

WAS HEAVEN OPENED AT CHRIST'S ASCENSION OR A.D. 70?

If your answer is A.D. 70 then you need to tear the Book of Revelation out of your Bible! The Book of Revelation shows 3 groups of people in Heaven BEFORE the Wrath of GOD or the Lamb or the Jewish-Roman War began with the opening of the 7th Seal in Revelation 8:1.

All scripture is copied from the New King James Version unless noted otherwise.

GROUP 1) The 24 Elders: Revelation 4:4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I SAW TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS SITTING, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

The 24 Elders were one of the first things John saw in his Vision in Heaven. They were wearing white robes and crowns and sitting on thrones so they were already REIGNING! John saw them BEFORE any of the 7 Seals had been opened.

Who were the 24 Elders?

Revelation 5:8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and THE TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS FELL DOWN BEFORE THE LAMB, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, AND HAVE REDEEMED US TO GOD BY YOUR BLOOD OUT OF EVERY TRIBE AND TONGUE AND PEOPLE AND NATION"... Since they were REDEEMED BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB they were Human Believers, NOT Angels!

Were the 12 Apostles included in the group of 24 Elders?

Jesus told his Disciples, "YOU WHO HAVE FOLLOWED ME WILL ALSO SIT ON TWELVE THRONES, JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL"... Matthew 19:27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" Matthew 19:28 So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, YOU WHO HAVE FOLLOWED ME WILL ALSO SIT ON TWELVE THRONES, JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL".

Did John look into the future and see himself sitting on 1 of the thrones?

I don't think so. I believe John was in the Present at the beginning of his vision. Perhaps all OVERCOMERS get to sit on one of the thrones for awhile. Jesus said this to the Church of Laodicea... Revelation 3:21 "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne"... Jesus also said in Luke 22:29-30: "And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, Luke 22:30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and SIT ON THRONES JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL"... Who was Jesus talking to? Answer: His 12 Disciples... Luke 22:14 When the hour had come, He sat down, and THE TWELVE

APOSTLES with Him.

Revelation 5:9 says that they sang a song about being REDEEMED "OUT OF EVERY TRIBE AND TONGUE AND PEOPLE AND NATION"... Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And HAVE REDEEMED US TO GOD BY YOUR BLOOD OUT OF EVERY TRIBE AND TONGUE AND PEOPLE AND NATION, Revelation 5:10 AND HAVE MADE US KINGS AND PRIESTS TO OUR GOD; AND WE SHALL **REIGN ON THE EARTH**"... Therefore, one would think the song must not only represent the 24 Elders but a larger group since there were more than 24 Tribes, Tongues and Nations at that time. Furthermore, Revelation 1:6 says that the church was "kings and priests" to GOD... Revelation 1:4 "John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler **over** the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, Revelation 1:6 and HAS MADE US KINGS AND PRIESTS TO HIS GOD AND FATHER, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen"... However, let's read what the BELIEVER'S BIBLE Commentary has to say and look at how some other Bible versions have translated the text...

Believers Bible Commentary: 5:9-10 - In their new song, they acclaimed the Lamb as worthy to execute judgment because of His redemptive work on the cross. There is a question whether they include themselves among the redeemed ("have redeemed us to God") or whether it should read, as in some versions, "and did purchase for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation".

(ASV) And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, (American Standard Version)

(ESV) And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, (English Standard Version)

(GNB) They sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to break open its seals. For you were killed, and by your sacrificial death you bought for God people from every tribe, language, nation, and race. (Good News Bible)

(NAS95) And they *sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. (New American Standard)

(NIV) And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. (New

International Version)

(NRSV) They sing a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation; (New Revised Standard Version)

Notice that Revelation 5:9 was BEFORE the 1ST SEAL had been opened in Revelation 6:1 so WHEN did these people go to heaven? Answer: The Old Testament Saints (**not all**) went there with Christ after they were Resurrected with him in the 1st Resurrection and the New Testament Saints who Died before the 2nd Resurrection went to Heaven when they Died. Remember what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:8: "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be ABSENT FROM THE BODY AND TO BE PRESENT WITH THE LORD".

Did you Notice that Revelation 5:10 said that the 24 Elders and probably the entire group they represented were supposed to "**REIGN ON THE EARTH**"?

So WHEN was that supposed to happen? Some believe that it happens in the Future at the 2nd Coming of Christ when he brings the Saints with him and THEN they Reign on the Earth for 1,000 years. Can you find another verse in the Bible that indicates the Saints will leave Heaven and Reign **ON** the Earth?

Let's look at what some of the Bible Commentators say about Revelation 5:10...

Popular New Testament Bible Commentary: At the word 'priests' there seems to be a pause, the following clause constituting a distinct proposition. Nor ought we to translate 'upon,' but 'over,' the earth. They are not upon the earth at all, and cannot therefore be said to be there 'exerting those influences, promoting those principles, and dispensing those laws of righteousness, holiness, and peace which in reality rule all the best developments of life and history.' They are the Church triumphant in heaven. The 'earth' has been their foe, and it is not now reformed by them: it is subdued beneath them.

Pulpit Bible Commentary: *And we shall reign on the earth;* or, and they reign on the earth (see on Rev_5:9). The interpretation of this passage will necessarily be influenced to some extent by the view adopted of the millennium (see Rev_20:1-15.), Those who expect a personal reign of Christ on the earth for a thousand years naturally consider that in this verse reference is made to that period. And if the thousand years be understood to denote the time which elapses between the first and second comings of Christ, that is to say, the present time, the two passages—that in Rev_20:4 and the one before us—may be connected, and intended to refer to the same time. We have, therefore, to inquire in what sense the word "reign" is used, and how the redeemed can be said to reign on the earth at the present time. In the first place, nothing is more plainly taught us than that Christ's reigning, his power, and his kingdom on earth are a spiritual reign, a spiritual power, a spiritual kingdom; though the Jews and our Lord's disciples themselves frequently erred by supposing that his kingdom would be a visible, worldly power. It seems natural, therefore, that if such is the meaning of Christ's reigning, that of his servants should be of the same nature; and we ought

not to err in the same way as the Jews did, by expecting to see the redeemed exercise at any time visible authority over their fellowmen. The redeemed reign, then, spiritually. But it will be well to inquire more fully and exactly what we intend to signify by this expression. The word "reign" is not often used of Christians in the New Testament.

Foy Wallace: *We Shall Reign* - Literally rendered the passage reads are reigning--referring in the Revelation context to their continuing conquests in the trials that were present. What the four creatures and twenty-four elders were chanting in unison, as a complete representative company, was the prospect of a glorious triumph over their oppressors. It symbolized a reign of victory, a symbol that the oppressions to be revealed in the seals could not consume them; the wrath of monarchs could not destroy them; nor the power of kings and emperors defeat them. They would survive; they would live; they would reign on the earth, not in future glory, but reign there and then as conquerers and overcomers in an undefeated, triumphant cause. The church was symbolized as being complete and imperishable in conflict with their heathen oppressors.

Cambridge Bible Commentary: *we shall reign*] Authorities are nearly evenly divided between the readings "they reign" and "they shall reign." Perhaps the present is to be preferred, as the more difficult in sense; the future could be easily understood of the millennial reign (Rev_20:4), whatever that means.

Albert Barnes: It is not said that this will be a reign under the Saviour in a literal kingdom on the earth; nor is it said that the saints will descend from heaven, and occupy thrones of power under Christ as a visible king.

It's amazing how 1 word can change the meaning of a verse. The Greek word that "**on**" is translated from can also be translated as "**over**".

EPI = STRONG'S G1909

Just look at how the mistranslation of the Greek word AION into WORLD instead of AGE in the King James Version has caused so much confusion and BAD ESCHATOLOGY especially because of Matthew 24:3... And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the END OF THE WORLD?

I recently found a new Hebrew translation of the books of Revelation, James and Jude. You may be interested in checking out the website. Here's what was said about the Hebrew New Testament...

"In the year 1806, Buchanan found two Hebrew New Testament manuscripts in a Jewish Synagogue in Cochin, India. Together, these two manuscripts contain the entire New Testament in Hebrew. However, most of the books in these Hebrew manuscripts do not contain the indications of authenticity expected in a faithful copy of an original Hebrew document. Rather, they are quite similar to the Aramaic (Syriac) Peshitta, and also contain Aramaic and Aramaic-like words which

were not properly translated into Hebrew.

In contrast, the Hebrew Revelation, James and Jude contained in these manuscripts from Cochin show many differences when compared to the Greek, Latin, and Aramaic versions. They also contain the many linguistic evidences of authenticity expected in genuine copies of original Hebrew documents: gapping of explicit subjects and objects; Hebrew word plays; inversed word order; Hebrew keywords linking sections together; and differences which indicate mistranslations in the Greek version. The Hebrew Revelation, James and Jude do not contain the many Peshitta-based Aramaisms found in most of the other books in these manuscripts, and can in no way be seen as translations from the Greek, Latin or Aramaic versions." - HebrewGospels.com

Here's the download link: [Hebrew Revelation, James and Jude](#)

Look at how Revelation 5:10 is translated - **Ms. Oo.1.16:** Revelation 5:10 and you made us priests and kings, that we may be kings OVER the earth.

An important thing to know is that the original manuscripts from which scripture is translated no longer exist and translations are not perfect; NONE of them! Translator BIAS is normal so it's wise to use different Bible versions and read the Bible Commentaries when studying scripture.

Look at how [The Kingdom Bible](#) translates Revelation 5:10... Revelation 5:10 and have made us to our God, a kingdom and priests; and WE WILL BE REIGNING OVER THE EARTH.

GROUP 2) The Martyrs under the Altar: Revelation 6:9 When He opened the fifth seal, I SAW UNDER THE ALTAR THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO HAD BEEN SLAIN FOR THE WORD OF GOD and for the testimony which they held. Revelation 6:10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "HOW LONG, O LORD, HOLY AND TRUE, UNTIL YOU JUDGE AND AVENGE OUR BLOOD ON THOSE WHO DWELL ON THE EARTH?" Revelation 6:11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

Revelation 6:9 in the Syriac Peshitta shows that the group included New Testament Martyrs... SYRIAC: (9) And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar, the souls of them who were slain on account of the word of God, and ON ACCOUNT OF THE TESTIMONY TO THE LAMB WHICH WAS WITH THEM.

[The Syriac Peshitta](#) - I prefer James Murdock's translation.

I believe the Martyrs of Revelation 6:9-11 were the same Martyrs as the ones mentioned in Revelation 20:4 and that group may have included Old Testament Martyrs... 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." There's no doubt that New Testament Martyrs were mentioned in Revelation 20:4.

I read where one Preterist said that these Martyrs were in Hades but there's no scripture that states that there was an "Altar" in Hades. There were BARS though... (KJV) Job 17:16 They shall go down to the BARS of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust. - **Just Kidding! LOL**

These Martyrs went to Heaven AFTER Jesus' Resurrection because Jesus said in John 3:13 "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven"... There may have been 2 Exceptions to this: Enoch and Elijah.

The Martyrs were under the ALTAR in Heaven. The temple and altars on earth were copies of the temple and altars in Heaven and the altar of sacrifice was located outside the temple. Here's what Robertson's Word Pictures and Albert Barnes Commentary says about the altar and the location in Revelation 6:9-10...

Robertson's Word Pictures: Under the altar - "Under" (hupokato), for the blood of the sacrifices was poured at the bottom of the altar (Leviticus 4:7). The altar of sacrifice (Exodus 39:39; Exodus 40:29), not of incense. The imagery, as in Hebrews, is from the tabernacle. This altar in heaven is symbolic, of course, the antitype for the tabernacle altar (Hebrews 8:5).

Albert Barnes: On them that dwell on the earth - Those who are still on the earth. This shows that the scene here is laid in heaven, and that the souls of the martyrs are represented as there.

Some interpret Hebrews 9:8 to mean that people could not enter Heaven while the Jewish Temple was still standing or had standing (validity)... "the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing." (YLT) Hebrews 9:8 the Holy Spirit this evidencing that not yet hath been manifested the way of the holy places , the first tabernacle having yet a standing; (Young's Literal Translation).

Here's what Cambridge Bible Commentary says about Hebrews 9:8...

Cambridge Bible Commentary: *that the way into the holiest ... was not yet made manifest*] Entrance into the Holiest symbolised direct access to God, and the "way" into it had not been made evident until He came who is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). He is "the new and living way" (Hebrews 10:19-20). [*while as the first tabernacle was yet standing*] Rather, "while yet the outer Tabernacle is still standing," i.e. so long as there is (for the Temple, which represented the continuity of the Tabernacle and the Old Covenant, had not sunk in flames, as it did a few years later) an outer Tabernacle, through which not even a Priest was ever allowed to enter into the Holiest. Hence the deep significance of the rending of the veil of the Temple from the top to the bottom at the Crucifixion. (Matthew 27:51).

(KJV) Matthew 27:51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

Albert Barnes Commentary on Matthew 27:51: The veil of the temple -

This was doubtless the veil, curiously performed, which separated the holy from the most holy place, dividing the temple into two apartments, Exo_26:31-33.

In twain - In two pieces or parts. This was the time of day when the priest was burning incense in the holy place, and it is probable that he witnessed it. The most holy place has been usually considered as a type of heaven, and the tearing of the veil to signify that the way to heaven was now open to all - the great High Priest, the Lord Jesus, being about to enter in as the forerunner of his people.

Pulpit Commentary on Matthew 27:51: The veil of the temple: There were two principal veils in the present temple—one between the vestibule and the holy place, and one other which is that here referred to, a constituent part of the edifice. This was the veil between the holy place and the holy of holies, which was moved aside only once a year to admit the high priest to the shrine on the great Day of Atonement (Exo_26:33). It was large and costly, some sixty feet high, and made of rich materials. Josephus ('Bell. Jud.,' 5.5. 4) tells us of one of the veils in the temple, that it was a Babylonian curtain, embroidered with linen in various colours, woven together with wonderful art, such as the eye loved to rest upon.

Was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: An apocryphal Gospel ('The Gospel of the Hebrews'), quoted by St. Jerome, in loc., asserts that the exquisitely carved lintel to which the veil was fastened was at this moment shattered to pieces, and in its fall tore the curtain asunder. The direction of the rent would show that no human hands had torn it apart, and the rending seems to have preceded the earthquake. The violent act was supernatural, and of a typical nature, as we are taught by Heb_9:6-12. The sanctuary enshrined the presence of God, from which the veil excluded every one but the high priest on one special occasion, thus denoting the imperfect reconciliation between God and his people, and that the way to the holiest was not yet made manifest. The rending of this veil betokened the opening of the access to heaven through the wounded body of Christ: as we read in Heb_10:19, Heb_10:20, "Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." "When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers." The distinction between Jew and Gentile was abolished, the mysteries of the old Law were opened and manifested, all rites and ceremonies were made of sacramental efficacy, and ministered grace. How soon this ominous occurrence was discovered, we know not. The priest who offered incense at the evening sacrifice about this same hour must have seen it, and spread abroad among his comrades the news, to which many would attach a meaning fatal to the security of their religion. But this was comparatively a private sign; the next one was of a more comprehensive and public character.

Couldn't the Most Holy Place in Heaven be in the Temple in Heaven instead of all of Heaven itself?

Scripture states that "NO ONE WAS ABLE TO ENTER THE TEMPLE TILL THE SEVEN PLAGUES OF THE SEVEN ANGELS WERE COMPLETED"... Revelation 15:5 After

these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. Revelation 15:6 And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. Revelation 15:7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. Revelation 15:8 The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and NO ONE WAS ABLE TO ENTER THE TEMPLE TILL THE SEVEN PLAGUES OF THE SEVEN ANGELS WERE COMPLETED.

The Temple in Heaven was not opened until the Last Trumpet was blown... Revelation 11:19 "THEN THE TEMPLE OF GOD WAS OPENED IN HEAVEN, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail." Since Revelation shows that there were people in heaven before the last trumpet was blown then maybe they were not allowed in the temple in heaven (Most Holy Place) until it was opened in Revelation 11:19.

So, GOD'S WRATH was completed and the Temple in Heaven was Opened. How convenient! It was opened right on time because another very important event occurred WHEN the Last Trumpet was Blown and that was THE 2ND RESURRECTION... 1 Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— 1 Corinthians 15:52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, AT THE LAST TRUMPET. For the trumpet will sound, and THE DEAD WILL BE RAISED INCORRUPTIBLE, AND WE SHALL BE CHANGED. 1 Corinthians 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Jesus said in John 11:26... "And whoever lives and BELIEVES IN ME SHALL NEVER DIE." Obviously he was not talking about physical death of the body. I believe that he meant Separation from GOD in Hades. We know that Believers were Martyred before the 2nd Resurrection. I believe that those who Died in Christ before the 2nd Resurrection went straight to Heaven. As Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:8... "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be ABSENT FROM THE BODY AND TO BE PRESENT WITH THE LORD".

I believe that Heaven was opened after Christ ascended. He took some captives from Hades with him... Ephesians 4:8 Therefore He says: "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE, AND GAVE GIFTS TO MEN."

The 1st Resurrection included Christ and those in Matthew 27:52-53... Matthew 27:52 and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; Matthew 27:53 and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many... The 1st Resurrection was the resurrection of corpses so it was Physical. The Resurrection at the Parousia did not involve corpses so it was Spiritual... 1 Corinthians 15:42 SO ALSO IS THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 1 Corinthians 15:43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 1 Corinthians 15:44 It is

sown a natural body, IT IS RAISED A SPIRITUAL BODY. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

Some or all of those in the 1st Resurrection may have been Martyrs. The prophet Isaiah may have been one of those Old Testament Martyrs. According to tradition he was sawn in two. I believe Isaiah prophesied of the 1st Resurrection and he was one of them... Isaiah 26:19 YOUR DEAD SHALL LIVE; Together with MY DEAD BODY THEY SHALL ARISE. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; For your dew is like the dew of herbs, And THE EARTH SHALL CAST OUT THE DEAD... The word "BODY" is translated from the Greek word NEBELAH and it means: a carcass, corpse. NEBELAH is used 48 times in 41 verses in the old testament and always refers to the dead bodies of animals or humans.

NEBELAH = STRONG'S H5038

Word Summary: nebelah: a carcass, corpse

Transliteration: nebelah

Phonetic Spelling: (neb-ay-law')

Part of Speech: Noun Feminine

Short Definition: a carcass, corpse

Strong's Concordance: dead body, dead carcass, dead of itself, which died, beast that which dieth of itself

From nabel; a flabby thing, i.e. A carcase or carrion (human or bestial, often collectively); figuratively, an idol -- (dead) body, (dead) carcase, dead of itself, which died, (beast) that (which) dieth of itself.

Here's what the Cambridge Bible Commentary says about Isaiah 26:19... "Here the hope is restricted to Israelites (see Isaiah 26:14) and no doubt to those Israelites who had departed this life in the faith and fear of God. On the other hand, the teaching of this verse is quite different from such passages as Hosea 6:2; Ezekiel 37:1-14. There rising from the dead is but a figurative clothing of the idea of national regeneration, whereas there can be no doubt that here a literal resurrection of individuals is foretold."

The 1st Resurrection was Biological/Physical. It had to be... Who would have believed that Christ had been Resurrected if it had only been Spiritual and no one had seen him after his resurrection? Christianity would never have been established if there were no witnesses to Christ's Resurrection!

The Apostle Paul revealed the Timing of the 1st & 2nd Resurrections... 1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so IN CHRIST ALL SHALL BE MADE ALIVE. 1 Corinthians 15:23 But each one in his own order: CHRIST THE FIRSTFRUITS, AFTERWARD THOSE WHO ARE CHRIST'S AT HIS COMING (Parousia).

Scripture does not say how many captives Christ took to Heaven but I'm assuming that it was at least 12 because I believe that 12 of the 24 Elders were old testament saints... We know that ALL of the old testament saints were not raised at that time because of what Paul said in Acts 24:14-15... 'And I confess this to thee, that, according to the way that they call a sect, so serve I the God of

the fathers, believing all things that in the law and the prophets have been written, Acts 24:15 having hope toward God, which they themselves also wait for, that THERE IS ABOUT TO BE A RISING AGAIN OF THE DEAD, BOTH OF RIGHTEOUS AND UNRIGHTEOUS; (Young's Literal Translation). The Greek word MELLO is used and it means "to be about to" in English or "fixin' to" if you speak Southern. The book of Acts was probably written in A.D. 61-62. Therefore, there were still RIGHTEOUS souls in Hades that would be Resurrected during the PAROUSIA. Furthermore, Daniel reveals that both the righteous and unrighteous would be raised at or near the same period of time... Daniel 12:2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

GROUP 3) The Great Multitude from Every Nation: Revelation 7:9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, Revelation 7:10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

The Great Multitude is mentioned after the Sealing of the 144,000 which occurred before the 7th Seal was opened in Revelation 8:1. There's nothing in the text to suggest that much time elapsed between the Sealing of the 144,000 and John seeing the great multitude in Heaven. Who were the Great Multitude dressed in white robes? Scripture provides the answer... Revelation 7:13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" Revelation 7:14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "THESE ARE THE ONES WHO COME OUT OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

I believe that John the Revelator wrote the Book of Revelation around A.D. 65. The Apostle John stated that he was "IN THE TRIBULATION" in Revelation 1:9... "I, John, both your brother and companion IN THE TRIBULATION and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ". The GREAT TRIBULATION of Revelation 7:14 is NOT the same GREAT TRIBULATION as referred to in Matthew 24:21 and Daniel 12:1. The GREAT TRIBULATION of Revelation 7:14 involved the Persecuted Christians and it occurred before the WRATH OF THE LAMB began which was on the Unbelieving Jews. Simply put... the GREAT TRIBULATION of Matthew 24:21 was by GOD or the LAMB on UNBELIEVERS and the GREAT TRIBULATION of Revelation 7:14 was by SATAN on BELIEVERS! GOD'S WRATH began after the Seventh Seal was opened in Revelation 8:1... When He OPENED THE SEVENTH SEAL, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. Revelation 8:6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. Revelation 8:7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

Christ told his Disciples that they would be Persecuted and some of them would be Killed before he told them about the Abomination of Desolation or Jerusalem being Surrounded by Armies and the GREAT TRIBULATION of Matthew 24:21... Matthew 24:9 "Then THEY WILL DELIVER YOU UP TO TRIBULATION AND KILL YOU, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. Matthew 24:10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

Here's what the parallel verses in the Gospel of Mark say... Mark 13:9 "But watch out for yourselves, for THEY WILL DELIVER YOU UP TO COUNCILS, AND YOU WILL BE BEATEN IN THE SYNAGOGUES. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. Mark 13:10 And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. Mark 13:11 But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Mark 13:12 Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and CAUSE THEM TO BE PUT TO DEATH. Mark 13:13 And YOU WILL BE HATED BY ALL FOR MY NAME'S SAKE. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

The parallel verses in Luke say... Luke 21:12 But before all these things, THEY WILL LAY THEIR HANDS ON YOU AND PERSECUTE YOU, DELIVERING YOU UP TO THE SYNAGOGUES AND PRISONS. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. Luke 21:13 But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. Luke 21:14 Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; Luke 21:15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. Luke 21:16 You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and THEY WILL PUT SOME OF YOU TO DEATH. Luke 21:17 AND YOU WILL BE HATED BY ALL FOR MY NAME'S SAKE.

Persecution of Christians began right after Pentecost. Read about Peter and John being arrested and threatened in Acts 4. The Book of Acts has several examples of the Persecution of Christians. They were either persecuted by Jews or the persecution was instigated by them. Christians who were Killed went to Heaven... 2 Corinthians 5:8 "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather TO BE ABSENT FROM THE BODY AND TO BE PRESENT WITH THE LORD". The Great Multitude that John saw in Revelation 7:9-17 were in Heaven "standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands" and they were seen before the Wrath of the Lamb had begun. The Greatest Persecution of Christians began in A.D. 64 after they were blamed for the Great Fire of Rome. Nero was the Roman Emperor at that time and was known as The Beast.

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In conclusion, To say that there weren't people in Heaven before the general Resurrection of A.D. 70 is to DISREGARD SCRIPTURE!