

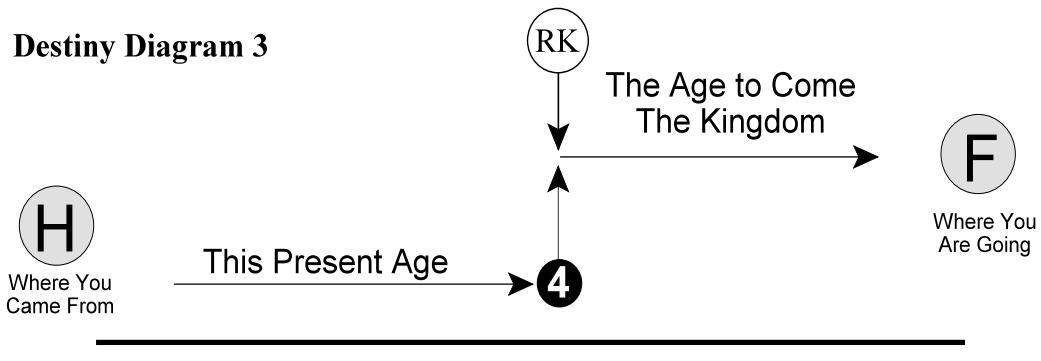
Lesson # 5

Resurrection Life in the Age to Come

Let's recap. In the previous chapters we named resurrection as one of the basics of the future. The resurrection of the just, the return of Christ and the appearing of the Kingdom government of God on earth essentially marks the end of this present age and the beginning of the next, referred to in the scriptures as "the age to come." Jesus promised eternal life in the age to come (see Matt 10:29-30) and the book of Hebrews also speaks of the age to come (see Heb 6:5).

The age to come is also referred to as the age of peace. Seven hundred years earlier, Isaiah the prophet foresaw Jesus' birth and spoke of Him as the Prince of Peace (Is 9:6). In the age to come, Jesus will rule the earth and will bring all things under His authority resulting in peace on earth as it is in heaven. This will be the fulfillment of that which was spoken about Jesus at His birth when the heavenly host proclaimed, "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"(Luke 2:14).

Now it is time to modify our Destiny Diagram illustrating our path to the future. We will insert into our diagram a number 4 (representing resurrection) and we will insert RK (representing the Return of the King). At the resurrection, the justified will join Christ and rule with Him in the Kingdom of God. This will elevate our path line because the resurrection marks the end of this present age and the beginning of the age to come.



Overlap of the Ages

As pointed out, there are *two* resurrections associated with the age to come, the resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the unjust.

But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

— Luke 14:13-14 (NKJV)

... and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

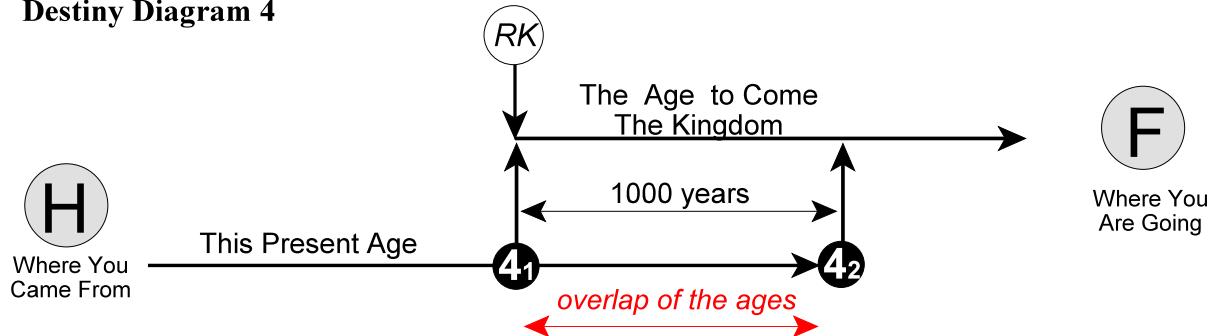
— Revelation 20:4-6 (NKJV)

Both of these passages imply *two* resurrections. Luke 14:14 implies a resurrection of the just separate from the resurrection of the wicked and Revelation Chapter 20 speaks of two resurrections, a resurrection of the just at the beginning of a 1000 year period (the age to come), and a resurrection of the unjust at the end of this 1000 year period. At the first resurrection, Jesus will return and those among the dead who are just will be raised to immortality along with the just who are living at that time (see 1 Cor 15:51-52). They will enter into “the age come” and reign with Christ. Over these, the second death has no power.

However, the unjust who are living at Christ’s coming will not put on immortality and will continue to live, in some respects as if they are still in this present age. During this time, mortals will be dwelling simultaneously on the earth with immortals. Therefore, we see that the age to come and this present age *overlap* in time.

This requires more modification to our diagram. We will indicate that there are two resurrections separated by 1000 years and refer to them as 4_1 and 4_2 . We will extend the line representing “This present Age” through the first resurrection to the second resurrection, illustrating the overlap of the ages.

Destiny Diagram 4



4₁ The First Resurrection & RK The Return of the King
4₂ The Second Resurrection

The Day of the Lord

Having put on immortality in the 1000 year *Day of the Lord*, God's people will live beyond 1000 years, something that has not been done since sin entered the world through Adam. Because God considers 1000 years to be *one day*, this may explain why He said to Adam and Eve concerning the forbidden tree, “... for in *the day* that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Genesis 2:17). This would also explain why Paul, when describing the events surrounding this period to the Corinthians said, “The last enemy that will be destroyed is death” (1 Corinthians 15:26). The point that seems to be made here is that when a humans live past the 1000 year mark, the last finger-hold that death has on humanity will slip off and the grip of death will be loosed forever.

Some believe that the 1000 year millennium is not a literal 1000 years. They claim “1000 years” is a symbolic term used to represent an indefinite period of time. They cite the use of “1000” in other places in scripture, such as Psalm 50:10 which states that God owns the cattle on a thousand hills. This example does imply an indefinite number, otherwise it would mean that God does not own the cattle on hill # 1001. The context makes this obvious.

But there is no such obvious context in Revelation chapter 20. It simply says, “1000 years.” Those who hold to the “indefinite” interpretation also usually point out that, except for Revelation Chapter 20, there are no other places in scripture that refer to a literal 1000 year millennium. They argue that good Bible interpretation requires corroborating scriptures—and I would agree. However, when we consider that there are at least twenty-four places in scripture referring to the “Day of the Lord” and remember that God sees 1000 years as one day(see 2 Peter 3:8), we see there many references to this 1000 year period.

There are also other reasons why the non-literal interpretation of the 1000 year millennium seem unlikely. However, I will not take the time to go into that here.

The Period of Restoration

Peter foresaw this age to come and spoke of it in his message to the people who gathered after the lame man was healed at the beautiful gate (see Acts chapter 3). He challenged those listening saying...

“Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.”

— Acts 3:19-21 (NASB)

Peter understood that the return of Jesus Christ to earth would initiate an age where a mighty restoration would take place. Having returned and subdued all resistance to His kingdom, an age of peace will ensue and Jesus' title, *Prince* of Peace, will become *King* of Peace. Because of the righteous government of God ruling the earth, we will see peace and blessing cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Peace and harmony will be so pervasive on earth that even wild carnivores like lions and tigers will cease to hunt other animals and simply eat grass like cattle. No harm will come to children, even if they play by the den of poisonous snakes.

"But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea."

— Isaiah 11:4-9 (NKJV)

Even the life span of mortal humans will be greatly increased! Isaiah says in another place...

Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed."

— Isaiah 65:20 (NIV)

The picture we get from this passage is a world where difficult pregnancies, birth defects, and sickness in general are a rarity. People will live for much longer periods of time. Life expectancy will be such that any mortal who only lives 100 years, (considered very old in this present age) will be thought to have died young. They will be considered cursed, or in other words, one who was judged early.

In short, the period of restoration of all things will result in a restored earth, earth the way it was originally in the Garden of Eden. Ever since sin entered the human race, all of creation has been groaning and longing for the revealed children of God, who as joint heirs with Christ, will oversee this restoration.

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

— Romans 8:16-22 (NKJV)

Christ's Resurrection: Our Source of Hope

We should point out again that our hope for this glorious future is based in and validated by the resurrection of Christ. The Apostle Paul makes this point in 1 Corinthians Chapter 15 saying, " But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty" (1 Cor 15:13-14). But, he gives a strong witness of Christ's resurrection.

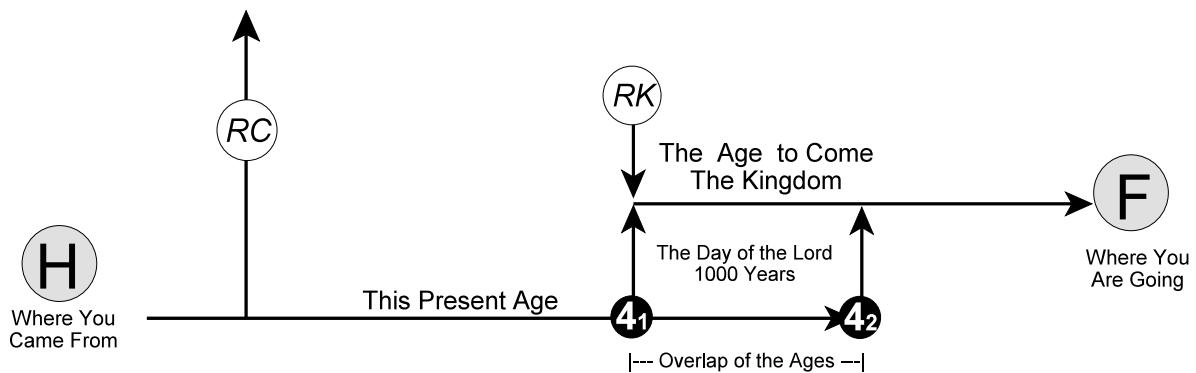
For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day

according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

— 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 (NKJV)

Therefore, we will modify our Destiny Diagram once again by adding “RC” which stands for the Resurrection of Christ.

Destiny Diagram 5



RC The Resurrection of Christ

- 4₁ The First Resurrection & RK - The Return of the King
- 4₂ The Second Resurrection