concerning this resurrection which may be observed from his omission of it: “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, then the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power” (1 Cor. 15:22-24). It is a mistake to assume that the New Testament authors knew about this resurrection and the great white throne judgment before it was revealed to the Apostle John. Likewise, they also did not know about Satan being cast into the abyss for 1000 years.

After the Great Tribulation is finished and Satan cast into the Lake of Fire, Christ ushers in everlasting righteousness, consummating Daniel’s 70th Week (Dan. 9:24-27) which began before the 1000 years. The seven year tribulation period is split into two parts like Daniel’s dreams (chpts. 7 and 8). It is never scripturally stated that this period is contiguous as often assumed, nor that a spiritual bodily resurrection precedes it (except for Christ’s resurrection, “the first fruits of those who are asleep”, 1 Cor. 15:20, 45).

The consummative result of Christ’s effectual reign is that all those who belong to Him will be clothed with immortality after He “has subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him (including the last enemy to be abolished which is death), so that God may be all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28; compare 1 Cor. 15:25-26 and v. 42 with the explicit sequence in vv. 52-54. The distinction between “imperishable” and “immortality” must be maintained, for they are not synonymous). This is not without enormous significance; for now, God alone possesses immortality (1 Tim. 6:16). The imperishable spiritual resurrected body is outfitted to coexist with God and dwell in His midst before the destruction of the old heavens and earth and the creation of the new (Heb. 12:25-29; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 21:1-8).

“Everlasting life” comes to fruition at the resurrection in the age to come (Mk. 10:30; Lk. 18:30; Rom. 2:5-7) as being an heir of the kingdom (Matt. 19:27-30; Gal. 5:19--6:8; Tit. 3:7). It is this life “which God, who cannot lie, promised long time ago” (Tit. 1:2). The only possible promise to which Paul is referring is Daniel 12:2, for it is the only occurrence of “everlasting life” in the Hebrew Scriptures. Those who are Christ’s AND remain faithful to Him until death will “awaken to everlasting life” at the resurrection (Dan. 12:2; Rev. 2:10). These are they who hear their Shepherd’s voice and now obey His commandments (Jn. 10:27-29; 12:24-26; 1 Tim. 6:11-19).

The concepts of “everlasting life” and “immortality” need to be differentiated. The adjective “everlasting” (*aiōnios*) is derived from the noun “age” (*aiōn*) and qualifies the noun “life” (*zōē*). Together they speak of the quality of life during the Kingdom Era (Jn. 4:14; 6:51, 58; 8:51, 52; 9:32; 10:28; 11:26) as does “disgrace” and “everlasting abhorrence”. Jesus manifested “everlasting life” during His earthly incarnation (1 Jn. 1:1-3; 5:20). Among other abilities, He exhibited the power to cure the sick, power over natural and demonic forces and life over death, able to change molecular structure (in both its quality and quantity), and made the blind to see and the lame walk. It is this quality of life that is necessary to reign and rule with Him. However, not until all has been subjugated to Christ that the imperishable (yet still mortal) spiritual resurrected body is clothed with immortality, and only then does it become death-proof.