

The Pattern of Glory

Genesis 2:1-3

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Introduction

When we speak and write, we often make allusions, references and hints of previously known comments. Quips and quotes from speeches, movies, plays, novels and even the Bible permeate our language. Many times we don't even know we are doing it. This idea often occurs inside a particular piece of literature or cinema. The author, play-writer or screenwriter intends for the reader/observer to recognize and connect the reference to each scene in the piece. Tonight we will be taking a look at four individual thought or ideas. These are concepts, metaphors, and pictures that are used in many Biblical passages and texts. We will string some of those texts together to get a familiarity with the use of these images to carry a meaning that connects the "dots" so to speak of the overall Biblical storyline. This is different than our typical "exposition" of a singular text, but we are pointing out recurrent concepts that should effect our focused expositions of these texts in their more complete contexts.

This requires a few assumptions that we cannot take the time tonight to defend or elaborate. These include a commitment to the underlying divine authorship of all of Scripture. There is an assumption as to the divine intention to the unfolding of history as displaying God's wisdom and ultimately His glory. We are also assuming that the Bible has a narrative and didactic cohesiveness. Even though it was penned over many years it remains literarily intact and intentioned. This literary cohesiveness is both direct and indirect, using quotations and allusions to allow the reader to interpret the unfolding of this revelation of His glory and in fact to correctly interpret and apply a particular passage in question.

These four concepts we are discussing tonight are important to understand the Bible's progression and presentation of glory, the future and "heaven." Each of these (and there are others) are used particularly in John's Revelation, but we are not going to read those passages, we will work backwards from other texts and let you then build even more complete connections perhaps even as this series progresses.

Exposition: Kingdom

Let's begin with the idea of "kingdom." The first set of texts we will read through are texts that utilize concepts of "kingdom" in the elaboration of their particular argument. Kingdom is a difficult concept for 21st century Americans to grasp. We have been so schooled in democratic ideals that have been baptized with a sense of Biblical/Christian "ought-ness" that we most often do not respond to the kingdom references with their full implications.

First of all, do not think of kingdom primarily in a geographical or spatial sense. Principally think of it as reign or rule. It is the sense of living in light and awareness of the authority of the king. This will necessarily include those who have this responsibility and then include their location. Kingdom involves ideas of reign, rule and authority. It brings with it accompanying thoughts of king, ruler or even lawgiver. It connects feelings of safety, protection, order and peace.

Hebrews 12:25-28

²⁵ See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. ²⁶ At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." ²⁷ This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸ Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, ²⁹ for our God is a consuming fire.

2 Peter 1:8-11

⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. ¹¹ For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 2:10-12

¹⁰ You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. ¹¹ For you know how, like a father with his children, ¹² we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

Colossians 1:9-13

⁹ And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. ¹¹ May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

John 3:1-3

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." ³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Isaiah 9:6-7

*⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,*

*and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
7 Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.*

Psalm 145

*1 I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.
2 Every day I will bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.
3 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,
and his greatness is unsearchable.
4 One generation shall commend your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts.
5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.
6 They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds,
and I will declare your greatness.
7 They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.
8 The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
9 The Lord is good to all,
and his mercy is over all that he has made.
10 All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,
and all your saints shall bless you!
11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom
and tell of your power,
12 to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds,
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.
13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.*

2 Samuel 5:1-3

Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh." 2 In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the Lord said to you, 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel.' " 3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel

Exodus 19:2-6

There Israel encamped before the mountain, 3 while Moses went up to God. The Lord called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: 4 You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6 and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

Genesis 1:26-28

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Exposition: City

Another Biblical metaphor used to follow through the Biblical storyline involves that of "city." Now, do not primarily think of city in geographical or architectural concepts. It involves a collection, gathering of people. It implies a sense of relationship both spatially and purposely and so does involve "location." City also carries with it the ideas we often associate the word "community" with. It involves the notions of gathering, meeting, and collecting. It, like "kingdom" also conveys the idea of protection and safety. There are walls to be boundaries, defining belonging. There are gates, places of entry and accessibility. As walk through references to "city", keep in mind the notions and emotions this concept should evoke.

Hebrews 11:8-10

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

Hebrews 12:18-24

¹⁸ For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest ¹⁹ and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. ²⁰ For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned." ²¹ Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear." ²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³ and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Philippians 1:27

²⁷ Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel

Philippians 3:17-21

¹⁷ Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Ezekiel 48:35

³⁰ "These shall be the exits of the city: On the north side, which is to be 4,500 cubits by measure, ³¹ three gates, the gate of Reuben, the gate of Judah, and the gate of Levi, the gates of the city being named after the tribes of Israel. ³² On the east side, which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates, the gate of Joseph, the gate of Benjamin, and the gate of Dan. ³³ On the south side, which is to be 4,500 cubits by measure, three gates, the gate of Simeon, the gate of Issachar, and the gate of Zebulun. ³⁴ On the west side, which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates, the gate of Gad, the gate of Asher, and the gate of Naphtali. ³⁵ The circumference of the city shall be 18,000 cubits. And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The Lord Is There."

Isaiah 60:1-5, 10-14

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
² For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the Lord will arise upon you,
and his glory will be seen upon you.
³ And nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your rising.
⁴ Lift up your eyes all around, and see;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from afar,
and your daughters shall be carried on the hip.
⁵ Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and exult,
because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
¹⁰ Foreigners shall build up your walls,
and their kings shall minister to you;
for in my wrath I struck you,
but in my favor I have had mercy on you.
¹¹ Your gates shall be open continually;
day and night they shall not be shut,
that people may bring to you the wealth of the nations,
with their kings led in procession.
¹² For the nation and kingdom
that will not serve you shall perish;
those nations shall be utterly laid waste.
¹³ The glory of Lebanon shall come to you,
the cypress, the plane, and the pine,
to beautify the place of my sanctuary,
and I will make the place of my feet glorious.
¹⁴ The sons of those who afflicted you
shall come bending low to you,
and all who despised you
shall bow down at your feet;
they shall call you the City of the Lord,
the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 62:1-5, 10-12

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.
² The nations shall see your righteousness,

- and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.
- ³ You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.
- ⁴ You shall no more be termed Forsaken,
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate,
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land Married;
for the LORD delights in you,
and your land shall be married.
- ⁵ For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your sons marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.
- ¹⁰ Go through, go through the gates;
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway;
clear it of stones;
lift up a signal over the peoples.
- ¹¹ Behold, the LORD has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to the daughter of Zion,
“Behold, your salvation comes;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.”
- ¹² And they shall be called The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD;
and you shall be called Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.

2 Samuel 5:6,7,10

⁶ And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, “You will not come in here, but the blind and the lame will ward you off”— thinking, “David cannot come in here.” ⁷ Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. ¹⁰ And David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him.

Exposition: Inheritance

Constantly though many texts in the Bible we read a statement of some importance of inheritance. To look forward to receiving something yet future is a recurring theme. The idea of inheritance involves a “future” perspective. It provides a direction and a promise. Inheritance suggests a hope and gives hope that there is yet “more” than what I am seeing. It does have a sense of possession and yet also a sense of stability. This then is seen also with related ideas such as heir. And as we have been working through these many texts, you are going to begin to see overlap in their connections. This should alert you to see that they involve a common direction and aim.

James 2:5

⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?

1 Peter 1:3-5

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Hebrews 9:15

¹⁵ Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 11:8,9

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise.

Ephesians 1:3,11-18

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Galatians 5:21

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ezekiel 44:15/28

¹⁵ "But the Levitical priests... ²⁸ "This shall be their inheritance: I am their inheritance: and you shall give them no possession in Israel; I am their possession.

Psalms 106

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever!
² Who can utter the mighty deeds of the Lord,
or declare all his praise?
³ Blessed are they who observe justice,
who do righteousness at all times!
⁴ Remember me, O Lord, when you show favor to your people;
help me when you save them,
⁵ that I may look upon the prosperity of your chosen ones,
that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation,
that I may glory with your inheritance.

Deuteronomy 4:1, 20-24

“And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you.

²⁰ But the Lord has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day. ²¹ Furthermore, the Lord was angry with me because of you, and he swore that I should not cross the Jordan, and that I should not enter the good land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance. ²² For I must die in this land; I must not go over the Jordan. But you shall go over and take possession of that good land. ²³ Take care, lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make a carved image, the form of anything that the Lord your God has forbidden you. ²⁴ For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

Genesis 15:1-6

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.” ² But Abram said, “O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³ And Abram said, “Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir.” ⁴ And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir.” ⁵ And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” ⁶ And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Genesis 12:1-3, 7-8

Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” ⁷ Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. ⁸ From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord.

Genesis 2:8,9,15

⁸ And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.”

Exposition: Rest

Our last concept for this evening is that of rest. Rest includes many ideas, that of obviously a lack or cessation of work and labor. It involves also a sense of peace and safety. It suggests a sense of arrival, a feeling of accomplishment and a satisfaction that things are done and done well. Fear of failure has passed and the worry of inadequacy is gone. Rest is both solemn and joyous. It is reflective and celebratory. It contains both the “ahhhh” and the “oh yeah!” Rest in the Scriptures is connected to being inherited, being safe within the city and ruled by the powerful king. Rest or Shabbat or Sabbath is one of the major unifying themes that stretches and connects all the Scriptures together.

Hebrews 4:1-11

Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. ² For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. ³ For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said,

“As I swore in my wrath,
‘They shall not enter my rest.’”

although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. ⁴ For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.”

⁵ And again in this passage he said,

“They shall not enter my rest.”

⁶ Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, ⁷ again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts.”

⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. ⁹ So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, ¹⁰ for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

¹¹ Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

Matthew 12:1-3,8

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. ² But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.” ⁸ For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”

Psalms 116:1-9

I love the Lord, because he has heard
my voice and my pleas for mercy.

² Because he inclined his ear to me,
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

³ The snares of death encompassed me;
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;
I suffered distress and anguish.

⁴ Then I called on the name of the Lord:
“O Lord, I pray, deliver my soul!”

⁵ Gracious is the Lord, and righteous;
our God is merciful.

⁶ The Lord preserves the simple;
when I was brought low, he saved me.

⁷ Return, O my soul, to your rest;
for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.

⁸ For you have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling;

⁹ I will walk before the Lord
in the land of the living.

Joshua 1:10-15

¹⁰ And Joshua commanded the officers of the people, ¹¹ “Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, ‘Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess.’”

12 And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said, 13 "Remember the word that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, 'The Lord your God is providing you a place of rest and will give you this land.' 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them, 15 until the Lord gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise."

Deuteronomy 12:8-11

8 "You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes, 9 for you have not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance that the Lord your God is giving you. 10 But when you go over the Jordan and live in the land that the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and when he gives you rest from all your enemies around, so that you live in safety, 11 then to the place that the Lord your God will choose, to make his name dwell there, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution that you present, and all your finest vow offerings that you vow to the Lord.

Exodus 20:8-11

8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Genesis 2:1-3

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

Conclusion:

I hope this exercise accomplished several things, but in particular that we have:

1. A sense of the authority and power of the Scripture itself. Not that preaching and teaching of the Word are not important and necessary but often our words cloud God's Words.
2. A renewed sense of the need to be more familiar with the entirety of Scripture. We have a tendency to focus on a few favorite or more easily understood texts and stories, but we have a full and complete Bible that will inform and strengthen us.
3. And lastly, we hope to have lifted your gaze, by seeing the scope of the Scriptures' intent from the beginning to "aim high in steering." To see beyond the doubt and fear, the struggle and war, even the temporary blessing and treasure to the glory of eternity, the rest of our eternal inheritance in the city of saints and the presence of the King!