



# PTN News

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P.O. Box 13006, Roanoke, VA 24030-3006

**This newsletter is also available on our website: [www.ptnews.org](http://www.ptnews.org)**

E-mail address for general communication: [mike@ptnews.org](mailto:mike@ptnews.org)

E-mail address for orders: [Joycew5656@aol.com](mailto:Joycew5656@aol.com)

## Thinking about Eternity

*“Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.”*

**Psalm 90:1-2**

By Mike Wingfield

Eternity. What comes to mind when you hear that word? Time. What is time and how does it relate to eternity? These are great questions that we need to honestly consider from a biblical perspective. As we begin a New Year, it seems fitting that we would consider what time and eternity are, and their relationship to each other. By doing this you will discover this is a great mystery that is difficult for the finite human mind to grasp. Without God’s revelation from the Bible, it would be impossible to even begin an accurate consideration of time and eternity.

While this matter is profound, it is very basic to the Christian faith and all that we should live for. It is very important that we call upon the Holy Spirit to teach us through His Word the meaning of time and eternity. Join me as we think about eternity.

### **God is Eternal**

When we speak about man and all of God’s creation, we can reference it within the created boundaries of

time. However, when we speak of God, we must also go outside of the boundaries of time. God has no beginning or end. He is eternal (**Deuteronomy 33:27**). The triune God in His very essence is an eternal Spirit. He lives outside the realm of finite time, space, and matter. All of time, space, and matter are a part of His creation for His purposes and for His glory. He controls and rules over all of time, space, and matter. Therefore, He is not bound or limited by any part of His creation. He is free to operate within His own self-imposed restrictions which eternally qualify Him to be holy, good, perfect, and sovereign. He cannot speak or act contrary to His infinite attributes. He is eternally true and faithful.

It is impossible for man to completely understand each of the statements above. While we by faith accept them, it is difficult for our finite minds to grasp them. God in His person is great beyond our comprehension. Long ago, the ancient prophet Isaiah asked, **“To whom then will ye liken God? or**

*what likeness will ye compare unto him” (Isaiah 40:18)?* Later, Isaiah declared that when you consider the everlasting God **“there is no searching of his understanding” (Isaiah 40:28)**. Hundreds of years later, the Apostle Paul would exclaim, **“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out” (Romans 11:33)!**

In no way is the One and only triune God limited or controlled by His finite creation. He is self-existent (**John 5:26**). That simply means He depends on nothing or no one for His being. He is the great “I am.” He is not bound by time. He is the sovereign King over all time (**1 Timothy 1:17**). Time began when the Lord spoke it into existence **“in the beginning” (Genesis 1:1)**. Time, as defined by the Bible, is the measurement of the continuation of all events and activities in their association to earth’s position in relationship to the movements of the sun, moon, and stars (**Genesis 1:14-19**). Thus, time began when God spoke the creation into existence. Time will end when God speaks, and the creation will be completely renovated after the Millennial Kingdom (**Psalm 102:25-26; 2 Peter 3:10-12**).

One of the oldest Psalms, written by Moses 3,400 years ago, declares, **“Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90:1-2)**. God does not live in time. He lives in eternity. He lives in the eternal now (**Isaiah 57:15**). He has no past. He has no future. He sees, understands, and controls all events within the boundaries of time all at the same moment. This is why the Bible declares **“that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Peter 3:8)**.

**Time, as defined by the Bible, is the measurement of the continuation of all events and activities in their association to earth’s position in relationship to the movements of the sun, moon, and stars.**

He lives in His eternal perspective where He sees the formation of all the atoms at the beginning while He also sees and controls the renovation of all the atoms at the end of time. He sees and rules over the invisible atoms and the great space of all the millions of galaxies that are beyond the intellectual capacity of man. The earth and God’s vast creation are His servants (**Psalm 119:91**). They obey when He speaks. Nothing escapes His total comprehension or divine sovereign control.

It is vitally important to realize that the entire Bible is God’s revelation about Himself and His creation from eternity past to eternity future. **Psalm 90:2** profoundly declares that He lives **“from everlasting to everlasting.”** In other words, God was before time began (eternity past) and will always be after time will end (eternity future). The Bible is a book about God and eternity. God expects us to discover His revelation about Himself and His eternal plan within and beyond time. This is another reason why biblical prophecy is so vitally important. This is why there is so much biblical prophecy in the Bible. Through the prophetic texts, God is transforming our thinking from creatures of finite time to redeemed children of God who will live in eternity.

If we are only interested in ourselves and our own little world at this moment in time, we are acting selfishly and foolishly. We will be out of touch with God and the very purposes He has for us and all His creation. **“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable” (1 Corinthians 15:19)**.

### **Man is Eternal from His Conception**

Man is eternal from his conception. We were made in the image of God. **“And 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 fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing**

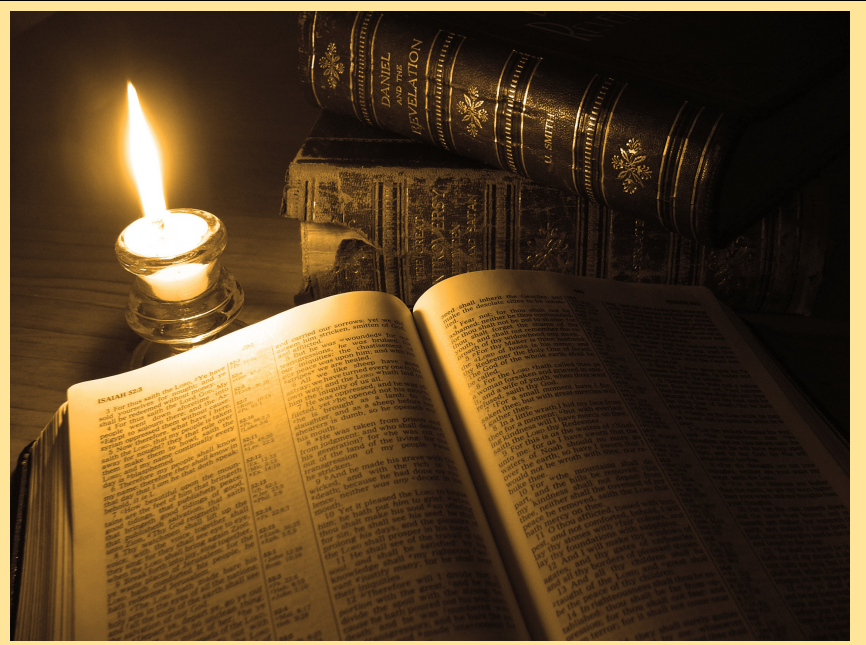
*that creepeth upon the earth”* (Genesis 1:26). What does it mean to be created in God’s image? This is a deep and profound subject. Several volumes could be written to answer this question. Simply, this means we were made as spiritual, moral, social, eternal, and intellectual creatures. In this newsletter, I am only briefly focusing upon the aspect of man being an eternal person.

The Bible overwhelmingly testifies that all mankind will live forever from the moment of their conception in their mother’s womb. After speaking about the passing away of the creation, the Psalmist in Psalm 102 declares, *“The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee”* (Psalm 102:28). The Hebrew word “continue” speaks of the continuation of a person’s life and dwelling place. This is speaking of God’s children living with God in His place. Psalm 90:1 reminds us, *“LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.”* The word “established” in Psalm 102:28, speaks of the child of God being sustained or secured in the presence of God. While the world is in a state of passing away, man is secured by the eternal God and will live forever.

When Jesus stood before the tomb of His friend Lazarus, He said to his sister, Martha, *“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die”* (John 11:25-26). The Bible states that the believer in Jesus Christ has eternal life now and *“in the world to come”* (Mark 10:30). When the believer in Christ dies on this earth, he is ushered into the presence of the Lord, where he awaits the resurrection of his earthly body at the time of the Rapture (2 Corinthians 5:8). He never dies but continues to live with Christ and the saints in heaven (Hebrews 9:15). All believers will enjoy *“eternal glory”* (2 Timothy 2:10) and receive an *“eternal inheritance”* (Hebrews 9:15).

In sharp contrast to this, all the unsaved will live forever, but suffer *“eternal damnation”* (Mark 3:29). They will be raised out of hell and made to stand before the Lord Jesus to be judged and condemned to the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:11-15). In the Lake of Fire, all the sinners of all the ages will *“be tormented day and night for ever and ever”* (Revelation 20:10). They will not be annihilated or cease to exist. They will live forever in a state of eternal judgment and torment separated from God.

Each human being has been created as an eternal being. All who have ever been conceived will live in



heaven or in eternal damnation. How sad that most people live only for the moment and never think about eternity. They never think about where they will spend eternity.

### Thinking about Eternity

Thinking about time and eternity is very basic to the Christian faith. When a person gets saved, it is the goal of the Holy Spirit to begin a gradual process that will transform them back into the perfect image of God. This is called sanctification and it is part of the salvation process. At the moment of our salvation, we are saved from the penalty of sin once and for all. We are being saved each day from the power of sin through the sanctifying work of the Spirit. Ultimately, we will be made perfect and sinless when we are saved from the presence of sin at the Rapture.

When a person gets saved, he begins to learn how to **“walk by faith, not by sight”** (2 [Corinthians 5:7](#)). The Bible says that **“faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”** ([Hebrews 11:1](#)). At the time of our salvation, the Holy Spirit begins to teach us to look at things in this world from a spiritual perspective. **“[The] eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God** (1 [Corinthians 2:9-10](#)). This transformation directed by the Holy Spirit is always connected to a person’s reception of the Word of God. **“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”** ([Romans 10:17](#)).

The life of the apostle Paul gives us a perfect example of how faith is produced by the Spirit through the Bible. In [2 Corinthians 4:16- 5:10](#), we learn how Paul walked by faith and not by sight. In this passage, Paul teaches us that biblical faith transcends time, space, and matter. We learn to look at life from God’s perspective.

When a person gets saved, there are three dynamic ways his vision changes. This is the very basic stuff that creates and maintains our faith. First, man begins to look at things that are not only physical, but invisible ([2 Corinthians 4:18](#)). There is a spiritual realm that is invisible. The Spirit of God uses biblical prophecy to help develop our spiritual vision of the invisible. Because of divine revelation, people of faith look beyond the physical realm. They cannot physically see it, but they believe this realm is there! For example, look at the testimony of the faith of Abraham and the patriarchs in [Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-14](#).

Second, at salvation, the Spirit begins to teach man to look at things that are not only temporary, but eternal ([2 Corinthians 4:17-18](#)). A biblical faith helps us to develop an eternal perspective on life. It is a restoration to our image of God as eternal persons like God. The core problem in our godless culture is the passion to pursue instant gratification. People do

not stop to think about the eternal consequences of their sin.

Biblical prophecy is the perfect tool the Spirit uses to create an eternal perspective in us. The Lord wants us to develop a timetable of eternity for finite man. We only live on this earth for a very short time. But this is not the reality of all that we will experience in eternity. There is a reason why there is so much prophecy in the Bible. When we study about the details of God’s eternal plan in the Bible, we are looking at the mileposts of the future that help to fix the reality of eternity in our minds.

**Biblical prophecy is the perfect tool the Spirit uses to create an eternal perspective in us. The Lord wants us to develop a timetable of eternity for finite man.**

Practically, this helps us to make choices based upon the BIG PICTURE, rather than being overwhelmed with instant gratification. This is where the sinful heart lives in foolishness and the dangers of the wages of sin. For example, look at the testimony of Moses in [Hebrews 11:23-29](#).

Third, biblical faith causes us to look at things that are not only earthly, but heavenly ([2 Corinthians 5:1-6](#)). Heaven is mentioned numerous times in the Bible. Heaven is at the heart of the longing of those who have real biblical faith! What we think about heaven and its daily application in our lives is essential for our spiritual growth and maturity ([Colossians 3:1-4](#)).

Biblical prophecy is like an eye chart. It helps us to check our spiritual vision. Biblical prophecy causes us to look beyond time, space, and matter. We are exercising our faith as we view ourselves as pilgrims and strangers on this earth. This is the real stuff that faith is made of. It is at the heart of our salvation experience and our real daily walk and worship experience. If heaven is not our home and our daily hope and focus, then our spiritual vision is really suffering!

## The Practical Application

One of the main goals of the Holy Spirit is to produce a godly character in us. A part of that godly character is our application of the reality that we are eternal. As we grow in our understanding of this reality, it will radically alter our perspective of life and living. Our glorious hope is bound up in our faith – a faith that is anchored in eternity.

Most people are selling their souls to the cheap, instant thrills of this world. They do not realize that the God Who loves them created them to live for eternity. He created them to know Him and enjoy being with Him for all eternity.

This perspective of the hope of eternity is what helps us live in a world full of pain and disappointment. It strengthens us when our bodies and this world are falling apart. It comforts us when we are forced to say goodnight to someone we love, who has passed through the door of death. It reminds us that we can weep, but not as others who have no hope ([1 Thessalonians 4:13](#)). It leads us to redeem the time because the days are evil ([Ephesians 5:16](#)). It helps us to rejoice in times of persecution and rejection ([1 Peter 4:12-13](#)).

In [Psalm 90](#), after reminding us of the eternality of God and the brevity of our life on this earth, we are admonished, **“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom”** ([Psalm 90:12](#)). [Psalm 39:4-5](#) adds, **“Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is: that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.”** Life is short when compared to eternity. Our time on this earth is very limited. We must be wise to invest our time and talents for the rewards that will count for eternity. Soon, all of this will come to pass and only what has been accomplished by the Holy Spirit in us for the glory of God will really matter. Life is not about the collection of the junk of this world. The best investments we can make while on this earth are those that are

forwarded ahead to be deposited in the bank of heaven ([Matthew 6:19-21](#)).

Our Lord expects us to be a people who are passionate about the future, especially as it relates to what He has prepared for us. Sadly, most people today fail to think about eternity. They live their entire lives focused upon the things of this world and how it can bring them pleasure at this moment in time. It is all about gratification now!

Most people are selling their souls to the cheap, instant thrills of this world. They do not realize that the God Who loves them created them to live for eternity. He created them to know Him and enjoy being with Him for all eternity. As you begin this New Year, please challenge yourself to apply the same warning given by Jesus to His disciples, **“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul”** ([Matthew 16:24-26](#))?

Be ready for the shout that will take us out!

## Is He the One?

The Bible plainly states that the illumination of the identity of the antichrist will not take place until after the Rapture of the church ([2 Thessalonians 2:1-10](#)). While we will never know for sure who the antichrist will be, it appears that there are several persons on earth at this moment who could be the one who is being groomed by Satan to be his superman.

One such person is the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman. Just a few months ago, in August, the Crown Prince signaled that he wants Saudi Arabia to replace Jordan as the Islamic custodian of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. He mentioned that Saudi Arabia already controls the two most holy sites in the religion of Islam – Mecca and Medina. Therefore, in his eyes, it is only fitting that it also controls the third most holy site of Islam, which is the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Those who recognized this change believe that Mohammed bin Salman is positioning himself to strike a treaty of peace with Israel. According to the Bible, this is exactly what the antichrist will do (**Daniel 9:27**). It appears that the antichrist's false peace agreement with Israel will include Israel's right to build a Jewish temple on the Temple Mount.

Currently, there are only two groups that are passionately struggling for the right to control the holy mountain of Zion – Islam and Israel. Therefore, it appears that the stage is being set for the final war over the Temple Mount.

It seems obvious to say that this war will be between Israel and Islam. When the antichrist breaks his false covenant with Israel at the mid-point of the Tribulation, he will make his move to take back his control over the Temple Mount (**Daniel 9:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 11:1-2**).

Before Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, it appeared that a peace agreement between Israel and Saudi Arabia was about to take place. Since Israel began its war in Gaza to destroy Hamas, the Islamic world has voiced its opposition to and hatred of Israel. However, to many people's surprise, Mohammed bin Salman has guarded his comments on Israel's war with Hamas and is trying to keep the door open for a peace deal with Israel.

Haisam Hassanein, an Arab Associate Fellow at The Washington Institute, in Joel Rosenberg's *All Arab News*, reports that some influential Arabs are saying that Saudi Arabia holds the key to bringing peace to the Middle East. This report states, "Direct Saudi Arabian involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is likely to be the shortest route to a stable peace in the Middle East. ... Clearly, a new Washington-

Jerusalem-Riyadh entente is the best path to stable peace. Will U.S., Israeli, and Saudi leaders seize the opportunity" (*All Arab News, December 21, 2023*)

For quite some time it has been my conviction that the antichrist would be a Muslim leader in the Middle



East who would have a face of peace, but a heart of war. We can not be sure that Mohammed bin Salman is the antichrist.

However, it is obvious that the events of October 7 and its aftermath of Israel's war with Hamas have

created the perfect storm in the Middle East and the entire world that could set the stage for the antichrist's entrance and his deceptive peace deal with Israel.

The time appears to be right. It is very likely that the antichrist is making his bid to garner global attention as a rising global political star. This could be it!

## Mike's Winter Speaking Schedule

### January

4- Rocky Mount, VA, Franklin Heights Church 540-798-5110  
18- Roanoke, VA, Clearbrook Baptist Church 540-798-5110  
28- Front Royal, VA, Front Royal Temple 540-717-2333

### February

1-Rocky Mount, VA, Franklin Heights Church 540-798-5110  
15- Roanoke, VA, Clearbrook Baptist Church 540-798-5110  
17-18- Kittanning, PA, Grace Brethren Church 724-763-7871  
25-28- Berne, IN, West Missionary Church 260-849-0500

### March

7- Rocky Mount, VA, Franklin Heights Church 540-798-5110  
17-19- Rochester, IN, Whippoorwill Community 574-242-1836  
21- Roanoke, VA, Clearbrook Baptist Church 540-798-5110