

THE EARTHLY INHERITANCE SERIES OF BIBLE SUBJECTS

Various Bible study guides in subjects pertaining to New Earth prophecy, as taught by Paul Phelps

For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD,
they shall inherit the earth. Psalm 37:9

BELIEVERS of the ENDTIME

Bible quotes are from the **New Revised Standard Version** except for my own translations or as otherwise indicated.

Christian believers on earth in the endtime are not all the same. The Bible reveals different purposes and destinies of believers.

A Bible study project by Paul Phelps
After several years of study this writing was completed in 2015.

According to Bible prophecy, endtime believers are given ***different destinies*** according to their life in the Spirit and ***God's predetermined purposes***. This is true of the entire Church age and increasingly evident just before Christ returns. The different purposes of God decide his choice of our resurrection inheritance. We know that believers will receive different degrees of honour (2 Tim. 2:20-21) ***and of resurrection reward*** (Daniel 12:3; 1 Corinthians 15:40-41; Hebrews 11:35). God always calls everyone to follow Jesus and be prepared for his kingdom; and even after Church evangelism has ended, there are more believers with another kingdom position and destiny. This subject is about the total family of believers.

The BRIDE of CHRIST

The most loved is the Bride of Christ, the ***first fruits*** of salvation. 2 Th. 2:13-14,

v 13 But we must always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the ***first fruits for salvation*** through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

v 14 ***For this purpose he called you*** through our proclamation of the good news, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

James 1:18,

In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth,
so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

Romans 8:22-23,

We know that the whole creation has been groaning
in labour pains until now; and not only the creation,
but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan
inwardly, while we wait for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

The Bride of Christ saints, from start to end of the Church age, are born-again
overcomers, with no distinction of nationality, social status or gender. The Bride
is promised spiritual heavenly resurrection like Christ, bodies made for heaven.
1 John 3:2,

Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet
been revealed. What we do know is this: when it is revealed,
we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.

Hebrews 3:1,

Therefore, brethren, holy partners in a **heavenly calling**...

Therefore the Bride saints will inherit the highest honour of resurrection glory,
all of them shining like stars. (*Some stars shine brighter than others; 1 Cor. 15:41.*)
This is the **collective body** of born-again overcoming saints, from Pentecost until
the Church age is ended, when the predestined number is complete and sealed.
All New covenant saints are united in "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5).

The Bride believers as a collective body are not defined as martyrs, but many
were martyred throughout the Church age and will be until the end. We are not
told when the predestined number of overcomers is full. Only the Father knows
the timing for Spirit-born saints to be complete and ready to be taken to heaven.

Rev. 6:9-11,

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar
the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the word of God
and for the testimony they had given; they cried out with a loud voice,
"Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long will it be before you judge
and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?"

v 11 They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer,
until the number would be complete

both of their fellow servants and of their brethren,
who were soon to be killed as they themselves had been killed.

The waiting time '*under the altar*' indicates that the catching away of the saints
into heaven as a complete body **had not yet occurred** at the time of the fifth seal.
There is a distinction between '*fellow servants*' and '*brethren*,' thus revealing that
Bride of Christ believers **co-exist with other believers**—(*which we explain later*);
but Satan sees no difference, he persecutes all true believers.

For populating heaven, the complete Bride of Christ is surely a large number,
but this predestined number is not known to us. At their ingathering in heaven,
the glorified saints are revealed to be a **great multitude**.

Rev. 7:9-12,

- v 9 After this I looked,
and there was a **great multitude** that no one could count,
from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages,
standing before the throne and before the Lamb,
robed in white, with palm branches in their hands.
They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God
who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'
- v 11 And all the angels stood around the throne
and around the elders and the four living creatures,
and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God,
- v 12 singing, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and
honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.'

The Bride of Christ saints are recognised in the song of the twenty-four elders,
in Revelation 5:9-10.

They sing a new song:

"You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals,
for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God
saints from every tribe and language and people and nation;
you have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God."

A final endtime gathering of *the Bride of Christ saints* in heavenly Mount Zion
is foreseen in Hebrews 12:22-23,

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God,
the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,
and to **the assembly of the firstborn** who are enrolled in heaven ...

This heavenly endtime assembly of firstborn saints is ***after they are caught up
in the clouds to meet the Lord*** (1 Thes. 4:14-18).

This scene in heavenly Mount Zion is further described in Revelation 14:1-5,

Then I looked, and there was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion!
And with him were one hundred and forty-four thousand
who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.
And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters
and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard
was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps,
and they sing a new song before the throne and before
the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could
learn that song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand
who have been redeemed from the earth.

- v 4-5 It is these who have not defiled themselves with women,
for they are virgins; these follow the Lamb wherever he goes.
They have been redeemed from humankind as **first fruits**
for God and the Lamb, and in their mouth no lie was found;
they are blameless.

The last verses 4–5 identify this group as the Bride of Christ, a select company of **first fruit saints** who have separated themselves from all of worldly pollutions and are a spotless bride, called and transformed for life in heaven. This number “*one hundred forty-four thousand*” can’t be literal but rather signifies 12 apostles ruling 12 tribes for a thousand years, and it represents them to be a predestined company having a predestined number known only to God. The exclusivity and separateness of this group of saints is further indicated in the song that they sing *because no one else can know that song!*

The Rev. 14:1-5 vision of the saints in heavenly Mount Zion takes the viewpoint that the catching away of the born-again saints **had already occurred** in the time of this vision and are already in heaven. As the vision continues (vv 6-12) **angels** continue the work of preaching and harvesting people for the Kingdom, because apparently the saints are no longer on earth for gospel-preaching to the nations in the time of this vision.

Angelic authority in earth is still in effect until Jesus returns, until then they are God’s endtime agents; but when he returns there is a change. “*Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels*” (Hebrews 2:5).

The coming world will be ruled by Jesus **and the saints**: “*Do you not know that we are to judge angels?*” (1 Cor. 6:3) —and, “To everyone who conquers and continues to do my works to the end, **I will give authority over the nations**; to rule them with an iron rod, as when clay pots are shattered, even as I also received authority from my Father” (Rev. 2:26-28).

The first advent of Christ two thousand years ago was for two main purposes: (A) to redeem the world by his sacrificial death on the cross, and (B) to prepare the way for the Church calling, the “**new and living way**” (Heb. 10:20), lasting for almost two thousand years since the Church age began (*on the day of Pentecost*). When the predestined number of the Bride is full, the Church age will be ended.

Ezra was also given a vision of the glorified Bride—**on Mount Zion in heaven**, and saw them as a **great multitude** that he could not number.

2 Esdras 2:33-48,

³³ I, Ezra, received a command from the Lord on Mount Horeb to go to Israel. When I came to them they rejected me and refused the Lord's commandment. ³⁴ Therefore I say to you, O nations that hear and understand, ‘Wait for your Shepherd; He will give you everlasting rest, because he who will come at the end of the age is close at hand.

³⁵ Be ready for the rewards of the kingdom, for eternal light will shine on you forevermore. ³⁶ Flee from the shadow of this age, receive the joy of your glory; I publicly call on my Saviour to witness.

³⁷ Receive what the Lord has entrusted to you and be joyful, giving thanks to him who has called you to **heavenly kingdoms**.

³⁸ Rise, stand erect, and see the **number** of those who have been sealed at the feast of the Lord.

³⁹ Those who have departed from the shadow of this age have received glorious garments from the Lord.

⁴⁰ **Take again your full number**, O Zion, and close the list of your people who are clothed in white, who have fulfilled the law of the Lord.

⁴¹ **The number of your children**, whom you desired, **is now complete**. Implore the Lord's authority that your people, who were called from the beginning, may be made holy.'

⁴² I, Ezra, saw on Mount Zion a **great multitude** that I could not number, and they all were praising the Lord with songs.

⁴³ In their midst was a young man of great stature, taller than any of the others, and on the head of each of them he placed a crown, but he was more exalted than they. And I was spellbound.

⁴⁴ Then I asked an angel, 'Who are these, my lord?' ⁴⁵ He answered and said to me, 'These are they who have put off mortal clothing and have put on the immortal, and have confessed the name of God; now they are being crowned and receiving palms.'

⁴⁶ Then I said to the angel, 'Who is that young man who is placing crowns on them and putting palms in their hands?' ⁴⁷ He answered and said to me, '**He is the Son of God, whom they confessed in the world.**' So I began to praise those who had stood valiantly for the name of the Lord. ⁴⁸ Then the angel said to me, 'Go, tell my people how great and many are the wonders of the Lord God that you have seen.'

Ezra's vision is parallel to John's vision in Rev. 7:9-12—and adds further detail. In this vision the predestined number is fulfilled, the saints are already changed from mortality to immortality (see 1 Cor. 15:44-52), and are receiving crowns.

Crowns indicate rulership authority; in this case it is authority to rule in God's kingdom on earth. Luke 19:15-19 (selected quotes),

v 17 He said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been trustworthy in a very small thing, **take charge of ten cities.**'

v 19 He said to him, 'And you, **rule over five cities.**'

The OTHER BELIEVERS

Throughout the Church age there have always been other believers who are not destined for heaven (not part of the Bride of Christ) but yet have saving faith. For awhile the first believers from Samaria were like this (Acts 8:5-8,12-17). And when Paul first came to Ephesus he met believers who at that time had not been born of the Spirit (but they had been baptized by John the Baptizer, Acts 19:1-7).

In both encounters, the Holy Spirit birth was announced and accepted, and they entered the **heavenly high calling**— (“destined for eternal life,” as in Acts 13:48). However, **these people were true believers even before their spiritual new birth**, and also now this is true of many believers. (We must recognise that Spirit birth is a matter of **predestination**—divine choice; Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:5,11.) Even without Spiritual new birth, faith in Jesus has hope of Kingdom reward and promise of salvation, *and many such have died for their faith and been martyred.*

The ENDTIME MARTYRS

While the antichrist is in power, and the Bride saints are not here, many other believers will die for their refusal to take the mark of the beast. These are the endtime believers that are in places under antichrist control, who are not among those given a protective seal **but nevertheless have saving faith in Jesus Christ and are called saints. These are the endtime martyrs for Christ.**

Rev. 12:17,

Then the dragon was angry with the woman,
and went off to make war on **the rest of her children**, those
who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus.

Rev. 13:7, (the sea beast)

... **it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.**

Rev. 13:10b, **Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.**

Rev. 14:12-13,

Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who
keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith of Jesus.
And I heard a voice from heaven saying,
“Write this: Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord.”
“Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labours,
for their deeds follow them.”

Evidently at that point of time, the endtime massacre of Jesus believers is fully accomplished, which is described in Rev. 14:14-16 as “the harvest of the earth,” and which is followed by “the great winepress of God’s wrath” (in verses 17-20). At that point of time, God is ready to pour out his bowls of wrath upon the earth, **the seven last plagues.** Rev. 15:1-3a,

v 1 Then I saw another portent in heaven, great and amazing:
seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last,
for with them the wrath of God is ended.

v 2 **And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mixed with fire,
and those who had conquered
the beast and its image and the number of its name
standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.**

v 3a And they sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb:

The 'sea of glass' scene is obviously somewhere in heaven or the spirit realm where the souls of the endtime martyrs are waiting for their resurrection bodies. *This group of believers is **different** from the Bride of Christ overcomers because they are waiting in a **different place**, and are given a **different symbolic gift**, and are singing a **different song** than the Bride; (compare with Rev. 6:9-11 and 14:1-5).* These are the people referred to separately, in Revelation 7:13-17,

- v 13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?'
- v 14 I said to him, 'Sir, you are the one who knows.' Then he said to me, '**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.'
- v 15... For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the One who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'

Earth people are in view here; they need shelter; they get hungry and thirsty; their bodies can be scorched by sun radiation and heat (Rev. 16:8-9). They need guiding and shepherding; they have much sorrow from the tribulation time—but God promises to wipe the tears from their eyes. The reward of these martyrs is an inheritance here in earth, and it will be fine. They are before God's throne in his temple which is the New Jerusalem city coming to earth; Rev. 21:3-4 and v 22,

vv 3-4 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God **is among mortals**. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.'

v 22, I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty... Rev. 22:14,

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates.

All the endtime believers in antichrist lands, who are living by God's laws and have a testimony of Jesus, and who are killed for not taking the mark of the beast **will be in the first resurrection of the Kingdom age**. Rev. 20:4,

Then I saw thrones,
and those seated on them were given authority to judge.

I **also** saw the souls of those who had been beheaded
for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God.

They had not worshipped the beast or its image
and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands.

They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

From this text we see that the Bride of Christ saints, “those seated on thrones,” are already in heaven, having been taken up at an earlier time. And afterwards, the endtime believers who are killed for their faith during the reign of the beast will get their earthly resurrection bodies **at the start** of Christ’s millennial reign.

The ENDTIME REMNANT

The story of Elijah and Elisha reveals two different kinds of endtime believers. And just as they were together for some while, the Church saints in the endtime **co-exist awhile** with another kind of endtime believers. (The Church-age saints are caught up to heaven at an appointed time, just as Elijah was caught up—thus symbolising heaven-called Christians). The ‘**Elisha-type believers**’ serve Jesus just like Church saints **but they remain here** because their inheritance is earthly.

The remnant of endtime believers given protection are typified by **Elisha** and his friends **the company of prophets** (*2 Kings Chapter 2*), that continued on earth after Elijah was taken up. (Apparently Elisha had greater Spirit-infilling than the company of prophets, indicating different degrees of Spirit-infilling operating in this remnant.) So after the Church is caught up, **Elisha and company symbolise the endtime remnant of believers** to carry forward the Kingdom message—who are providentially put in safe places from attack of antichrist forces. This relates to the woman (Rev. 12:6,13-16) when she is taken to places of wilderness refuge, prophetic of the protection provided for the endtime remnant.

In principle these believers are much the same as the endtime martyrs except that they are providentially put in regions of safety for survival into the Kingdom. **Having divine protection, the remnant believers all continue on earth after the Church is taken up—and continue to live into the Kingdom after Jesus returns.** (See our essay entitled, “Remnant refuge for some last day believers.”)

The endtime remnant is chosen from throughout the world and therefore the wilderness refuge places are in many regions and countries; they are prepared by God and he knows how to take his people to his safe places at the right time. Rev. 12:14,

But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle, so that she could fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to her place where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time.*

*A time, times, and half a time, is the same as 42 months, 1260 days, or 3½ years.

The RECLAIMED TRIBES of ISRAEL

We know that the modern state called Israel contains only a small part of the family of Jacob. The Jewish population is from the European and Mediterranean area—descendants from the Roman captivity; (see the essay, “Pre-dawn Israel”). ***It therefore represents only the “House of Judah”*** (and only a small part of that). We also know that most Bible prophecies of Israeli restoration are for the ***earlier*** Assyrian and Babylonian captivities that included all the tribes living in the land.

In our essay entitled “The Twelve Tribes of Israel” we have explained that the eastern and northern tribes were put at the east side of Assyria—later migrating farther eastward on the Silk Road into central Asia and China, and settling there. We also explained that the larger portion of Jews from the Babylonian captivity ***remained in Persia*** (did not return to Jerusalem) and continued living in the east and in later centuries migrated into India and into many places throughout Asia. Hence, Israel’s final restoration must include descendants of ***all*** of these eastern tribes—most of whom have lost knowledge of their ancient Israeli tribal ancestry and by now must be a large multitude of people.

The Rev. 7:2-8 text is not about Israeli Jews, or Sephardic or Ashkenazi Jews from European or western-world diasporas, and nothing is said about preaching the Gospel. This text is about an entirely different idea. It is about reclaiming Israel’s forgotten tribes in the eastern world who have lost their identity, and to protect them in the endtime—***to be ready for the revealing of New World Israel.*** The angel given this task rises in the east (ANATOLAS HELIOU, *rising of the sun*). Rev. 7:2-8,

I saw another angel ascending **from the rising of the sun**, having the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to damage earth and sea, saying, ‘Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have marked the servants of our God with a seal on their foreheads.’

And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed out of **every tribe** of the people of Israel:

From the tribe of **Judah** 12,000 sealed,
Reuben 12,000, **Gad** 12,000, **Asher** 12,000, **Naphtali** 12,000,
Manasseh 12,000, **Simeon** 12,000, **Levi** 12,000, **Issachar** 12,000,
Zebulun 12,000, **Joseph** 12,000, **Benjamin** 12,000 were sealed.

These eastern tribes are not taken to ‘safe places’ as the remnant, they instead are given protection where they are. This seal of protection could be territorial as well as personal; we know that the locust plague cannot harm them (Rev. 9:4).

The tribes were never the same size, and the prophetic blessings of Moses in Deuteronomy 33 show size differences in the Kingdom; (compare v 6 and v 17). The number 12,000 represents the earthly kingdom (12 tribes X 1000 years), and 144,000 shows earth and heaven together (12 tribes X 12 apostles X 1000 years). We know that the twelve apostles were promised to rule over the twelve tribes in the time of renewal of all things (Mt. 19:28; and is again seen in Rev. 21:12-14). The listing of tribes in the Bible is always twelve, but in fact there were fourteen because Joseph's tribe enlarged, but every tribe taken captive is included here. ***We expect this reclamation of the eastern tribes is for large masses of people.***

This endtime reclaiming of the eastern tribes was a mystery hidden until now, and even now there are many details not yet revealed; but it's important to know about this endtime event because the political impact in the world will be ***large***. These people are identified as '***the tribes of Israel***' but they are also identified as '***the servants of our God***.' This description makes them somehow different from the endtime remnant who are '*living by God's laws and have a testimony of Jesus.*' Yet we know these reclaimed tribes are serving God's endtime purpose and are being reclaimed for his Kingdom. They are under the rule of the twelve apostles and their inheritance will be earth. ***They are the main body of new world Israel.***

During the endtime all believers will be very dependent on hearing from God in ***prophetic revelations***, and will need ***wisdom from heaven***.

Ephesians 1:17-18,

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory,
may give you a ***spirit of wisdom and revelation*** as you come
to know him, so that with the eyes of your heart enlightened,
you may know what is the hope to which he has called you ...