The Seven Administrations of Scripture

A narrative study, with the governing word of each age — King James Version

A study of the seven administrations of scripture — Eden, Patriarchal, Mosaic Law, Christ, Grace, the Day of Wrath, and the Day of Judgment — each opened by something God makes heard, establishing new governing terms, and read again as the mirror of God's plan of the ages.

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Anchor Passage

> **2 Timothy 2:15** *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*
>
> **Ephesians 1:10** *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:*

Introduction

A. Seven Stretches, Each Opened by a Voice

Seven stretches of biblical history run from Eden to the Day of Judgment, this study argues, each opened by something God makes heard — His own voice, a sound from heaven, or words He gives —

establishing new terms for how He deals with His household, and closed only when the next such declaration sounds. Laying out the shape of all seven, in full, is the purpose of what follows.

Seven such stretches make up what this study, following Melvin Elliott, calls all the time of this present earth: a bounded, countable span opened at Eden and closed at the Day of Judgment, before an uncounted state, standing beyond the sequence altogether, begins.

The chart below is the whole shape of it at a glance. The chapters that follow walk through each stretch in full, with the governing King James text quoted in full at every declaration.

Administration	Span	Opens With	Governing Basis
1. Eden — the Garden	Creation to the expulsion	Gen 2:15-17	A broad permission, a charge to tend and rule, and one prohibition
2. Patriarchal	The expulsion to Sinai	Gen 3:14-19, with sub-declarations to Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob	Credited faith (Gen 15:6)
3. Mosaic Law	Sinai to Christ's baptism	Ex 19:16-19; 20:1	Vowed obedience to a written code (Ex 19:8; 24:7)
4. Christ — the Kingdom at Hand	The baptism to Pentecost	Matt 3:16-17	Repent; the kingdom is at hand (Matt 4:17)
5. Grace — the Administration of the Mystery	Pentecost to the gathering of the church	Acts 2:2-4	Grace through faith, apart from law (Eph 2:8-9)
6. The Day of Wrath	The gathering of the church to Christ's return	1 Thess 4:16-17 (closing 5, opening 6)	Judgment poured out in full strength (Rev 6:17; 16:1)
7. The Day of Judgment — Christ's Return with His Saints	Christ's return to the great white throne	Rev 19:11-16	Christ reigns in person (Rev 20:4)
Beyond the seven: the new heaven and the new earth	Unending	Rev 21:1	Outside the counted sequence entirely

The same history can also be read a second way. Read in a straight line, as Chapters 1-7 read it, it is a sequence of seven stretches of time. Read as a whole, it has a shape: its closing ages answer its opening ages in reverse order, like the two sides of a mirror. The serpent who entered the garden is bound; the nations scattered at Babel are gathered; the heavens and the earth God first made are made new. Chapter 8 lays the seven administrations over that mirror.

The complete study. Chapter 8 of this study is a condensed summary of the mirror. The full case, with a chapter for each of the eight pairs, every verse quoted in full, and every link weighed, is set out in this library's companion study, **The Structure of Scripture — A Demonstration of the Precision of God's Word**.

Weighing it: Narrative — states the study's shape; carries no weight on any contested claim by itself.

B. What "Administration" Means

The word itself is scriptural before it is a label this study applies. "Administration" translates the Greek *oikonomia* — literally the management or stewardship of a household. The King James translators rendered it "stewardship" in Jesus' parable of the unjust steward and "dispensation" everywhere Paul uses it. Paul uses it chiefly of his own charge:

> **Ephesians 3:2** *If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:*
>
> **Colossians 1:25** *Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;*

And once, in the anchor passage above, he uses it of God's own ordering of the ages — "the dispensation of the fulness of times" (Ephesians 1:10), a coming stretch of time in which God gathers all things together in Christ. That is the sense this study carries: a distinguishable stretch of time in which God deals with His household on a stated governing basis, that basis changing at a point He marks Himself. (The English word "administration" in the King James Version translates a different Greek word, one meaning service or ministry; this study's use of it follows the more recent translations of *oikonomia*. Appendix B §1 gives every occurrence.)

Weighing it: Direct statement — the idea of a God-given stewardship over a stretch of time is scripture's own. The other side can fairly answer that Paul's usual subject is his own charge, not a scheme of history. Agreed; Ephesians 1:10 is the one place the word reaches beyond that, and this study does not lean on it for more than the idea.

C. The Test This Study Uses, and Where It Bends

Scripture does not itself hand over a numbered list of seven administrations the way it hands over the ten plagues or the twelve tribes. That count, and where each boundary falls, is this study's own organizing device, tested against the text rather than read off it directly. Other careful readers have counted differently — Scofield counts seven with different boundaries, Bullinger counts seven with the eternal state as the last of them — and Appendix C sets all three side by side.

The working test used to find each boundary is the same throughout: an administration opens where God makes Himself heard, audibly and publicly, establishing new terms. Honesty requires saying at the start that the test does not look identical at every boundary. At Sinai and at the Jordan, God's own voice is quoted directly. At Pentecost, the words are given by the Spirit and spoken through human lips (Chapter 5 §A). At the gathering of the church, the voice is the Lord's shout and the archangel's voice (Chapter 5 §G). The test holds throughout — something is heard, from God, at every boundary — but what is heard takes different forms, and each chapter says which.

Weighing it: Method, not argument — defines the test so that each chapter can be checked against it.

D. The Strongest Case on the Other Side

A study that only quotes the verses it likes has not earned its conclusion. Here, before any answer is given, are the strongest objections to this study's framework, stated the way a careful reader would state them.

First, scripture never numbers the administrations, so any count is a construction.

Second, the boundaries are disputed among people who accept administrations at all. Some divide the span between the Fall and Sinai into three periods, at the Flood and at Abraham's call; some give Christ's earthly ministry no administration of its own, placing it under the Law; some begin Grace at the cross rather than at Pentecost.

Third, faith was never only a Patriarchal basis. Habakkuk wrote "the just shall live by his faith" while the Law was in force, and Hebrews 11 runs its roll of faith straight through Moses, Rahab, and David. So "credited faith" and "a vowed code" cannot describe two different ways a person was ever made right with God.

Fourth, the Law was still in force throughout Christ's ministry — He was "made under the law" (Galatians 4:4) and told His hearers to observe what the scribes taught from Moses' seat (Matthew 23:2-3) — so a separate Christ administration may blur more than it clarifies.

Fifth, the audible test is uneven, as §C admitted, and at the Mystery it is this study's own test that decides the question.

Each chapter answers the objection that bears on it, in its own weighing notes, and Appendix D gathers every answer in one place.

Weighing it: Opposing case, stated — weighs against this study, and is answered chapter by chapter rather than here.

E. What This Study Claims

This study argues eight claims. They are named here once, so that each weighing note can say which one it bears on.

	The claim	Argued in
V	Each administration opens with something God makes heard, marking new terms	Intro §C; every chapter's boundary section
S	Seven administrations, with the boundaries placed here, are a sound reading of the whole span	Ch. 1 §D; Ch. 2 §B; Ch. 3 §D; Ch. 4 §D
B	Each administration governs on its own stated basis, and the basis changes only at a boundary	Ch. 1 §B; Ch. 2 §§C-D; Ch. 3 §§B-C; Ch. 4 §C; Ch. 5 §B

	The claim	Argued in
T	Pentecost's tongues were God's own audible words, spoken through the believers	Ch. 5 §A
G	The Mystery is the fuller content of the one Grace administration, not an administration of its own	Ch. 5 §§C-E
E	The gathering of the church closes Grace before the Day of Wrath, and Christ then returns bodily with His saints, judges the nations, delivers Israel, and reigns a thousand years	Ch. 5 §G; Ch. 6; Ch. 7
H	The sound at Pentecost came from heaven; it was not the believers' own breathing	Ch. 4 §E; Appendix A
M	The seven administrations fit inside the mirror of God's plan of the ages, and part from it only where the two outlines measure different things	Ch. 5 §F; Ch. 8

Weighing it: Method, not argument — names what is being tested.

F. How to Read This Study's Weighing Notes

Every section of this study ends with a short note in bold, headed **Weighing it**. It is there because a study that states a strong argument and a weak one in the same confident tone has not been honest with its reader.

Each note says two things. First, how strong the section's argument is, on a five-step scale used across this library. **Direct statement** means scripture says it in so many words; the only question is what the words mean. **Strong inference** means it follows closely from what scripture says, and the alternative has to strain against the text. **Reasonable inference** means it is the more natural reading, but an honest reader can take it otherwise. **Corroboration only** means it fits this study's position but would fit the opposite roughly as well — it may be stated, not leaned on. **Neutral** means it is commonly cited but settles nothing.

Second, each note says *which way the section points*, and on which of the claims above. Some sections argue nothing contested — they tell the story, or explain the method — and they say so plainly rather than being given a manufactured rating. Each chapter closes with a short "In Short" that says what it found in plain words.

Where the narrative states a count, a sequence or a word study in a sentence, Appendix B gives the full detail behind it, so that the reader can keep reading and check later.

Weighing it: Method, not argument — bears no weight either way.

Chapter 1 — Eden: The Garden

Administration	Span	Opens With	Governing Basis
1. Eden — the Garden	Creation to the expulsion	Gen 2:15-17	A broad permission, a charge to tend and rule, and one prohibition

A. The Name: Garden, Not Paradise

Common usage often calls this the "Paradise" administration, following Melvin Elliott's terminology, and the name has an old pedigree: the Greek translation of the Old Testament, made before Christ, rendered Eden's garden with the word *paradeisos*. But Genesis itself names this place *gan*, "garden" (Genesis 2:8, 15), and in the King James New Testament "paradise" appears three times, never of the garden behind Adam. Each time it looks forward: to the place in Christ's coming kingdom promised to the dying thief, who had asked to be remembered "when thou comest into thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42-43); to the paradise Paul was shown in vision, "the third heaven" (2 Corinthians 12:2-4); and to the tree of life "in the midst of the paradise of God," promised to the one who overcomes (Revelation 2:7). Paradise, in the New Testament's own usage, is the garden restored, not the garden lost. So this study keeps the text's own word for the first administration: Eden, the Garden.

Weighing it: Direct statement — on the name only; bears on no contested claim. The other side can fairly answer that the old Greek translation's use of *paradeisos* for Eden gives Elliott's term a real basis. Agreed; this is a choice of the plainer word, not a correction of an error.

B. A Broad Permission, a Charge, and One Prohibition

God's first recorded word to the man, spoken before the woman was formed (Genesis 2:18-22), sets a single prohibition inside a broad permission, and it comes with a charge:

> **Genesis 2:15** *And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*
>
> **Genesis 2:16-17** *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

To the man and the woman together, God then gives the blessing and the commission of dominion:

> **Genesis 1:28** *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

That is the whole of the governing basis: a broad permission, a charge to tend the garden and rule the earth, and one prohibition as the single test of trust. There is no codified system beyond it, and no

priest, altar or ritual between the man and God. Obedience is owed directly, to a word God Himself has spoken.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim B: the terms of Eden are stated in God's own words. The other side can fairly answer that Genesis 1:28 is itself a set of commands, so to call Eden's basis "one command" is too narrow. Conceded; the previous edition said "one command," and this edition corrects it. The one prohibition remains the single test.

C. The Boundary: God Calls, Then Judges

The administration closes with a second audible declaration, God calling out to the man who is hiding and then pronouncing judgment on each party in turn:

> **Genesis 3:9** *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*
>
> **Genesis 3:14-15** *And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*
>
> **Genesis 3:17-19** *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

Inside the judgment itself sits the first promise of redemption in scripture: the woman's seed who would bruise the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15). Every administration that follows moves toward that promise. Then the garden is closed behind them:

> **Genesis 3:23-24** *Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim V: this boundary is marked by God's own quoted voice. The other side can fairly answer that this voice closes Eden, and that reading the same words as opening the next administration is this study's own arrangement. That is so, and Chapter 2 §B says why.

D. Why Not an Age of "Conscience"?

No new positive law is handed down at this boundary. The verse that comes closest to naming what governs conduct afterward is God's own later question to Cain, still framed as a matter of conscience rather than code:

> **Genesis 4:6-7** *And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*

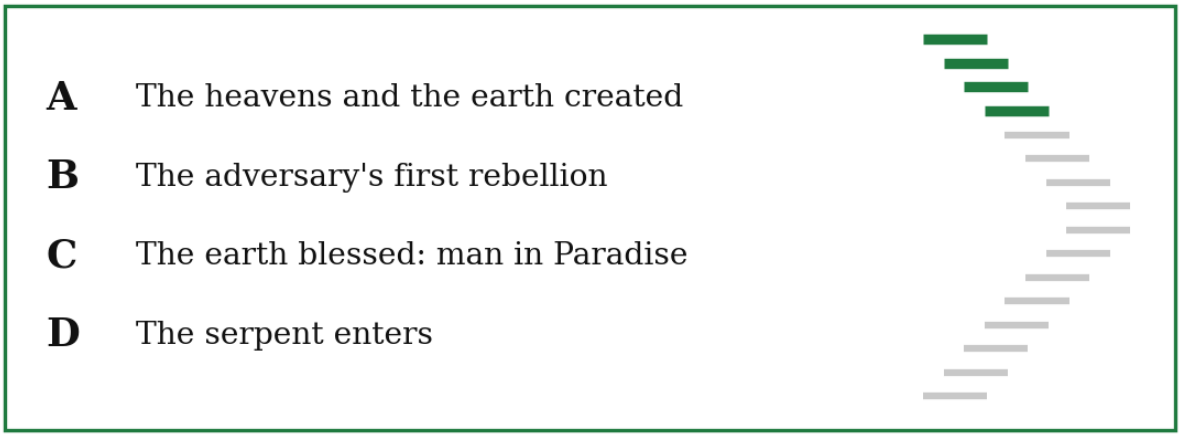
That absence of a new code is the reason some older schemes name the age after Eden "Conscience," and then mark two further ages before Sinai — one opening at the Flood, one at Abraham's call (Appendix C). This study treats the whole span from the expulsion to Sinai as one administration instead, because at neither the Flood nor Abraham's call is a new basis announced for how a person stands before God. That basis, as Chapter 2 shows, is stated once and stays the same throughout.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for claim S: the span from the Fall to Sinai is best read as one administration. The other side can fairly answer that Genesis 9:6 gives a new ordinance of justice and Genesis 17 a new covenant sign, and that these are new terms of a kind. This study's answer is that neither changes the basis on which Abraham, or anyone, was counted righteous (Genesis 15:6) — and that is the basis the test looks for.

In Short

Eden's terms were simple and spoken directly by God: freedom to eat from every tree but one, a charge to tend and to rule, and one prohibition as the single test. The administration ended with God's voice calling, judging, and — inside that judgment — promising the Seed who would one day undo it.

Where this sits in the Plan of the Ages (Chapter 8). Eden holds the first four members of the Plan on the way down: A, the heavens and the earth created; B, the adversary's first rebellion, through pride (1 Timothy 3:6), before he entered the garden as "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan" (Revelation 12:9); C, man in Paradise; and D, the serpent entering. All four are answered, in reverse order, at the far end of the Plan: the serpent bound (D′), the earth restored (C′), the adversary's last rebellion (B′), and the new heavens and the new earth (A′).



Chapter 2 — Patriarchal

Administration	Span	Opens With	Governing Basis
2. Patriarchal	The expulsion to Sinai	Gen 3:14-19, with sub-declarations to Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob	Credited faith (Gen 15:6)

A. Scripture's Own Word

"Patriarchal" is not only a convenient modern label. It is scripture's own word for the men this administration is named for:

> **Hebrews 7:4** *Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.*
>
> **Acts 7:8-9** *And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs. And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,*

The word appears once more in the New Testament, of David (Acts 2:29), who lived under the Law. So it is not a technical term for this age alone; it names the founding fathers of the nation. Its use for Abraham and for Jacob's twelve sons is what makes it a fitting, scriptural name here.

Weighing it: Direct statement — on the name only; bears on no contested claim. The other side can fairly answer that because David is also called a patriarch, the word fits this age without defining it. Agreed.

B. One Basis, Many Renewals

The administration runs from the expulsion from Eden to the giving of the Law at Sinai, and Genesis 3:14-19, already read in Chapter 1, functions as both the closing declaration of Eden and the opening one here: it sets the terms of life outside the garden — toil, sorrow, death, and a promised Seed. Everything that follows within it — God's dealings with Noah, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — comes as sub-declarations inside a single governing basis, not as new administrations of their own:

> **Genesis 6:13-14** *And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.*
>
> **Genesis 9:1** *And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.*
>
> **Genesis 9:5-6** *And surely your blood of your lives will I require... Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.*
>
> **Genesis 12:1-3** *Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a*

> *great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*
>
> **Genesis 17:10-11** *This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.*
>
> **Genesis 28:13, 15** *And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed... And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.*
>
> **Genesis 35:9-10** *And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name.*

Some of these renewals carry real new ordinances — the sanctity of human blood after the Flood, the sign of circumcision for Abraham's house. But none of them changes what actually governs a person's standing before God.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for claim S: God's words to Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob renew one administration rather than opening new ones. The other side can fairly answer that the covenant with Noah is made with every living creature and still stands, and that circumcision is a new covenant sign, so these are genuine new terms. This study agrees they are real; its answer is that the basis of righteousness named in §C runs unchanged through all of them.

C. Credited Faith

That basis is stated once, plainly, of Abraham, and confirmed repeatedly in the New Testament's own reading of this period:

> **Genesis 15:6** *And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*
>
> **Romans 4:13-15** *For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith... for where no law is, there is no transgression.*
>
> **Galatians 3:17** *And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.*
>
> **Hebrews 11:4, 7-8** *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain... By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark... By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*

Credited faith, not a codified law — that is this administration's governing basis, from the expulsion to the foot of Sinai. The promise came first, and the Law, arriving centuries later, could not cancel it.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim B: scripture says Abraham's righteousness was counted to him by faith, and that the promise did not come through law. The other side can fairly answer that faith was never only a Patriarchal basis — people under the Law were justified by faith too. That is true, and Chapter 3 §C faces it directly; what distinguishes this administration is that no written code stood beside the promise.

D. The Boundary: A Vow at Sinai

The Patriarchal administration ends at Sinai, where Israel answers God's offer not with a belief but with a vow. The offer itself is conditional from its first words:

> **Exodus 19:5** *Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:*
>
> **Exodus 19:8** *And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.*

That first vow comes before a word of the Law is spoken. The voice follows (Chapter 3 §A), and then the people vow twice more, and the covenant is sealed in blood:

> **Exodus 24:3, 7** *And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do... And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.*
>
> **Exodus 24:8** *And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.*

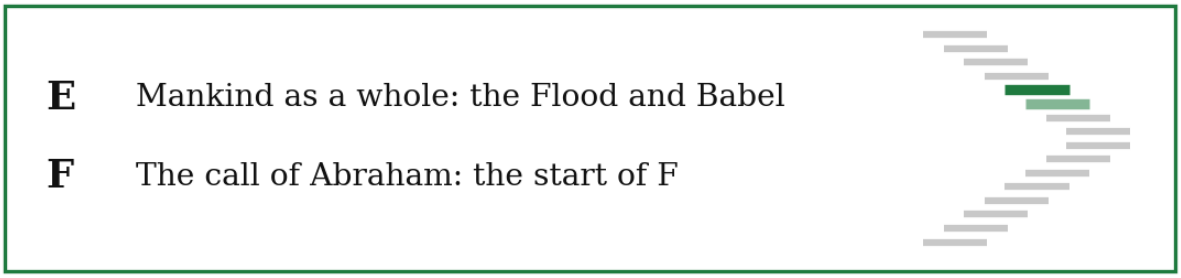
Sinai, then, is one event in three movements: the offer and the people's vow, the voice from the mountain, and the covenant ratified in blood (Appendix B §4 sets out the whole sequence). The voice is the boundary's audible marker; the vow is its new basis. That shift — from a righteousness counted on the basis of belief to a covenant vowed on the basis of performance — is the line the next administration is built on.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim B: the conditional offer and the people's vow are in the text in so many words. The other side can fairly answer that the vow did not replace faith as the way any believing Israelite stood before God. Agreed — what changed at Sinai was the covenant under which the nation lived, not the way God counts a person righteous.

In Short

From the expulsion to Sinai, God spoke again and again — to Noah, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob — but the basis never changed: Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. The administration ended when a whole nation answered God's conditional offer with a vow of obedience, sealed in blood.

Where this sits in the Plan of the Ages (Chapter 8). The Patriarchal administration holds E, mankind dealt with as a whole, through the Flood and Babel, and the opening of F, the call of Abraham. Their partners come at the King's return: the nations gathered and judged (E′), and Israel called again (F′).



Chapter 3 — Mosaic Law

Administration	Span	Opens With	Governing Basis
3. Mosaic Law	Sinai to Christ's baptism	Ex 19:16-19; 20:1	Vowed obedience to a written code (Ex 19:8; 24:7)

A. The Loudest Boundary

Sinai opens with the most unmistakable audible declaration in the whole sequence — not a voice alone, but thunder, fire, and trumpet surrounding it:

> **Exodus 19:16, 19** *And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled… And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.*
>
> **Exodus 20:1** *And God spake all these words, saying,*

The Ten Commandments follow directly. Israel's own later recollection of the moment, in Moses' closing addresses in Deuteronomy, confirms that the people heard it themselves, and that the mediation of Moses began only afterward, at their own request:

> **Deuteronomy 5:4** *The LORD talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire,*
>
> **Deuteronomy 5:22, 27** *These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more… Go thou near, and hear all that the LORD our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the LORD our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it.*

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim V: at Sinai the whole nation heard God's voice. No serious reading disputes it.

B. A Written Code, Bound to a Vow

The governing basis is a comprehensive written code — often divided, for convenience, into moral law in the Ten Commandments, civil law in the judgments that follow (Exodus 21-23), and ceremonial law from Exodus 25 onward, though scripture itself speaks of it as one law. It is bound to a vow of obedience:

> **Galatians 3:12** *And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.*

Deuteronomy 28 spells out what that vow carries with it, blessing and curse both tied directly to performance:

> **Deuteronomy 28:1-2** *And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.*
>
> **Deuteronomy 28:15** *But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:*

The chapter runs to sixty-eight verses — fourteen of blessing and fifty-four of curse. It is not reproduced here in full, since the shape of it, blessing and curse both bound to the vow Israel made at Sinai, is the point that matters for this study.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim B: the Law's terms are conditional on performance, in its own words and in Paul's. The other side can fairly answer that the Law also provided sacrifice and forgiveness for those who failed. Agreed; the sacrifices were part of the code, and they did not change its "if thou shalt hearken" terms.

C. Faith Under the Law

One thing needs saying plainly, so that this chapter is not misread. "The law is not of faith" describes the terms of the covenant Israel lived under. It does not mean that no one under the Law was made right with God by faith. Scripture says otherwise, in the Law's own period:

> **Habakkuk 2:4** *Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.*
>
> **Romans 4:6-7** *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.*

Hebrews 11 carries its roll of faith straight through Moses, the Passover, the Red Sea, Rahab, and David (Hebrews 11:23-33). So the difference between the Patriarchal administration and the Law is not two ways of being saved. It is two different arrangements under which God dealt with His people: a promise received by faith, and a national covenant of blessing and curse, vowed on the basis of performance, which a believing Israelite lived under while still standing before God by faith.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim B, narrowing it: the basis that changed at Sinai was the covenant's terms, not the way God counts a person righteous. The other side can fairly answer that if faith runs through both administrations, the "governing basis" has not really changed. This study's answer is Paul's: the Law "was added" alongside a promise it could not cancel (Galatians 3:17-19), and a nation living under blessing and curse by performance is governed differently from a family living under promise alone.

D. Where the Law's Administration Ends

This administration closes at the same moment the next one opens — the voice from heaven at Christ's baptism, quoted in full in Chapter 4. But the Law does not vanish the instant that voice sounds. Christ was born under it and kept it, and He affirmed it throughout His earthly ministry:

> **Galatians 4:4-5** *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*
>
> **Matthew 23:2-3** *Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.*

So this boundary marks the start of a new administration overlapping the tail end of the old one's formal operation. The Law's claim is taken out of the way at the cross (Colossians 2:14; Ephesians 2:15), and the administration that replaces it opens at Pentecost, after the resurrection and the Ascension (Chapter 4 §D).

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for claim S: the baptism is the right place to mark the end of the Law's administration. The other side can fairly answer that the Law's administration properly runs to the cross, with Christ's ministry inside it, and that Galatians 4:4 and Matthew 23:2-3 show it. This study concedes the overlap; its answer is that the baptism is where God's voice is heard from heaven and where a new message — "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" — begins to be preached.

In Short

At Sinai the whole nation heard God speak, and received a written code bound to their own vow, with blessing and curse tied to performance. Faith still justified the believing Israelite; what changed was the covenant the nation lived under. That covenant stayed in force through Christ's own ministry, until the cross took it out of the way.

Where this sits in the Plan of the Ages (Chapter 8). The Law holds the rest of F, the chosen nation called and blessed, from Sinai to Malachi. Its partner is F′, the same nation called again and blessed under a new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31).

F Israel called and blessed: Sinai to Malachi

Chapter 4 — Christ: The Kingdom at Hand

Administration	Span	Opens With	Governing Basis
4. Christ — the Kingdom at Hand	The baptism to Pentecost	Matt 3:16-17	Repent; the kingdom is at hand (Matt 4:17)

A. The Voice at the Jordan

This administration opens with a voice from heaven at Christ's baptism, recorded by all three of the first Gospels:

> **Matthew 3:16-17** *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*
>
> **Mark 1:10-11** *And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*
>
> **Luke 3:21-22** *Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.*

John the Baptist's own testimony confirms the same event from the ground:

> **John 1:32-34** *And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.*

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim V: God's voice from heaven, quoted in three Gospels, opens this administration.

B. Heard Twice More

The voice from heaven sounds a second time, at the Transfiguration, this time adding a direct command:

> **Matthew 17:5** *While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

Moses and Elijah — the Law and the Prophets — appear beside Christ in that scene and then are gone, and the disciples "saw no man, save Jesus only" (Matthew 17:8). And it sounds a third time, in the last week before the cross, heard by a whole crowd:

> **John 12:28-30** *Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.*

"For your sakes" — the voice was meant to be heard. No other administration is marked by God's voice from heaven so often.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim V: three separate voices from heaven fall within this administration. The previous edition counted only two, and called the sound at Pentecost the third; this edition corrects the count (Appendix B §6).

C. The Governing Proclamation

The governing instruction of this administration is a single proclamation, given first by the forerunner and then taken up by Christ Himself in the same words:

> **Matthew 3:2** *And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*
>
> **Matthew 4:17** *From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

That proclamation was addressed to Israel. When Jesus sent out the twelve with the same message, He told them where to take it and where not to:

> **Matthew 10:5-7** *These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

What Christ adds to the Law across this administration is not replacement but intensification. He first says plainly that He has not come to destroy the Law, and then, in the repeated formula of the Sermon on the Mount, moves its standard from outward compliance to the heart:

> **Matthew 5:17-18** *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*
>
> **Matthew 5:21-22** *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment:*

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim B: the kingdom proclamation, and its address to Israel, are in the text in so many words. The other side can fairly answer that this is the Law still in force, preached

to Israel, and not yet a new basis. In part that is right, and Chapter 3 §D conceded the overlap; what is new is the announcement that the kingdom itself is at hand, in the person of the King.

D. The Cross, the Resurrection, and the Ascension

Within this administration comes the center of all of them: Christ's death, burial and resurrection, "according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4), and forty days later His ascension:

> **Acts 1:9** *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.*

The Ascension is not an afterword. Scripture ties the giving of the gift of holy spirit directly to it — the gift could not come until Christ was glorified:

> **John 7:39** *(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost [holy spirit] was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*
>
> **Acts 2:32-33** *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*

Peter's own words at Pentecost link the three together: raised, exalted to God's right hand, and pouring out what the crowd could "see and hear." That is why this study places the next boundary at Pentecost rather than at the cross. The cross took the Law out of the way; the resurrection and the Ascension completed the work; and the new administration opened when the ascended Christ shed forth the gift.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for claim S: the Grace administration begins at Pentecost, not at the cross. The other side can fairly answer that the cross is the redemptive event, and that many count Grace from there. This study's answer is John 7:39 and Acts 2:33: scripture itself says the gift waited on the glorified, ascended Christ, and the gift is what the new administration is built on.

E. The Boundary: A Sound from Heaven

The administration closes with a fourth thing heard from heaven, no longer a voice but a sound, understood by those present as coming from heaven all the same:

> **Acts 2:2** *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*

"All the house" — which this library's study of Acts 2, *Save Yourselves from This Untoward Generation*, argues was the temple, where the crowd was already gathered, rather than a private upper room. See Appendix A, "Acts 2:2: Sound, Wind, and Breath," for the Greek grammar behind this sound — its stated source, and the word that links it to John 20:22 — and for an assessment of a claim that it describes the apostles' own breathing rather than a sound from heaven.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claims V and H: the text says the sound came "from heaven." Appendix A weighs the opposing reading in full.

In Short

The Christ administration was opened by God's voice at the Jordan, heard again on the mountain and again in Jerusalem, and preached as one message to Israel: repent, for the kingdom is at hand. Inside it came the cross, the resurrection and the Ascension — and because the gift waited on the ascended Christ, the administration closed, not at the cross, but at Pentecost, with a sound from heaven.

Where this sits in the Plan of the Ages (Chapter 8). The Christ administration holds G, the First Coming, when the King came to His own and was rejected. Its partner is G′, the Second Coming, when "this same Jesus" returns in like manner (Acts 1:11).



Chapter 5 — Grace: The Administration of the Mystery

Administration	Span	Opens With	Governing Basis
5. Grace — the Administration of the Mystery	Pentecost to the gathering of the church	Acts 2:2-4	Grace through faith, apart from law (Eph 2:8-9)

A. Words Given by the Spirit

Pentecost's declaration is not a directly quoted voice in the manner of Sinai or the baptism. It is audible utterance, given by the Spirit and spoken through the gathered believers themselves:

> **Acts 2:4** *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost [holy spirit, the gift], and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*
>
> **Acts 2:11** *Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.*

Whether that satisfies the same "audible declaration" test as a directly quoted heavenly voice is worth pausing on rather than assuming. Three things in the text say that it does. Luke says the words were given: they spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance." The crowd says what they heard: "the wonderful works of God," in their own languages. And Peter says whose doing it was: the ascended Christ had "shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:33). Paul's own later description of the gift agrees — not human language learning, but God speaking through a human voice, which he ties back to a prophecy of God Himself speaking in other tongues:

> **1 Corinthians 12:7, 10** *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal… to another divers kinds of tongues;*

> **Isaiah 28:11** *For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 14:21-22** *In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not:*

This study's own author, who speaks in tongues, confirms the same thing from firsthand experience: God — Holy Spirit, capitalized, the Giver — supplies the words directly; the believer's own gift of holy spirit, lowercase, the indwelling gift each believer receives (Acts 2:38; Romans 8:9-11), receives them; the believer's body supplies nothing but the mechanics of speech — breath passing over vocal cords already in place — forming words the speaker did not originate. Interpretation of tongues and prophecy — forth-telling a word from God, not fore-telling the future, though the two can overlap — work the same way: the content originates with God and passes through the believer's own speech. On that basis, the words spoken at Pentecost were God's own audible words in the fullest sense, produced through human speech rather than replacing it.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for claim T: Pentecost's tongues were God's own words, audibly spoken. The other side can fairly answer that no verse calls tongues "the voice of God" in so many words, and that personal testimony, however real, is testimony rather than text. That is why this is rated a strong inference and not a direct statement. It rests on Luke's "as the Spirit gave them utterance," the crowd's "we do hear," Peter's "see and hear," and Paul's "will I speak."

B. The Governing Basis

The governing basis of this administration is stated as plainly as any in the sequence:

> **Acts 2:38** *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [holy spirit].*
>
> **Ephesians 2:8-9** *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*
>
> **Romans 6:14** *For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*
>
> **Romans 8:2** *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim B: grace through faith, not under law, is stated in so many words.

C. A Stewardship Made Known to Paul

Paul describes his own stewardship within this administration using the same word this study opened with, applied now to a specific trust he says was hidden until his own ministry made it known:

> **Colossians 1:25-27** *Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what*

> *is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:*
>
> **Ephesians 3:2-3** *If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery;*

Weighing it: Direct statement — Paul calls the Mystery a stewardship given to him, hidden until then. Whether it opens an administration of its own is the question of §§D-E.

D. A New Administration, or Grace's Fuller Content?

Whether "the Mystery" names a distinct stage within Grace, tied to Paul's later ministry, or is simply the fuller content of the single Grace administration already opened at Pentecost, is worth tracing through the text's own order of events rather than assuming either answer.

> **Acts 9:15** *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:*

That commission is given at Paul's calling. But Gentile inclusion is first made public not by Paul but by Peter, in the very next chapter, at Cornelius's house — before Paul's own ministry to the Gentiles has begun:

> **Acts 10:34-35** *Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*
>
> **Acts 11:17-18** *Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*

Only later does Paul turn to the Gentiles publicly (Acts 13:46). And what Jerusalem's leaders later recognize is not two gospels but one gospel divided in its field of labor:

> **Galatians 2:7-9** *But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter... they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.*
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:11** *Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.*

What Paul calls "the mystery," then, is not the bare fact of Gentile salvation — settled already at Cornelius's house — but the fuller content of what that inclusion means, unpacked across his letters and stated most fully in Ephesians and Colossians, written late in his ministry:

> **Ephesians 3:5-6** *Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:*

> **Ephesians 2:14-15** *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us... for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;*
>
> **Romans 16:25-26** *Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:*

That is real, previously hidden content — one body, with no distinction at all, and Christ in the believer rather than among a people through temple and law (Colossians 1:27, above). It changes the scope of what Grace is understood to include, not the terms on which anyone receives it: grace through faith, apart from law, is the same basis already stated at Pentecost (Acts 2:38; Ephesians 2:8-9) before any of this is written. Appendix B §7 sets out the order of events in full.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for claim G: the Mystery is the fuller content of the one Grace administration. The other side can fairly answer that Galatians 2:7 speaks of "the gospel of the uncircumcision" and "the gospel of the circumcision," and that a mystery "hid from ages" and revealed first to Paul could mark a new administration of its own; some place its beginning at the close of Acts. This study's answer is the order of events: Gentile inclusion came publicly through Peter before Paul's Gentile ministry began, the Jerusalem leaders gave Paul the right hand of fellowship, and Paul himself says "whether it were I or they, so we preach."

E. No Voice Marks It

Where every other boundary in this framework is marked by something audible and public — thunder and a voice at Sinai, a voice from heaven at the Jordan, wind and tongues at Pentecost, a shout and a trumpet at the gathering of the church — the Mystery has no such moment. Paul receives it privately, "by revelation" (Ephesians 3:3), and says so of his gospel as a whole:

> **Galatians 1:11-12** *But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

By the same test this framework uses everywhere else, that absence points one way: the Administration of the Mystery is the fuller portion of Grace, completing its scope, not a separate administration opening a new one. Grace remains one administration, from Pentecost to the gathering of the church.

(The previous edition pointed here to Paul's vision in 2 Corinthians 12, where he "heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." That passage is set aside in this edition: the Mystery was not unspeakable — Paul wrote it down, "as I wrote afore in few words" (Ephesians 3:3) — and nothing in 2 Corinthians 12 says the vision concerned it.)

Weighing it: Strong inference within this study's own test — for claim G. The other side can fairly answer that the test is this study's own, so a reader who does not accept it will not find this section decisive. That is fair; the order of events in §D stands without it.

F. The Kingdom Offered Again, Alongside Grace

One thing in the book of Acts needs to be set in its place, because a careful reader will meet it. Grace's terms began at Pentecost. But beside them, through the whole of Acts, something else was going on: the kingdom was offered to Israel a second time. The King had been rejected and crucified; God raised Him and took Him up into heaven; and now Peter, in the temple, called the nation to repent so that God would send Him back:

> **Acts 3:19-21** *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

The offer hung on the nation's repentance, and the nation refused it: first in Jerusalem (Acts 7:51), then in the synagogues abroad, where Paul and Barnabas said:

> **Acts 13:46** *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.*

and finally at Rome, where Paul spoke Isaiah's words of hardening over the leaders of the Jews (Acts 28:25-27) and closed with these:

> **Acts 28:28** *Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.*

Does the offer mean that the Christ administration ran on beside Grace until Acts 28? This study's answer is no, for two reasons. First, the terms on which any person was saved did not change at Acts 28. They were grace through faith from the day of Pentecost, and Peter said so of Jew and Gentile alike, years before Rome:

> **Acts 15:11** *But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.*

Second, nothing was heard from heaven at Acts 28. Every boundary in this study is marked by something God makes heard; the close of the offer is marked only by Paul's own words. By this study's test it closes a chapter in God's dealings with the nation of Israel, not an administration.

Nor is the kingdom withdrawn; it is held back. When the disciples asked whether the kingdom would now be restored to Israel, Jesus did not tell them it would not; He told them the times were the Father's (Acts 1:6-7). Paul says how long the holding back lasts:

> **Romans 11:25-26** *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*

So through the Acts two things ran side by side: the Church of God, called out under grace from Pentecost, and the kingdom offered again to Israel, and refused. Chapter 8 §E shows where each sits in the Plan of the Ages.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for claims B and M: the offer is stated (Acts 3:19-21), and so are its refusal (Acts 13:46; 28:28) and the unchanged terms of grace (Acts 15:11). The other side can fairly answer, as Bullinger did in his later writings, that the close of the offer at Acts 28 opened a new administration, the Mystery. This study's answer is in §§D-E: Paul wrote of "one body," into which Jew and Gentile alike are baptized, during the Acts (1 Corinthians 12:13), and nothing from heaven marks Acts 28.

G. How Grace Closes

This administration closes as it opened, with something heard from heaven — this time a shout, the archangel's voice, and the trump of God:

> **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

This gathering together of the church (2 Thessalonians 2:1), commonly called the Rapture, closes Grace before the Day of Wrath begins. The same letter says why:

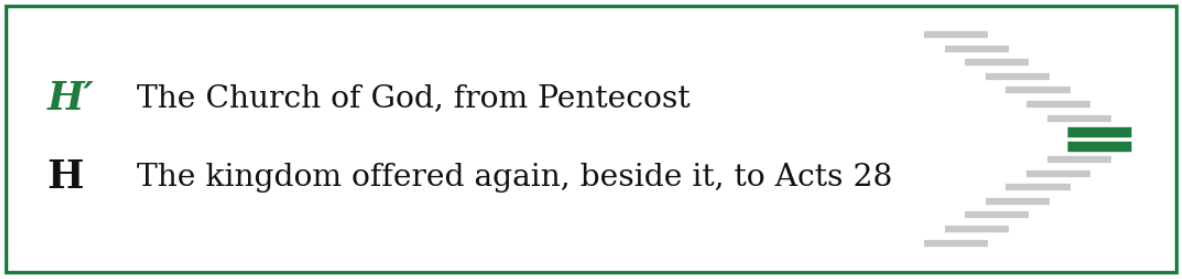
> **1 Thessalonians 1:10** *And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*
>
> **1 Thessalonians 5:9** *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,*

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for claim E: the gathering of the church comes before the Day of Wrath. The other side can fairly answer that "wrath" in these verses can mean final judgment rather than the Day of Wrath, and that careful believers place the gathering at other points. This study reads the letter's own order — the gathering in chapter 4, then "sudden destruction" coming upon "them," not "us" (1 Thessalonians 5:3, 9).

In Short

Grace opened at Pentecost with words the Spirit gave and a crowd heard, and it governs by grace through faith, apart from law. Paul's Mystery — one body, Christ in the believer — is the fuller content of that same administration, not a new one: Gentiles were brought in through Peter before Paul's own Gentile ministry began, and no voice from heaven ever marked a new beginning. Beside it, through the Acts, the kingdom was offered to Israel again and refused; the offer's close at Acts 28 changed no one's terms and opened no new administration. Grace closes when the Lord Himself descends with a shout and gathers His church.

Where this sits in the Plan of the Ages (Chapter 8). Grace holds the centre of the whole Plan: H′, the Church of God, called out from Pentecost. Beside it, through the Acts, ran H, the kingdom offered again to Israel and refused (§F above). The centre of a mirror carries its emphasis, and the Church of God stands there.



Chapter 6 — The Day of Wrath

Administration	Span	Opens With	Governing Basis
6. The Day of Wrath	The gathering of the church to Christ's return	1 Thess 4:16-17 (closing 5, opening 6)	Judgment poured out in full strength (Rev 6:17; 16:1)

A. Named in Its Own Text

This administration opens exactly where the last one closed: the gathering of 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 is both the end of Grace and the start of what follows it. Its name is not this study's invention. Revelation gives it, in the words of those who face it, and the prophets gave it first:

> **Revelation 6:16-17** *And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*
>
> **Zephaniah 1:15** *That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,*
>
> **Revelation 16:1** *And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.*

Weighing it: Direct statement — on the name: scripture itself calls it the great day of His wrath.

B. Its Length and Shape

Daniel names the period's length and its structure centuries in advance:

> **Daniel 9:27** *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of*

> *abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

A "week" in Daniel's prophecy is a week of years, seven years in all, divided at its midpoint. Half of it — three and a half years — is measured again and again in Revelation, in months, in days, and in "times": forty-two months, twelve hundred and sixty days, and "a time, and times, and half a time" (Revelation 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5), all naming the same span. Daniel names it twice more in the same way (Daniel 7:25; 12:7). Appendix B §8 lists every occurrence.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for claim E: the Day of Wrath runs seven years, divided in the middle. The half-period is stated directly and often; that Daniel's "week" means seven years, and that it belongs to this administration, is inference from the context of Daniel 9. The other side can fairly answer that who "he" is in Daniel 9:27, and when the week falls, are read in more than one way.

C. Three Series of Judgments, and a Permitted Adversary

The vials of Revelation 16 are the culmination of three escalating series of judgments — seals, trumpets, and vials (often called bowls) — set against a persecuting power the text says is permitted only a limited window to act:

> **Revelation 12:9, 12** *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him... for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4** *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*
>
> **2 Thessalonians 2:10-11** *...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:*
>
> **Matthew 24:21** *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

"God shall send them strong delusion" is read in this library the way *God: Deliverer, Not Destroyer* reads it: the idiom of permission. The same passage names the working of Satan behind the lie (2 Thessalonians 2:9), and those who receive it are those who had already refused "the love of the truth." They are given over to what they chose.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim E: the text names both the wrath and the adversary permitted to act within it. The reading of "God shall send" as permission rests on the idiom examined in *God: Deliverer, Not Destroyer*; there it is weighed as a strong inference.

D. Salvation Within the Wrath

Wrath is not the whole of this administration's content, though. The text is explicit that people are saved within it, not merely judged:

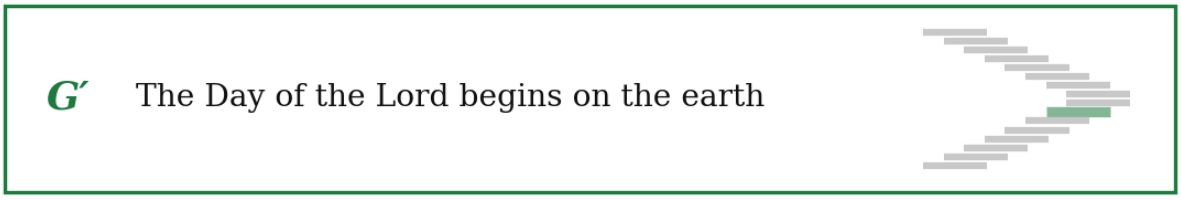
> **Revelation 7:4** *And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*
>
> **Revelation 7:9, 14** *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes… These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

Weighing it: Direct statement — mercy runs through the Day of Wrath, stated in so many words.

In Short

The Day of Wrath is scripture's own name for it. It opens when the church is gathered, runs the length Daniel foretold — a week of years, with its half measured over and over in Revelation — and pours out judgment on a world given over to the lie it chose. Even so, a multitude no one can number comes out of it saved.

Where this sits in the Plan of the Ages (Chapter 8). The Day of Wrath is where G′ begins: the Day of the Lord breaking upon the earth (Revelation 6:17). Israel's time of trouble (Jeremiah 30:7) and the nations gathered against Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:2) belong here, and prepare the way for F′ and E′, which are completed when the King returns.



Chapter 7 — The Day of Judgment: Christ's Return with His Saints

Administration	Span	Opens With	Governing Basis
7. The Day of Judgment — Christ's Return with His Saints	Christ's return to the great white throne	Rev 19:11-16	Christ reigns in person (Rev 20:4)

A. Heaven Opened

This administration opens with heaven itself opened, and Christ riding out with His royal title written openly upon Him:

> **Revelation 19:11, 16** *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war... And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

The title is not new — Paul gave it to God Himself (1 Timothy 6:15), and Revelation had already named the Lamb by it (Revelation 17:14). What is new is that it is now worn in the open, by the King returning to rule.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim V: heaven is opened and the King is seen and named.

B. Bodily, Local, and with His Saints

The return is bodily and local, not symbolic. The text names the exact place His feet come down, pins the manner to the way He left, and says who comes with Him:

> **Zechariah 14:4-5** *And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east... and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.*
>
> **Acts 1:11** *Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*
>
> **Jude 14** *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,*

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim E: a bodily return, to the Mount of Olives, with His saints.

C. The Nations Gathered, and Israel Delivered

When the King returns, two things the prophets long foretold come to pass with Him. The nations are gathered before His throne and judged:

> **Matthew 25:31-32** *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:*

And Israel, blinded in part through the present age (Chapter 5 §F), is delivered:

> **Romans 11:26-27** *And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*

Both are tied to His coming: the nations are gathered "when the Son of man shall come in his glory," and Israel is saved when "the Deliverer" comes "out of Sion." The Day of Wrath prepares for both (Chapter 6), but neither is completed before the King Himself returns. That is why this study places them at the

opening of the Day of Judgment, and why the companion study *The Structure of Scripture* places its members E′ (the nations gathered and judged) and F′ (Israel called again) here as well (Chapter 8 §D).

Weighing it: Direct statement that both come with His return; strong inference that they belong to the opening of this administration — for claim E. The other side can fairly answer that Matthew 25 may describe the final judgment at the great white throne rather than the opening of Christ's reign. But those gathered in Matthew 25 are "all nations," separated as a shepherd separates sheep from goats before "the throne of his glory," at His coming; the great white throne judges "the dead, small and great" (Revelation 20:12), after the thousand years.

D. Why "the Day of Judgment"

The name this study gives the seventh administration comes from what happens in it: "judgment was given" to those who reign with Christ (Revelation 20:4), and God "hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness" by the man He raised from the dead (Acts 17:31). Peter's second letter sets "the day of judgment" and the thousand years side by side:

> **2 Peter 3:7-8** *But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

Weighing it: Corroboration only — for the name: Peter's "one day... as a thousand years" fits a day of judgment a thousand years long, but it is a statement about how God sees time, not a definition of this administration. The name rests on Revelation 20:4 and Acts 17:31; Peter's words may be noticed, not leaned on.

E. Direct Royal Rule

The governing instruction of this administration is direct personal royal rule, not an inward principle or a mediated code. Isaiah and Micah give the same picture, almost word for word (Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-3):

> **Isaiah 2:3-4** *...for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

It begins with the adversary removed:

> **Revelation 20:1-3** *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled:*

> **Revelation 20:4** *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

This is a direct reversal of what Satan was permitted to do in the Day of Wrath. There he "deceiveth the whole world" and is "cast out into the earth" (Revelation 12:9); here he is cast into the bottomless pit, "that he should deceive the nations no more." Revelation 20 names the thousand years six times, in verses 2 through 7 (Appendix B §9), describing a literal, future reign of Christ that follows Satan's binding and comes before his final loosing and judgment. This reign is often called the Millennium, from the Latin for a thousand years.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim E: "a thousand years" is stated six times over. The other side can fairly answer that Revelation uses many numbers as figures, so the number itself could be symbolic. This study takes a plain statement, repeated six times in six verses, at its word.

F. The Close: A Last Rebellion, and the Great White Throne

The administration closes with one final permitted rebellion, ended by direct judgment, and then the judgment of the dead:

> **Revelation 20:7-9** *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle... and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.*
>
> **Revelation 20:10** *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*
>
> **Revelation 20:11, 15** *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them... And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

Weighing it: Direct statement — the seventh administration has a stated end: "when the thousand years are expired."

In Short

The seventh administration opens when heaven is opened and Christ returns in body, to the Mount of Olives, with His saints. At His coming the nations are gathered before His throne and Israel is delivered. He reigns in person for a thousand years with the adversary bound, and at its close a last rebellion is put down, the adversary is judged, and the dead stand before the great white throne.

Where this sits in the Plan of the Ages (Chapter 8). The Day of Judgment holds six members of the Plan's second half: G′ completed, as the King returns (Revelation 19:11); F′, Israel saved, when "there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer" (Romans 11:26); E′, the nations gathered before His throne (Matthew 25:31-32); D′, the serpent bound; C′, the earth restored under His reign; and B′, the

adversary's last rebellion. Six losses from the first half of the Plan are answered within this one administration.

G′	The King returns
F′	Israel called again and blessed
E′	The nations gathered and judged
D′	The serpent bound
C′	The earth restored and blessed
B′	The adversary's last rebellion



Chapter 8 — The Seven Seen as a Mirror

A condensed summary — the complete study is published separately. This chapter only summarizes. The full case, with a chapter for each of the eight pairs below, every verse quoted in full, and every link weighed, is set out in this library's companion study, **The Structure of Scripture — A Demonstration of the Precision of God's Word**. A reader who wants to test the mirror for themselves should read it there.

A. A Second Way of Reading the Same History

Seven chapters have read biblical history in a straight line: one administration after another, each opened by something God makes heard. That is one true way to read it, and Scripture invites a second. God says of Himself:

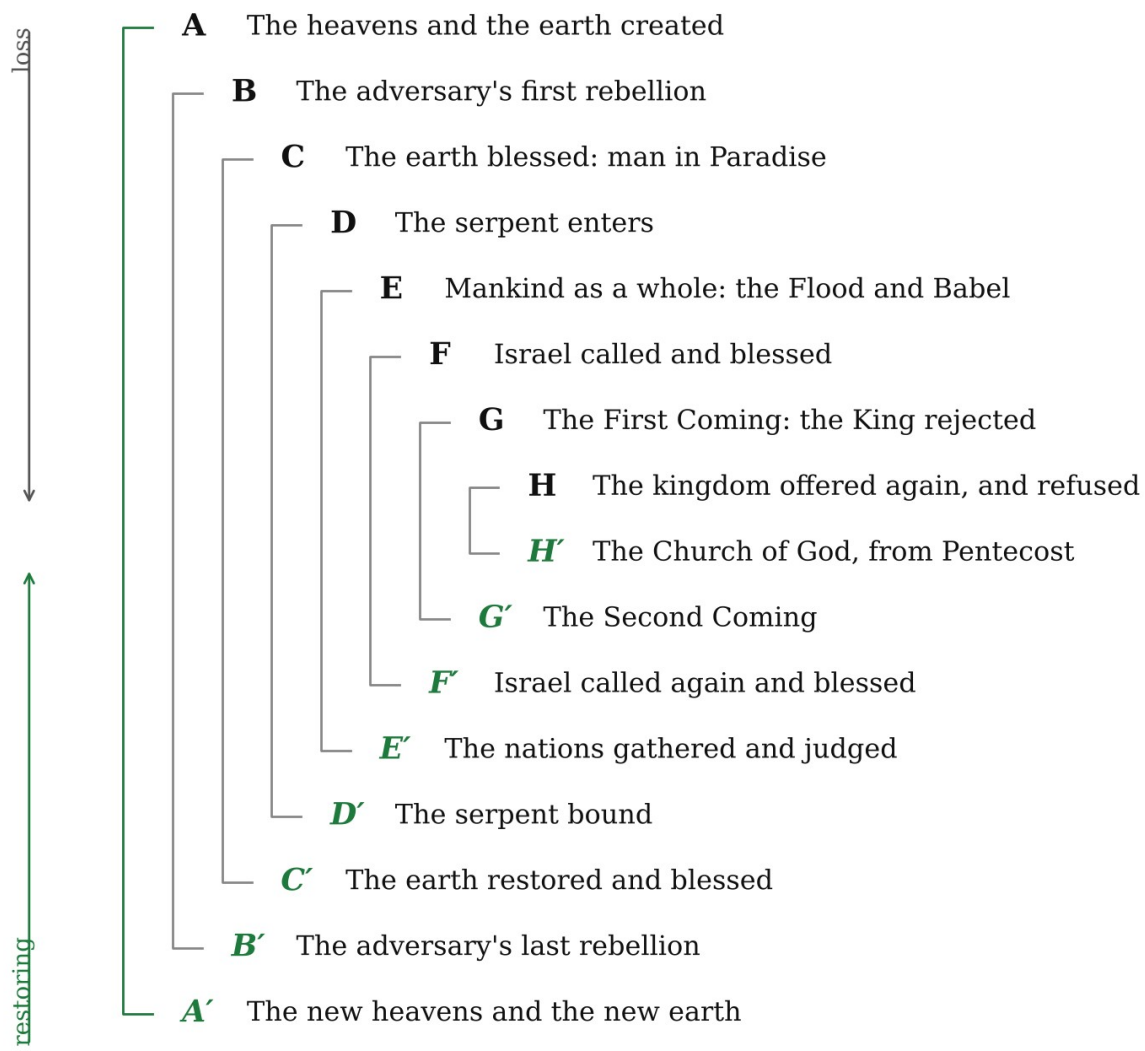
> **Isaiah 46:10** *Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:*

Peter, preaching in the temple, spoke of "the times of restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21). A *restitution* is a putting back of what was lost. If God planned the restoring from the beginning, we should expect what was lost in the Bible's opening chapters to be put back in its closing chapters, and that is what we find, in a particular order.

Scripture often arranges its material as an *introversion*: a set of members on the way down, answered by partners on the way back up in reverse order, like the two sides of a mirror. The first member is answered by the last, the second by the next-to-last, and so on to the centre, which carries the emphasis of the whole. Dr. E. W. Bullinger set out the whole of biblical history in this form in his book *The Apocalypse*, under the heading "The Plan of the Ages." This library's revised edition of that book corrected his outline, chiefly by removing the Gap Theory and by beginning the Church of God at Pentecost rather than after Acts 28. The corrected Plan is the one used here.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for claim M: Isaiah 46:10 and Acts 3:21 state that God planned the restoring from the beginning; that the restoring runs as a mirror is what the pairs below must show. The other side can fairly answer that a pattern found in single passages does not prove a pattern across the whole Bible. That is why the companion study tests every pair on its own.

B. The Plan at a Glance



God's plan of the ages, as a mirror: each member on the way down is answered by its partner on the way back.

Read down the first column and you have the history of loss. God made all things very good (A). The first of His creatures to fall was the adversary, lifted up with pride (B). God blessed the earth and set man in a garden (C); the adversary entered it, and man fell (D). Mankind as a whole went astray, until the Flood and the scattering at Babel (E). God chose one man and his seed and blessed that nation above all others (F), but Israel rejected its King when He came (G), and refused the kingdom again when it was offered a second time after His resurrection and Ascension (H).

Read back up the second column and you have the history of restoring. In the middle God calls out the Church of God (H′). Christ returns (G′). Israel is called again and blessed (F′). The nations are gathered and judged (E′). The adversary is bound (D′), and the earth is restored and blessed under Christ's reign

(C′). The adversary is loosed for a season and makes his last rebellion (B′). Then come the new heavens and the new earth (A′). The last thing lost is the first thing restored; the first thing lost, the heavens and the earth as God first made them, is the last thing made new.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for claim M: the reverse order is in the outline, and Revelation 19-22 runs in that order. The other side can fairly answer that different schools order the events of Revelation 20 differently. This study follows the order of the text, as Chapter 7 does.

C. The Eight Pairs in Brief

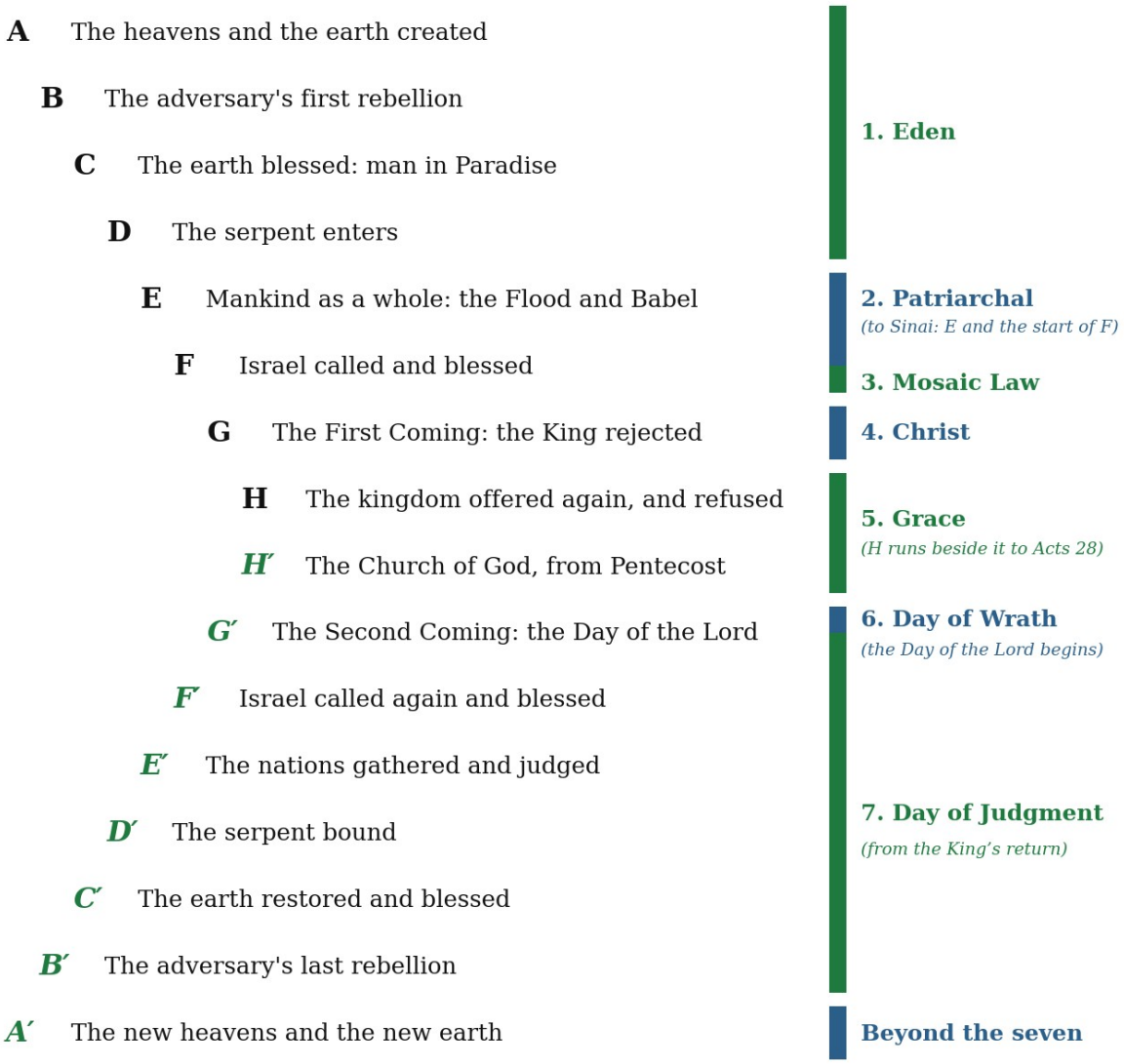
Each pair is joined by something Scripture itself carries from one end of the Plan to the other: a word, a name, or an image.

- **A and A′ — the heavens and the earth, created and made new.** The Bible's first sentence, **"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1)**, is answered by **"a new heaven and a new earth" (Revelation 21:1)**. The river, the tree of life, and God dwelling with men are named at both ends.
- **B and B′ — the adversary's first rebellion and his last.** He was "lifted up with pride" (1 Timothy 3:6; Ezekiel 28:15-17) before he entered the garden; loosed after the thousand years, he rebels once more and is cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:7-10). The first rebellion is inferred rather than narrated, which makes this the weakest pair.
- **C and C′ — the earth blessed, and the earth restored.** Man was set in a garden with dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:28; 2:8); under Christ's reign the earth is blessed again: **"the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose" (Isaiah 35:1)**.
- **D and D′ — the serpent enters, and the serpent is bound.** Revelation calls him by his Genesis name, **"that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan" (Revelation 20:2)**, and binds him **"that he should deceive the nations no more" (Revelation 20:3)**.
- **E and E′ — the nations scattered, and the nations gathered.** Scattered at Babel (Genesis 11:8-9), they are gathered before the King: **"before him shall be gathered all nations" (Matthew 25:32)**.
- **F and F′ — Israel called, and called again.** Abraham was called out of the nations (Genesis 12:1-3); his seed, blinded "in part" for a time, is called again: **"And so all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26)**.
- **G and G′ — the two comings. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11)**; and **"unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time" (Hebrews 9:28)**.
- **H and H′ — the centre.** The kingdom offered to Israel again through the Acts, and refused (H); and the Church of God, called out from Pentecost (H′). The two run side by side through the Acts (Chapter 5 §F), so the turning point of the whole Plan is not a single day but a stretch of time.

Weighing it: Direct statement for A/A′, D/D′ and G/G′, where Scripture itself carries the words across; strong inference for E/E′, F/F′ and H/H′; reasonable inference for B/B′ and C/C′ — all for claim M. The

other side can fairly answer that some pairs are matched by the reader rather than by the text. The companion study weighs each pair on its own and says where each link is weakest.

D. The Seven Laid over the Plan



The Plan of the Ages, with the seven administrations of this study laid over it.

Administration	Members of the Plan
1. Eden: the Garden	A, B, C and D (creation, the adversary's fall, Paradise, the Fall of man)
2. Patriarchal	E (the world before the Flood, and Babel), and the start of F (the call of Abraham)
3. Mosaic Law	F (Israel, from Sinai to Malachi)
4. Christ: the Kingdom at Hand	G (the First Coming)

Administration	Members of the Plan
5. Grace: the Administration of the Mystery	H′ (the Church of God from Pentecost), with H (the kingdom offered again) beside it through the Acts
6. The Day of Wrath	The opening of G′: the Day of the Lord on the earth
7. The Day of Judgment	G′ completed at the King's return, with F′ and E′; then D′, C′ and B′
Beyond the seven	A′ (the new heavens and the new earth)

Laid over each other, the two outlines show three things the straight line alone does not. Eden holds four members: everything from the creation to the Fall happened there, and none of those four losses is answered until the last administration and beyond it. Grace holds the centre of the mirror, between the King rejected and the King returning. And the Day of Judgment holds six members of the second half, because when the King returns He answers, one after another, the losses of the ages.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for claim M: the two outlines agree in order throughout, and at every boundary but the three set out in §E.

E. Where the Two Outlines Part

Three places do not line up neatly, and they are stated here rather than smoothed over.

- **The Patriarchal administration spans two members.** It runs from the expulsion out of Eden to Sinai, so it covers E (mankind as a whole) and the opening of F (the call of Abraham). The Plan divides at Abraham's call, because that is where God begins to deal with one nation; the administrations divide at Sinai, because that is where the governing terms change (Chapter 2 §D).
- **The kingdom offer runs inside Grace.** In this study the Christ administration closes at Pentecost, because the governing terms changed there (Chapter 4 §§D-E). In the Plan, the kingdom offered again is a member of its own, H, which runs until Acts 28. Chapter 5 §F shows that the close of the offer changed no one's terms of salvation; the Plan shows that it was the last of Israel's failures on the way down.
- **The Second Coming spans a boundary.** The Plan's member G′, the Day of the Lord, begins in the Day of Wrath (Revelation 6:17), but the King's return itself, when heaven is opened (Revelation 19:11), opens the Day of Judgment; and with Him come Israel's deliverance (F′) and the gathering of the nations before His throne (E′) (Chapter 7 §C). One member of the Plan therefore spans two administrations. The table in §D follows this boundary, and so does the companion study's own table (*The Structure of Scripture*, Chapter 12).

In each case the two outlines measure different things. The administrations measure the terms on which God governs; the Plan measures what is lost and what is restored. Neither contradicts the other.

Weighing it: Concession — for claim M: the outlines part at three boundaries, and each difference is explained by what each outline measures. The other side can fairly answer that a fit needing three explanations is a loose fit. That is fair; the claim rests on the agreement in order throughout, and at every other boundary.

F. The Lesson of the Mirror

Read down the first column again, and every created order God set up failed when it stood on its own: the adversary, through pride; Adam, in the most favourable place ever given to man (Romans 5:12); mankind as a whole, until the Flood and Babel; and Israel, given the covenants and the Law, broken off "because of unbelief" (Romans 11:20). The administrations tell the same story from the other side. Under every one of them, those who stood were those who believed God, and righteousness was credited, not earned (Romans 4:3; Habakkuk 2:4).

At the centre of the mirror stands the one company in the Plan that does not claim to stand by its own strength:

> **Romans 5:2** *By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*
>
> **Ephesians 3:10** *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,*

That is why Grace stands at the centre of the Plan, and why everything in its second half is God's own doing in Christ: His return, His reign, His binding of the adversary, and at last the new heavens and the new earth, when God will "gather together in one all things in Christ" (Ephesians 1:10).

Weighing it: Strong inference — for claim M: Ephesians 3:10 states that God makes His wisdom known to the heavenly powers through the church, and Romans 5:2 and 11:20 set standing by grace against each failure. The other side can fairly answer that Ephesians 3:10 does not say what lesson is being taught. That is so; this reading is drawn from the Plan as a whole, and is weighed accordingly.

In Short

The seven administrations read biblical history in a straight line; the Plan of the Ages reads the same history as a mirror, each loss on the way down answered on the way back in reverse order. Laid over each other, they fit: Eden holds the first four losses, Grace holds the centre, and the Day of Judgment holds six of the answers. They part at three boundaries, because they measure different things: the terms on which God governs, and what is lost and restored. The full case for every pair is in the companion study, *The Structure of Scripture — A Demonstration of the Precision of God's Word*.

Closing — Beyond the Seven

A. The New Heaven and the New Earth

The seventh administration has an end; what follows it has none. Beyond the great white throne, John sees what the whole sequence has been moving toward since the promise of Genesis 3:15:

> **Revelation 21:1** *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*
>
> **Revelation 21:3-4** *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*
>
> **2 Peter 3:13** *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

Even here, a great voice out of heaven announces it. The holy city comes down from God as a perfect cube — "the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal" (Revelation 21:16) — the same shape as the most holy place in Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:20), now filling a new creation. This study does not count the new heaven and the new earth among the administrations. It is not another stretch of time on this present earth, governed on new terms until the next boundary. It is where the boundaries end.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for the new heaven and new earth; this study's framing places it outside the count. The other side can fairly answer that Bullinger counts the eternal state as the last of his seven (Appendix C). That is a difference in counting, not in what scripture says will come.

B. A Rest That Has No Evening

In Genesis 1, each of the six days of creation closes with "the evening and the morning." The seventh day alone does not:

> **Genesis 2:2-3** *And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.*

The rest of God's seventh day is given no evening, and Hebrews speaks of a rest still ahead for God's people, using a word found nowhere else in the New Testament — a keeping of sabbath:

> **Hebrews 4:9-10** *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.*

Seven administrations, and then a rest that does not end. The picture fits.

Weighing it: Corroboration only — the seventh day's missing evening and the unending rest of the new creation make a fitting picture, not a proof. The previous edition said that the seventh *administration* is never closed by an evening-and-morning formula; that confused the seventh day of Genesis with the seventh administration, which does close (Revelation 20:7). This edition corrects it.

C. What Would Change This Study's Mind

A study that cannot say what would overturn it has not really tested itself. Here are four findings that would, each specific enough that a reader could go looking.

First: a text in which Paul's Mystery is opened by a public declaration from heaven, or said to begin a new administration. No such text exists that this study knows of; Paul says he received it privately, by revelation. A text that said otherwise would overturn claim G and weaken claim V.

Second: a text showing the gift of holy spirit poured out before Christ's ascension. John 7:39 and Acts 2:33 say the opposite. A clear counter-example would move the boundary between the fourth and fifth administrations, and weaken claim S.

Third: a text saying Abraham was counted righteous by keeping a written law, or that Israel's covenant at Sinai carried no conditions. Genesis 15:6, Romans 4 and Exodus 19:5-8 say the opposite. Such a text would overturn claim B.

Fourth: a text placing the gathering of 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 inside or after the judgments of the Day of Wrath, in so many words. This study reads the order of 1 Thessalonians 4-5 the other way. A plain statement to the contrary would overturn the first part of claim E.

Weighing it: Method, not argument — states what would count against the study.

D. The Shape of It All

Seven administrations, then, each opened by something heard from God, each governing on its own stated terms, spanning from the garden to a judgment that ends at a great white throne — and beyond them, a new heaven and a new earth, and a rest that has no evening. A garden with one prohibition; a promise believed; a law vowed; a kingdom announced; grace poured out; wrath, and mercy within it; a King reigning in person. That is the shape of biblical history, read one boundary at a time, and every part of it moves toward the promise first spoken in the garden: the Seed who would crush the serpent's head, and a God who will dwell with His people.

Read as a mirror (Chapter 8), it is also one story told forward and back: what was lost from the creation to the cross is restored, in reverse order, from the King's return to the new creation.

Weighing it: Narrative — summarizes the study; adds no new argument.

Where this sits in the Plan of the Ages (Chapter 8). What stands beyond the seven is the Plan's last member, A′: the new heavens and the new earth, answering A, the heavens and the earth God first created. The Plan ends where the Bible began.

Appendix A — Acts 2:2: Sound, Wind, and Breath

This word study supports Chapter 4 §E, where the sound at Pentecost closes the Christ administration and opens Grace.

1. The Question

A contention has been raised regarding Acts 2:2: that "the sound... as of a rushing mighty wind" was not an external, heaven-sent sound, but the sound of the apostles breathing in unison — a practice held to have been taught by Jesus in John 20:22, where He breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." This appendix tests that reading against the Greek text of both verses, following this library's method: the verse itself, then its context, then how the words are used elsewhere in scripture, before weighing any outside source.

Weighing it: Method, not argument — states the question.

2. The Text

> **Acts 2:2** *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*

Greek: καὶ ἐγένετο ἄφνω ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἦχος ὥσπερ φερομένης πνοῆς βιαίας, καὶ ἐπλήρωσεν ὅλον τὸν οἶκον οὗ ἦσαν καθήμενοι — literally, "and there came suddenly, out of heaven, a sound [*ēchos*] as of a violent wind [*pnoē*] being borne along, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting."

Weighing it: Narrative — the text itself.

3. What the Grammar Establishes

The source is stated. *Ek tou ouranou*, "out of heaven," is direct language naming where the sound came from. It does not describe something inside the room or its occupants.

The comparison is a likeness, not an identity. *Hōsper*, "as, just as," marks the sound as resembling a violent wind, not being one. Chrysostom made this point early in the church's commentary on the passage: the weight falls on the "as," so the sound is not wind itself, exactly as the "tongues like as of fire" in verse 3 are not literal fire (cited in the *Expositor's Greek Testament*, on Acts 2:2).

It is the sound, not the wind, that filled the house. Barnes' Notes observes that the verb "filled" (*eplērōsen*) has no grammatical subject available to it but *ēchos*, "sound." The sentence reads "there was a sound... and [the sound] filled the house," with "wind" appearing only in a dependent phrase describing what the sound was like. Meyer's critical commentary makes the same point against reading this as an actual gust: the sound is a wonder made vivid to the reader "by the comparison... with a violent wind," not an actual storm.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim H: the sound came from heaven, it was like a wind rather than a wind, and it was the sound that filled the house.

4. Why *Pnoē* and Not *Anemos*?

Luke had the ordinary Greek word for wind, *anemos*, available, and did not use it here. He chose instead *pnoē* (Strong's G4157), "breath, a breeze" — rendered "breath" at its only other New Testament occurrence, Acts 17:25 — from the same root (*pneō*, "I breathe") as *pneuma*, the ordinary word for spirit. It is also the word the Greek Old Testament uses for "the breath of life" in Genesis 2:7.

Several commentators read the choice as deliberate. Ellicott's Commentary says the word "is obviously chosen here as being better fitted than the more common word for the supernatural inbreathing of which they were conscious, and which to many must have recalled the moment when their Lord had 'breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.'" Barnes and MacLaren likewise trace the wind, breath and Spirit imagery back through Genesis 1:2, Ezekiel 37, and John 3:8.

This is where the John 20:22 connection is real — but it is a matter of vocabulary and theme, not of the sound's source. Luke's word choice invites the reader to remember the breath of God; it does not say, and the grammar of §3 will not allow, that the sound itself was anyone's breathing.

Weighing it: Reasonable inference — for claim H: Luke chose a "breath" word on purpose, to echo the breath of God. The other side of this particular point can fairly answer that Luke may simply have chosen a vivid word. Either way, the choice does not change the sound's stated source.

5. John 20:22 — A Different Word, a Different Day

> **John 20:22** *And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:*

"Breathed on" translates *enephysēsen*, from *emphysaō* (Strong's G1720), "to blow on, breathe on," found only here in the New Testament. It is a different word from Acts 2:2's *pnoē*, and it comes from a different root — *physaō*, "to blow" — not from the *pneō* family.

The link between the two verses runs through Genesis 2:7. In the Greek Old Testament, that verse uses both words together: God "breathed" (*enephysēsen*) into the man's face "the breath of life" (*pnoēn zōēs*). John uses the verb of that verse when Jesus breathes on the disciples; Luke uses its noun for the sound at Pentecost. Both writers point back to the same moment of creation. Neither says the one event was the other.

The two events are also separated in time. John 20:22 falls on the evening of the resurrection day itself (John 20:19). Acts 2:2 falls at Pentecost, the feast counted fifty days from the offering of the firstfruits (Leviticus 23:15-16) — some seven weeks later. What exactly the disciples received in John 20:22 — a present enablement pending Pentecost, or a symbolic promise of what Pentecost would give — is itself a long-standing question among interpreters. The symbolic reading goes back at least to Theodore of Mopsuestia in the early fifth century, whose view was condemned at the Second Council of Constantinople in 553, and it has been argued more recently by George Ladd and Cornelis Bennema (see Bob Wilkin, cited in the Sources). This appendix does not try to settle that separate question. It is noted only to show that John 20:22 is its own event, with its own open question, rather than a precedent that explains what happened at Pentecost.

Weighing it: Direct statement — for claim H: John 20:22 uses a different word, on a different day. The previous edition said the two words came from the same root; this edition corrects it (Appendix B §12).

6. The "Breathing in Unison" Reading — Origin and Assessment

This specific claim — that the Acts 2:2 sound was the apostles' own controlled or unison breathing, rather than an external sound from heaven — is associated with the Power for Abundant Living class (PFAL) and the book *Receiving the Holy Spirit Today* (RHST). That teaching presented deep breathing as part of the practical means of manifesting holy spirit and speaking in tongues, and read "rushing mighty wind" in that light.

The same author's *Jesus Christ Is Not God* (JCING) stands as one of three corroborating sources in this library's *One God, One Mediator* study — but that is a different book making a different argument. A source's usefulness on one question does not carry its unrelated claims along with it. This claim has to stand or fall on the text of Acts 2:2 and John 20:22 on its own terms.

Measured against §§3-5, it runs into three difficulties. First, the text states the sound's source as "out of heaven," not the room. Second, grammatically it is the sound — not a wind or a breath — that "filled" the house, which does not read naturally as a description of the gathered believers' own breathing. Third, the comparison is to something violent (*biaias*) and forceful enough to fill an entire house, which is a strange way to describe quiet or even vigorous group breathing.

No historic commentary surveyed for this appendix — spanning Chrysostom, the Reformation and post-Reformation tradition (Poole, Gill, Bengel, Benson), the nineteenth-century grammatical commentators (Meyer, Alford, Vincent, Barnes), and standard nineteenth- and twentieth-century exposition (Ellicott, Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, MacLaren, the *Expositor's Greek Testament*) — reads Acts 2:2 as the believers' own breathing rather than an external sign from heaven.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for claim H, against the breathing reading: it cannot be squared with the verse's own grammar. The other side can fairly answer that breath is plainly part of speaking in tongues, and that John 20:22 connects breath with receiving. Both are true, and neither is what Acts 2:2 describes. The survey of commentaries is corroboration only: commentary is not scripture.

7. Conclusion

The verbal echo of John 20:22 is real. Luke's choice of *pnoē* over *anemos* reaches for the breath of life of Genesis 2:7, the same verse whose verb John uses when Jesus breathes on the disciples, and a first-century Jewish audience steeped in the Greek Old Testament would likely have heard the echo. But an echo in word choice is not the same claim as the sound itself being the disciples' breathing. On the grammar of Acts 2:2 read plainly — a stated heavenly source, a likeness (not an identity) to a mighty wind, and a sound that itself fills the house — the text describes a distinct, external, audible sign from God: the first of three signs at Pentecost (the sound, the tongues like as of fire, and Spirit-given speech), not a description of the believers breathing together.

Weighing it: Strong inference — for claim H: the sound at Pentecost came from heaven. The breathing reading is a twentieth-century teaching, not found in the historic commentary surveyed, and it does not survive the grammar of the verse.

Appendix B — The Details Behind the Narrative

The chapters state these findings in a sentence so that the reader can keep reading. The full detail is here.

1. The Word *Oikonomia* (Introduction §B)

Oikonomia occurs in the Greek text behind the King James Version seven times. Three are in Jesus' parable of the unjust steward, rendered "stewardship" (Luke 16:2, 3, 4). Four are Paul's, rendered "dispensation": 1 Corinthians 9:17 ("a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me"), Ephesians 1:10 ("the dispensation of the fulness of times"), Ephesians 3:2 ("the dispensation of the grace of God"), and Colossians 1:25 ("the dispensation of God which is given to me"). Two further places read *oikonomia* in many later Greek editions where the King James text followed a different reading: Ephesians 3:9 ("fellowship of the mystery" in the KJV) and 1 Timothy 1:4 ("godly edifying" in the KJV).

In the King James Version itself, the English word "administration(s)" translates *diakonia*, "service, ministry" (1 Corinthians 12:5; 2 Corinthians 9:12), and "administered" translates the related verb (2 Corinthians 8:19, 20). This study's use of "administration" for *oikonomia* follows more recent translations.

2. "Paradise" (Chapter 1 §A)

The Greek *paradeisos* occurs three times in the New Testament: Luke 23:43, 2 Corinthians 12:4, and Revelation 2:7. The Greek Old Testament uses it throughout Genesis 2-3 for the Hebrew *gan*, "garden" — which is why later writers called Eden "Paradise." The Hebrew Old Testament's own word for Eden's garden is always *gan*.

3. "Patriarch" (Chapter 2 §A)

The Greek *patriarchēs* occurs four times in the New Testament: of David (Acts 2:29), of Jacob's twelve sons (Acts 7:8, 9), and of Abraham (Hebrews 7:4).

4. The Sequence at Sinai (Chapter 2 §D; Chapter 3 §A)

Verses	What happens	Who speaks
Exodus 19:3-6	God's conditional offer: "if ye will obey my voice indeed"	God, through Moses
Exodus 19:7-8	The people's first vow: "All that the LORD hath spoken we will do"	The people
Exodus 19:16-19	Thunder, lightning, cloud, trumpet; "God answered him by a voice"	God, heard by all
Exodus 20:1-17	The Ten Commandments	God, heard by all
Exodus 20:18-21	The people ask Moses to speak to them instead	The people
Exodus 21-23	The judgments, given through Moses	God, through Moses
Exodus 24:3	The second vow: "All the words which the LORD hath said will we do"	The people
Exodus 24:4-8	The book of the covenant read; the third vow, "and be obedient"; the blood of the covenant sprinkled	Moses and the people

5. Deuteronomy 28 (Chapter 3 §B)

Sixty-eight verses: blessings in verses 1-14, curses in verses 15-68.

6. Voices from Heaven in the Christ Administration (Chapter 4 §§A-B, E)

At the baptism: Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22. At the Transfiguration: Matthew 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35; recalled by Peter in 2 Peter 1:17-18. In Jerusalem, in the last week: John 12:28-30, heard by the crowd, some of whom said it thundered. Then, at the boundary, the sound from heaven at Pentecost (Acts 2:2). The previous edition counted the Pentecost sound as the third audible sign of this administration; it is the fourth.

7. The Order of Events Behind the Mystery (Chapter 5 §D)

Order	Event	Reference
1	Pentecost: the gift poured out; Grace opens	Acts 2
2	Paul's calling: "a chosen vessel... before the Gentiles"	Acts 9:15
3	Peter at Cornelius's house: Gentiles receive the gift	Acts 10:34-48; 11:17-18
4	Greeks at Antioch believe	Acts 11:19-21
5	Paul and Barnabas publicly turn to the Gentiles	Acts 13:46-48
6	Jerusalem: the right hands of fellowship	Galatians 2:1-10; compare Acts 15
7	The Mystery set out in Paul's letters, most fully in Ephesians and Colossians, written during his imprisonment	Romans 16:25-26; Ephesians 3:1-9; Colossians 1:25-27

8. The Figures for the Day of Wrath (Chapter 6 §B)

Reference	Wording in the King James Version	Length
Daniel 9:27	"one week"; "in the midst of the week"	Seven years, divided at the middle
Daniel 7:25	"a time and times and the dividing of time"	Three and a half years
Daniel 12:7	"a time, times, and an half"	Three and a half years
Revelation 11:2	"forty and two months"	Three and a half years
Revelation 11:3	"a thousand two hundred and threescore days"	Three and a half years
Revelation 12:6	"a thousand two hundred and threescore days"	Three and a half years
Revelation 12:14	"a time, and times, and half a time"	Three and a half years
Revelation 13:5	"forty and two months"	Three and a half years

Forty-two months of thirty days each is 1,260 days, and three and a half years of 360 days is the same. Daniel 12:11-12 also names 1,290 and 1,335 days; this study does not try to explain those two figures. The previous edition said the half-week recurs "by its second half alone" in three places; scripture does not say in every case which half is meant, and the figure occurs five times in Revelation, not three.

9. "A Thousand Years" in Revelation 20 (Chapter 7 §E)

Verse 2, "bound him a thousand years"; verse 3, "till the thousand years should be fulfilled"; verse 4, "reigned with Christ a thousand years"; verse 5, "until the thousand years were finished"; verse 6, "shall reign with him a thousand years"; verse 7, "when the thousand years are expired." Six times in six consecutive verses. Some of these name Satan's binding and some the saints' reign; all name the same thousand years.

10. "King of Kings" (Chapter 7 §A)

Of God: "God of gods, and Lord of lords" (Deuteronomy 10:17; Psalm 136:2-3); "the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Timothy 6:15). Of the Lamb: "Lord of lords, and King of kings" (Revelation 17:14). Of the returning Christ: "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:16). The phrase is also used of earthly emperors (Ezra 7:12; Ezekiel 26:7; Daniel 2:37).

11. The Seventh Day and the Rest (Closing §B)

"And the evening and the morning were" closes each of the six days (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31). The seventh day (Genesis 2:2-3) has no such close. In Hebrews 4, "rest" is ordinarily *katapausis*; in Hebrews 4:9 alone it is *sabbatismos* (Strong's G4520), "a keeping of sabbath," found nowhere else in the New Testament.

12. *Pnoē* and *Emphysaō* (Appendix A §§4-5)

Pnoē (G4157) occurs twice in the New Testament, Acts 2:2 and Acts 17:25; it is from *pneō*, "to breathe," the root of *pneuma*. *Emphysaō* (G1720) occurs once, John 20:22; it is from *physaō*, "to blow." The Greek Old Testament uses both in Genesis 2:7 — "ἐνεφύσησεν εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πνοὴν ζωῆς," "he breathed into his face the breath of life" — and uses *emphysaō* again in Ezekiel 37:9, "breathe upon these slain."

Appendix C — How Other Schemes Count the Ages

This study's seven are not the only seven. Here they stand beside the two best-known earlier schemes, so that the reader can see where they agree and where they part.

This study	Scofield Reference Bible (1909)	Bullinger, *How to Enjoy the Bible* (1916)
1. Eden — creation to the expulsion	Innocency — creation to the expulsion	1. Edenic (Innocence)
2. Patriarchal — the expulsion to Sinai	Conscience — the Fall to the Flood; Human Government — the Flood to Abraham; Promise — Abraham to Sinai	2. Patriarchal (Theocratic)
3. Mosaic Law — Sinai to Christ's baptism	Law — Sinai to the cross	3. Israelite, past (Law)

This study	Scofield Reference Bible (1909)	Bullinger, *How to Enjoy the Bible* (1916)
4. Christ — the baptism to Pentecost	No separate period; Christ's ministry falls under Law	No separate period
5. Grace — Pentecost to the gathering of the church	Grace — from the death and resurrection of Christ	4. The Ecclesia (Grace)
6. The Day of Wrath	Not counted as a period of its own	5. Israelite (Judgment)
7. The Day of Judgment — the thousand years	Kingdom — the thousand years	6. Millennial (Theocratic)
Beyond the seven — the new heaven and the new earth	The eternal state, not counted	7. Eternal (Glory)

Three differences matter most. Scofield divides the span from the Fall to Sinai into three periods; this study keeps it as one, because the basis of righteousness does not change within it (Chapter 1 §D; Chapter 2 §§B-C). Neither Scofield nor Bullinger gives Christ's earthly ministry a period of its own; this study does, because it is opened and marked by God's voice from heaven three times, and preaches a new message to Israel (Chapter 4). And Bullinger counts the eternal state as the last of his seven, where this study places it beyond the count (Closing §A). Bullinger's later writings also placed the beginning of the church of the Mystery at the close of Acts; this study does not (Chapter 5 §§D-E).

Bullinger also laid out the whole of biblical history in a second form: not as a count of ages but as a mirror, "The Plan of the Ages," in *The Apocalypse*. Chapter 8 sets this study's seven beside that Plan, in the corrected form printed in this library's revised edition of *The Apocalypse*; the full study of it is *The Structure of Scripture — A Demonstration of the Precision of God's Word*.

Weighing it: Method, not argument — sets the schemes side by side; the reasons for this study's choices are weighed in the chapters.

Appendix D — Weight of Each Argument

Every load-bearing argument in the study, grouped by the claim it bears on (Introduction §E). The last group lists what pod-V5 said and pod-V6 withdrew or corrected; pod-V7 and pod-V8 withdraw nothing. They are kept in view on purpose, so that a returning reader can see what changed, and so that a later edition does not quietly bring a broken argument back.

Claim V — Each administration opens with something God makes heard

#	Argument	Where	Weight	What the other reading fairly answers
1	Eden closes with God's own quoted voice	Ch. 1 §C	Direct statement	It closes Eden; reading it as also opening the next is this study's arrangement — agreed

#	Argument	Where	Weight	What the other reading fairly answers
2	At Sinai the whole nation heard God's voice	Ch. 3 §A	Direct statement	Not disputed
3	A voice from heaven at the Jordan, in three Gospels	Ch. 4 §A	Direct statement	Not disputed
4	Two more voices from heaven, at the Transfiguration and in Jerusalem	Ch. 4 §B	Direct statement	Not disputed
5	A sound from heaven at Pentecost	Ch. 4 §E	Direct statement	See claim H
6	The gathering of the church comes with a shout, a voice and a trumpet	Ch. 5 §G	Direct statement	Not disputed as to the sound; its timing is claim E
7	Heaven opened at Christ's return	Ch. 7 §A	Direct statement	Not disputed
8	What is heard takes different forms at different boundaries	Intro §C	Concession	The test is uneven — conceded and stated

Claim S — Seven administrations, with these boundaries

#	Argument	Where	Weight	What the other reading fairly answers
9	The count of seven is this study's organizing device	Intro §C	Concession	Scripture gives no numbered list — agreed
10	The Fall to Sinai is one administration	Ch. 1 §D; Ch. 2 §B	Reasonable inference	Genesis 9:6 and 17 give new terms; answer: the basis of righteousness is unchanged
11	The Law's administration ends at the baptism, overlapping to the cross	Ch. 3 §D	Reasonable inference	The Law ran to the cross; the overlap is conceded
12	Grace opens at Pentecost, not at the cross	Ch. 4 §D	Strong inference	The cross is the redemptive event; answer: the gift waited on the ascended Christ
13	The new heaven and new earth stand outside the count	Closing §A	Reasonable inference	Bullinger counts the eternal state; a difference in counting

Claim B — Each administration governs on its own stated basis

#	Argument	Where	Weight	What the other reading fairly answers
14	Eden: a permission, a charge, and one prohibition	Ch. 1 §B	Direct statement	Genesis 1:28 is itself commands — corrected in this edition
15	Abraham counted righteous by faith; the promise not through law	Ch. 2 §C	Direct statement	Faith was never only Patriarchal — agreed (Ch. 3 §C)

#	Argument	Where	Weight	What the other reading fairly answers
16	Sinai: a conditional offer and a vow	Ch. 2 §D	Direct statement	The vow did not replace faith — agreed
17	The Law's blessing and curse bound to performance	Ch. 3 §B	Direct statement	The Law also provided sacrifice — agreed
18	Faith under the Law; what changed was the covenant's terms	Ch. 3 §C	Direct statement	Then the basis has not changed; answer: Galatians 3:17-19
19	"The kingdom of heaven is at hand," preached to Israel	Ch. 4 §C	Direct statement	This is the Law still in force — in part agreed
20	Grace through faith, not under law	Ch. 5 §B	Direct statement	Not disputed
21	Christ reigns in person	Ch. 7 §E	Direct statement	See claim E

Claim T — Pentecost's tongues were God's own audible words

#	Argument	Where	Weight	What the other reading fairly answers
22	"As the Spirit gave them utterance"; "we do hear"; "see and hear"	Ch. 5 §A	Strong inference	No verse calls tongues the voice of God in so many words
23	Paul applies Isaiah's "will I speak" to tongues	Ch. 5 §A	Strong inference	Isaiah first spoke of foreign invaders' speech; Paul's application is what is cited
24	The author's own testimony	Ch. 5 §A	Corroboration only	Testimony is not text — agreed

Claim G — The Mystery is Grace's fuller content, not a new administration

#	Argument	Where	Weight	What the other reading fairly answers
25	Paul calls the Mystery a stewardship given to him	Ch. 5 §C	Direct statement	Whether it opens a new administration is the question
26	Gentile inclusion came publicly through Peter before Paul's Gentile ministry began	Ch. 5 §D	Direct statement	Paul's commission came first (Acts 9:15) — agreed; the public inclusion came through Peter
27	One gospel, two fields of labor	Ch. 5 §D	Strong inference	"The gospel of the uncircumcision" can be read as a second gospel
28	The Mystery changes Grace's scope, not its terms	Ch. 5 §D	Strong inference	A mystery "hid from ages" could mark a new administration
29	No audible declaration marks the Mystery	Ch. 5 §E	Strong inference within this study's test	The test is this study's own

Claim E — The order of the end

#	Argument	Where	Weight	What the other reading fairly answers
30	The gathering of the church comes before the Day of Wrath	Ch. 5 §G	Reasonable inference	"Wrath" may mean final judgment; others place the gathering differently
31	Scripture names it "the great day of his wrath"	Ch. 6 §A	Direct statement	Not disputed
32	Seven years, divided at the middle	Ch. 6 §B	Reasonable inference	Who "he" is in Daniel 9:27, and when the week falls, are read differently
33	The half-period stated in months, days and "times"	Ch. 6 §B	Direct statement	Not disputed
34	A permitted adversary; "strong delusion" as permission	Ch. 6 §C	Direct statement (the adversary); strong inference (the permission)	"God shall send" can be read as God's direct act
35	Salvation within the Day of Wrath	Ch. 6 §D	Direct statement	Not disputed
36	A bodily return to the Mount of Olives, with His saints	Ch. 7 §B	Direct statement	Not disputed as to the text
37	Peter's "one day… as a thousand years" beside "the day of judgment"	Ch. 7 §D	Corroboration only	A statement about how God sees time — agreed
38	"A thousand years," six times	Ch. 7 §E	Direct statement	Revelation's numbers can be figures
39	The seventh administration has a stated end	Ch. 7 §F	Direct statement	Not disputed
68	The nations are judged and Israel delivered at the King's return, opening the Day of Judgment	Ch. 7 §C	Direct statement (at His return); strong inference (opening this administration)	Matthew 25 may describe the great white throne

Claim H — The sound at Pentecost came from heaven

#	Argument	Where	Weight	What the other reading fairly answers
40	"From heaven," a likeness to wind, and the sound fills the house	App. A §3	Direct statement	Not disputed as grammar
41	Luke chose a "breath" word to echo the breath of God	App. A §4	Reasonable inference	Luke may simply have chosen a vivid word
42	John 20:22 is a different word, on a different day	App. A §5	Direct statement	Not disputed
43	The breathing reading cannot be squared with the grammar	App. A §6	Strong inference	Breath is part of speaking in tongues — true, but not what Acts 2:2 describes
44	No historic commentary reads it as breathing	App. A §6	Corroboration only	Commentary is not scripture — agreed

Claim M — The seven fit the mirror of the Plan of the Ages

#	Argument	Where	Weight	What the other reading fairly answers
59	God declares "the end from the beginning"; history can be read as a mirror	Ch. 8 §A	Reasonable inference	A pattern in single passages does not prove a pattern across the whole Bible
60	The losses are answered in reverse order	Ch. 8 §B	Reasonable inference	Different schools order the events of Revelation 20 differently
61	A/A′, D/D′ and G/G′: Scripture carries the words across	Ch. 8 §C	Direct statement	Not disputed as to the words
62	E/E′, F/F′ and H/H′	Ch. 8 §C	Strong inference	Some read "all Israel" (Romans 11:26) as the whole people of God
63	B/B′ and C/C′	Ch. 8 §C	Reasonable inference	The first rebellion is inferred; the prophets' pictures could belong to the new earth
64	The seven fit inside the Plan's members	Ch. 8 §D	Reasonable inference	The fit is loose at three boundaries
65	The kingdom was offered again through the Acts, beside Grace; its close opened no administration	Ch. 5 §F	Strong inference	Bullinger's later view: a new administration, the Mystery, began at Acts 28
66	The outlines part at three boundaries because they measure different things; the companion study (pod-V3) now uses the same Second Coming boundary	Ch. 8 §E	Concession	Three explanations make a loose fit — fair
67	Whatever stands, stands by grace; Grace at the centre	Ch. 8 §F	Strong inference	Ephesians 3:10 does not name the lesson

Withdrawn or corrected in pod-V6

#	What pod-V5 said	Where	Status	Why
45	Eden was governed by "one command"	Ch. 1 §B	Corrected	Genesis 1:28 and 2:15 also command
46	Luke 23:43's paradise is "the place of the redeemed dead"	Ch. 1 §A	Withdrawn	The New Testament's paradise looks forward, to the kingdom and the restored tree of life
47	The Patriarchal administration ends with the vow of Exodus 24	Ch. 2 §D	Corrected	The first vow comes at Exodus 19:8, before the voice; Sinai is one event
48	Deuteronomy 28 is blessing and its "mirrored" curse	Ch. 3 §B	Corrected	Fourteen verses of blessing, fifty-four of curse
49	The Pentecost sound is the Christ administration's "third" audible sign	Ch. 4 §E	Corrected	It is the fourth; John 12:28 was left out
50	Gentile inclusion under Peter came "well before" Paul's calling	Ch. 5 §D	Corrected	Paul's calling (Acts 9) comes before Cornelius (Acts 10)
51	2 Corinthians 12's "unspeakable words" as the pattern for how the Mystery was revealed	Ch. 5 §E	Withdrawn	The Mystery was written down, not unspeakable
52	"King of kings" is a title "no earlier administration ever gives Him"	Ch. 7 §A	Withdrawn	1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 17:14
53	Isaiah and Micah give the picture "independently"	Ch. 7 §E	Corrected	Their words are nearly identical
54	The seventh administration is never closed by an evening-and-morning formula	Closing §B	Withdrawn	That belongs to the seventh day of Genesis; the administration does close (Revelation 20:7)
55	The half-week recurs "by its second half alone," three times	Ch. 6 §B	Corrected	Five times in Revelation; which half is not always stated
56	*Emphysaō* and *pnoē* share a root	App. A §5	Withdrawn	Different roots; the real link is Genesis 2:7 in Greek
57	The symbolic reading of John 20:22 is "traced to the sixth century"	App. A §5	Corrected	Theodore of Mopsuestia, early fifth century; condemned in 553
58	A closing paragraph promising a regrouping into "three sets of two thousand years"	Closing §D	Withdrawn	Left over from the Genesis 1:1 study; nothing in this study followed it

Appendix E — What Changed from the Previous Edition

For readers of pod-V6, here is every change of substance in pod-V7 and pod-V8. The changes from pod-V5 to pod-V6 are listed in pod-V6's own Appendix E.

pod-V8: harmonized with *The Structure of Scripture* (pod-V3). Chapter 7 gains a new §C, "The Nations Gathered, and Israel Delivered" (Matthew 25:31-32; Romans 11:26-27), so that the chapter itself shows what Chapter 8 places at the opening of the Day of Judgment; the former §§C-E are now §§D-F, and every cross-reference is updated. Chapter 8 §E's third point now records that both studies use the same Second Coming boundary. Chapter 1's "Where this sits" note places the adversary's first rebellion before the garden (1 Timothy 3:6; Revelation 12:9), as the companion study does. Claim E's wording, Appendix D (row 68) and the Scripture Index follow.

The pod-V7 changes:

New Chapter 8, "The Seven Seen as a Mirror." A condensed summary of the companion study *The Structure of Scripture — A Demonstration of the Precision of God's Word*: the Plan of the Ages, its eight pairs in brief, the seven administrations laid over it (with a new diagram), the three boundaries where the two outlines part, and the lesson of the whole. A boxed note at the head of the chapter points the reader to the complete study.

Introduction. §A previews the mirror and carries the same boxed note. §E adds an eighth claim, M.

Chapters 1-7 and the Closing. Each now ends with a short note, "Where this sits in the Plan of the Ages," and a small picture of the members it holds.

Chapter 5. New §F, "The Kingdom Offered Again, Alongside Grace" (Acts 3:19-21; 13:46; 15:11; 28:28; Romans 11:25-26). The former §F, "How Grace Closes," is now §G, and every cross-reference to it is updated. The chapter's In Short adds the kingdom offer.

Chapter 7. §E (then §D) gives the thousand-year reign its common name, the Millennium.

Closing. §D adds the mirror reading.

Appendices C-D. Appendix C notes Bullinger's Plan of the Ages. Appendix D adds the claim M rows (59-67); nothing is withdrawn in this edition.

Sources. Bullinger's *The Apocalypse* and the companion study *The Structure of Scripture* added.

Sources Consulted

This study is built from scripture. The King James Version is the base text throughout, and every quotation has been checked against it. The works below were consulted for language, background and comparison. None carries scriptural weight.

The Holy Bible, King James Version. The base text.

James Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. For word counts and the Greek words behind the English (G2279 *ēchos*, G4157 *pnoē*, G4151 *pneuma*, G1720 *emphysaō*, G3622 *oikonomia*, G3857 *paradeisos*, G3966 *patriarchēs*, G4520 *sabbatismos*).

The Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint). For *paradeisos* in Genesis 2-3, and for *emphysaō* and *pnoē* in Genesis 2:7 and Ezekiel 37:9.

Melvin W. Elliott, *Genesis One: God's Table of Contents to the Bible* (Tate Publishing, 2010). Terminology, the idea of Genesis 1 as a structural key, and the pattern of sevens. Consulted as a guide and tested against the text, not adopted outright. Elliott's Gap Theory reading of Genesis 1:2 is not adopted; see this library's study *Genesis 1:2 and the Gap Theory Revealed*.

E. W. Bullinger, *How to Enjoy the Bible* (1916). His list of seven dispensations, set beside this study's in Appendix C.

C. I. Scofield, ed., *The Scofield Reference Bible* (1909). His seven dispensations, set beside this study's in Appendix C.

E. W. Bullinger, *The Apocalypse, or "The Day of the Lord"* (1902; 2nd ed. 1909). His "Plan of the Ages," used in Chapter 8 in the corrected form printed in this library's revised edition.

E. W. Bullinger, *Number in Scripture* (1894). Consulted for the pattern of sevens. Numerical patterns are treated in this library as corroboration only.

Commentaries on Acts 2:2 and John 20:22 (read through biblehub.com): Chrysostom (as cited in the *Expositor's Greek Testament*); Meyer's New Testament Commentary; the *Expositor's Greek Testament*; Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers; Barnes' Notes on the Bible; Vincent's Word Studies; MacLaren's Expositions; Jamieson-Fausset-Brown; Gill's Exposition; Matthew Poole's Commentary; Bengel's Gnomon; the Benson Commentary; the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; the Pulpit Commentary.

Bob Wilkin, "He Breathed on Them and Said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' (John 20:22)," Grace Evangelical Society (faithalone.org), 2019. On the symbolic reading of John 20:22 and its history, citing George Ladd and Cornelis Bennema.

The Second Council of Constantinople (553), Anathema 12. Its condemnation of Theodore of Mopsuestia's reading of John 20:22 as figurative.

Victor Paul Wierwille, *Power for Abundant Living* (class) and *Receiving the Holy Spirit Today*. Cited in the text of this study by the abbreviations PFAL and RHST. Consulted, through general reference sources, for the origin of the "breathing" reading of Acts 2:2 (Appendix A §6).

Victor Paul Wierwille, *Jesus Christ Is Not God*. Cited in the text of this study by the abbreviation JCING.

This library's companion studies: *The Structure of Scripture — A Demonstration of the Precision of God's Word* (the Plan of the Ages in full; Chapter 8); *Save Yourselves from This Untoward Generation* (Pentecost, and the temple as "the house"); *God: Deliverer, Not Destroyer* (the idiom of permission); *Where Are the Dead Right Now?* (Luke 23:43); *Genesis 1:2 and the Gap Theory Revealed*; *A Son Have I Established* (the cube of Revelation 21:16 and the most holy place).

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