

Eschatology

The Biblical Study and
Doctrines of **Last Things**

Last Things - End Times

(Eschatology – The Biblical Study and Doctrines of Last Things)

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” **John 14:1-3**

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” **John 16:12-13**

“He (Jesus) was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.” **Acts 1:9-11**

Introduction

Eschatology is the branch of Christian theology dealing with the biblical study of *last things, end times, the prophecies* and the *events of the last days on earth* leading up to a new heaven and a new earth.

Eschatology is Viewed in Both a Personal and General Way

First, it’s important to understand that everyone who trusts in Jesus for salvation and is born again has had a “New Beginning” and as well, whether realized or not, has a “New Ending.” It is not so much an ending as in, *there is nothing left, as much as God’s plan is accomplished.* We have a *new eternal destiny*; very much like a good story where the main character is rescued and at the end lives “happily ever after.” This is indeed our story, our destiny. Sadly, at the same time, there are many who refuse to acknowledge their Creator and put their trust in Him. They too have an eternal destiny, and it’s not good.

All of us have a future existence, a “last things” of our existence.

Personal Eschatology.

As Christians, when we hear the Good news about Jesus and the salvation He offers and respond by repenting of our sins and putting our faith in Him, we are being “*saved from*” a future something (Hell) and “*saved for*” a future something (Heaven). That “or something” includes eternal life with a glorified body, where there is no more sin and it’s affects or death. We will live eternally with Jesus in a new paradise all for God’s glory. In short, that is a believers “Personal Eschatology.”

Unbelievers will be judged for not repenting of sin and for not trusting in Jesus for salvation. God has given the gift of life and the gift of choice. Our choice in this life will directly determine our eternity. Unbelievers too will live eternally, but separated from God in a very real eternal hell. This is a terrible end but it is the eschatology of an unbeliever. In short, that is an unbelievers “Personal Eschatology.”

“**Personal Eschatology**” then, is a biblical understanding of an individuals eternal destiny or final state. As followers of Jesus, it is eternal life in a New Heaven and Earth. For unbelievers and rejecters of Jesus and His free gift of salvation, it is an existence for eternity in Hell.

General Eschatology

On the other hand, the bigger picture of what God has planned and will accomplish according to His word is General Eschatology. It is truth concerning what lies ahead in the near future on a cosmic scale. It is the Last Things concerning all of God’s creation, the heavens, the earth, the whole of humankind and including the end for Satan and his fallen angels. It is a biblical insight into the *last days* of planet earth and a glimpse of the new world God has in mind.

Many followers of Jesus don’t have a clear understanding of what the bible says is yet to come. Hopefully this study will bring some clarity.

General Eschatological will be the focus of this study.

A. Where do We Get the Idea of Eschatology?

The word “eschatology” comes from a combination of Greek words: *eschatos*, meaning “last or end” and *logia*, a variant of *logos*, which means “collection (of words, thoughts).” Taken together, *eschat + logia* simply means “**the study of last things.**”

The term eschatology is drawn from Bible passages that speak of “*the last hour*” (1 John 2:18), as well as others that speak of “*the last times*” (1 Peter 1:20-21; Jude 18) and “*latter times*” (1 Timothy 4:1).

Looking forward from our present day, *eschatology* would include a chain of events beginning with:

- 1. The present church age**
- 2. Jesus calling away the church (the Rapture)**
- 3. The Great Tribulation**
- 4. Jesus returns to earth**
- 5. The Millennial reign of Jesus on earth**
- 6. A final revolt and judgment of Satan**
- 7. The Great White Throne judgment**
- 8. A New Heaven and New Earth.**

In the typical sense we think of *eschatology* as primarily future events, but we must take into consideration that the New Testament writers spoke of their day as being “*the last days.*”

- 1. Peter, on the day of Pentecost** as the disciples are being accused of drunkenness in the middle of the day, tells the onlookers:

“For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall come to pass in *the last days*, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.” **Acts 2:15-17**

- * Peter quotes from the prophet Joel 2:28 who wrote some 400 to 800 years before Jesus’ birth, claiming this as the fulfillment.

- 2. The writer of Hebrews** stated plainly that the time of Jesus’ first advent was seen and considered *the last days*:

“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in *time past* to the fathers *by the prophets*, has in *these last days* spoken to us *by His Son*” **Hebrews 1:1-2**

- 3. The apostle Paul**, when speaking of the example the children of Israel were to the Corinthian church, spoke of them (the Corinthians) at that time as those upon whom the *end of the ages* had come.

“Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” **1 Corinthians 10:11**

4. **Again Paul explains** to the Galatians, with Jesus’ coming, those waiting centuries for the messiah are seeing the last days promise. “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” **Galatians 4:4-5**

5. **The Apostle John stated** that the coming of the Antichrist would be an indicator of the *last days* and then states that the reality of their current existence was proof that it was indeed the *last hour*. “Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.” **1 John 2:18**

So then, we can easily see that from **Jesus’ first coming** through our day and time, right up until the New Heaven and the New Earth, can all be considered “*the last days*.”

If the early church believed they were living in the last days, we much more? **Perhaps we are living in the last of the last days?** “knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.” **Romans 13:11**

6. Here’s an interesting consideration:

- a. When Daniel was given the very precise prophecy concerning the children of Israel and Jesus the messiah’s coming that would take place in *the last days*, he was told to seal the prophecy because it was for a future time.

“But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

“And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.” **Daniel 12:4 & 9**

- b. On the other hand, when John is given the Revelation of Jesus and the end times, (approx. 90-95 AD) he is told, “don’t seal it up, the time is at hand”

“And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for *the time is at hand.*” **Revelation 20:10**
(Revelation 1:3; James 5:8)

Jesus promised to come again and in this study we will deal specifically with the events around **Jesus’ second coming**. **These are future events** that must soon take place.

We are living in very exciting times and we could very well be the generation to see and experience the culmination of the last things.

B. Why is Eschatology Important?

1. There is a Promise of Blessing.

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.” **Revelation 1:3**

2. It Provokes us to Search for Insight into Our Future.

We are all curious about the future and that is not a bad thing. There are things we can know and God wants us to know those things.

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever,”

Deuteronomy 29:29

3. It Allows us to See the Greater Plan of God.

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. **Ephesians 1:7-10**

4. It Grounds us in the Faithfulness of God’s Word.

“Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.” **Amos 3:7**

“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” **2 Peter 1:19-21**

5. It Gives us Hope Beyond our Present Circumstances.

- a. It gives us hope that the world will not continue to remain broken forever. God has a restoration plan. He will restore the Garden of Eden and plant the tree of life again.

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,” **Titus 2:11-13**

“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits and each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.” **Revelation 22:1-3**

- b. It gives us hope that a home of our own (a new heaven and new earth) that we’ve been yearning for will be ours.

“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.”

Hebrews 11:13-16

C. Is There Disagreement Concerning Aspects of Eschatology?

The answer is yes, in particular ideas concerning the Rapture and its relationship to the 7 year Tribulation period and the Millennial reign of Jesus.

Yet all bible believing Christians look forward to the return of Jesus, a Judgment, Heaven and Hell and a New Heaven and Earth.

Even if the bible were absolutely clear in all these areas, there would probably still be areas of disagreement. These discussions and disagreements should not be cause for division. Our salvation that Jesus offers is not determined by our particular end time view and we should accept those who disagree as fellow brothers and sisters in love.

Lets look briefly at these two main areas of disagreement.

1. The Rapture - Three views on the Rapture of the Church

In Daniel's prophecy of 70 weeks of years concerning Israel, the last 7 year period refers to a time of Tribulation. (Daniel 9:27) This great tribulation (Matthew 24:9, 21) and the rapture's relationship to it present three views. Pre-Tribulation, Mid-Tribulation, Post-Tribulation

- a. Pretribulation view** – believes the rapture occurs before the Tribulation and the church does not go through the Great Tribulation. The Rapture and the second coming are seen as separate events. **Key Texts** are Daniel 9:24-27; the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24:1-51; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-36); 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.

 - b. Midtribulation view** - believes the rapture occurs in the middle of the Tribulation but before God's wrath is poured out. **Key Texts** are Daniel 9:24-27.
- * **Both Pretribulation and Midtribulation** views realize that the last week of Daniels prophecy concerns Israel and not the church. Therefore the Great Tribulation during that time is wrath on unbelieving humanity and chastening for Israel, not the church.
- “Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.” **Luke 21:36** (John 14:3)

- * **God has not appointed the believer to wrath.** Scripture that support this are Matthew 3:7; Luke 21:36; John 14:3 Romans 5:8-9; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 4:15-18, 5:9.
- c. **Post-tribulation view** – believes the church is raptured after the Tribulation. This position believes the church will endure and experience the Tribulation. It also believes that no description of the Tribulation indicates it is a greater suffering than what has been and continues to be experienced. **Key Texts** Matthew 24:21; John 14:3; 1 Corinthians 15:50-53; Revelation 6-19.

Views on the Tribulation are based on Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 15:15; 24:14, 21, 37; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-36; John 14:3; 17:15; 1 Corinthians 15:50-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Revelations 3:10; 6:16-17; 20.

2. The Millennium -Three Views on the Millennial Reign of Jesus

Revelation 20 refers to a 1000 year reign of Jesus on earth, thus the Millennium meaning 1000. There are three main views on the Millennial reign Christ.

a. **Pre-millennialism**

Pre-millennialist believes that Jesus will come again personally prior to the millennial reign and establish His rule for a literal 1,000 years on earth. This will take place before the new heaven and new earth are created. This 1,000 year kingdom is seen as a complete replacement of the conditions humans now experience on the earth. Part of the basis for the pre-millennial view is that prophets in the Old Testament speak of the future restoration of Israel with the expectation of a worldwide kingdom (Daniel 2:34-35, 44; Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-8).

b. **Post-millennialism**

The post-millennial view believes that Christ's second coming will occur after ("post") the "millennium." The 1000 years leading up to Christ's return are supposed to be a golden age on earth in which things keep getting better and better. In this view, as the world becomes more and more "Christianized," there will be more and more peace, prosperity and good in the world. While the pre-millennialist says Christ comes to bind Satan, the post-millennialist says that Christ already bound Satan when

Christ came in the first century. Therefore, the Christian, according to the postmillennial position, is already in the non-literal 1000 year reign. Post-millennialism is partially based on Isaiah 2:2-4 and Jeremiah 31, and takes a non-literal approach to Revelation 20.

c. A-millennialism

This is another non-literal bible approach. The belief is that the New Testament teaches all events of Christ's second coming will occur at the same time in a cluster. This is based upon Replacement Theology, which is the belief that anyone who has accepted Christ is the "true Israel", that God's intention was the church and He has rejected Israel as special since Christ's rejection and crucifixion. There is not a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ (pre-millennial) nor is there a non-literal 1,000 year reign of believers (post-millennial). This position is based on John 2 where Jesus refers to himself as the true temple of God and reigning even now (Revelation 1:5-6, 5:1-14, Philippians 2:9, Colossians 1:13-14). Therefore, the a-millennial view does not see Romans 11 or Revelation 20 as describing a 1,000 year reign with Christ at the beginning (pre-millennial) or end (post-millennial).

D. What Then are the Main Events of Eschatology?

There are four keys that will help in approaching and understanding the End Time events.

The First Key, End time prophecy is like a mosaic. You can very seldom see what is taking place by looking casually at one piece, but as you put each piece in it's place the picture becomes clearer and clearer. This requires effort and diligent study.

The Second Key, Anyone who reads about the Lord's second coming for the first time is perplexed by the seemingly contradictory descriptions of it. The key to this is that there are two phases to his coming. We find that he will come in the air and that some things will take place in the air, and we find that he will come to the earth and that some things will take place on the earth. These two comings must be distinguished.

1. His coming in the air. Paul writes,

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thess. 4:16).

2 Thessalonians 2:1 speaks of our gathering together with him. This same idea is expressed in John 14:3,

“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

In this coming Christ does not come all the way to the earth, but he gathers his own in the air. This is the Rapture. The dead in Christ are raised, and those living are changed (1 Cor. 15: 51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). This coming must be distinguished from his coming to earth.

2. His coming to earth. In Zech. 14:4 we are told:

“His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east.”

In Acts 1:11 the angels in white explain that Jesus will return in “just the same way” as they had “watched Him go into heaven.”

He left Mt. Olivet visibly, and he will return visibly to Mt. Olivet. Matthew 19:28, speaks of His sitting upon his glorious throne and his twelve disciples sitting upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matthew 24:29-31 and 25:31-46 also imply His coming down to earth. Zechariah 12:10-14 speaks of the house of David, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all the families of Israel that remain, as mourning when they see Him coming whom they had pierced. And Revelation 1:7 says,

“Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him.”

When he comes back to earth he will come with his own (Joel 3:11; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 14.

This in itself indicates two aspects to his coming: one in which his own are caught up to him and another in which his own return with him.

The Third key, It's important to understand that God is not through with Israel (Romans 11) and there is a distinction between Israel and the Church. John F. Wolvoord in *The Rapture Question* calls the church a parenthesis between God's dealing with the Jews. This is an important principle in understanding the break between the 69th and 70th week in Daniel's prophecy.

In Thiessen's *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, he states five reasons that make this key clear.

- 1. In the past** God dealt primarily with Israel; now he is dealing with the church. In the future he will again deal with Israel. The church is as Romans 11 teaches, that Israel as a nation has been cut off so that the Gentiles could be grafted in. In the future Israel will again be grafted in (Acts 15:16-18; Romans 15:8-12).
- 2.** Israel is a nation; the church is a body of individuals called out from the nations.
- 3.** Daniel's 70 weeks deal with Israel (Daniel 9:24); the church fits into the time between the 69th and the 70th week.
- 4.** Christ is to return to Israel to establish the kingdom; his return for the church is to take the church to be with Him (John 14:1-3).
- 5.** The great Old Testament covenants were made with Abraham and his seed, Israel (Genesis 12:1-3; 2 Samuel 7:11-16; Jeremiah 31:31-34); the church shares in the spiritual benefits of these covenants, but not yet the physical (Romans 4:11; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 10:16). The literal physical fulfillment of these covenants is yet future and will take place in the kingdom age.

These and other distinctions made between the church and Israel demonstrate that God has a different program for each. God's program on earth for the church will come to an end when we are caught up to be with him in the air. This will signal the beginning of God's renewed dealings with Israel; just as Israel's rejection in New Testament times signaled the beginning of a new people of God called the church, the body of Christ.

The Forth Key, it may seem obvious to many but it must be mentioned that the Bible should be taken literally unless it is obvious and impossible to do so. This is key to all Bible prophecy. Many find themselves opening the door to grandiose speculation and down a path of no return simply because they fail to accept by faith what is stated in God's word.

Having mentioned these keys, lets look at Last Things events.

The Main Events of Eschatology

1. Rapture of The Church

- a. The Rapture is the future, although imminent, event where Christ comes back for His church, both those asleep (who have died) and those alive (1Thessalonians 4:13-17; John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54). It is part of the first resurrection (Revelation 20:5-6) and the believers of the Church Age will be with the Lord forever. It is before the Tribulation, and it is separate from Christ's Second Advent.
- b. It is termed "Rapture" from the Latin translation (*Lat. rapturo*) for "caught up" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Those alive will be changed (1 Corinthians 15:51) in the clouds (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Church Age believers will be with the Lord forever (John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:17). The Rapture will start the 70th week of Daniel.

2. The Great Tribulation

- a. While the Church is in heaven with the Lord, the world is experiencing what Jesus termed "great tribulation" (Matthew 24:21). It is equivalent to Daniel's 70th week (Daniel 9:24-27). The Tribulation will be a seven-year period of time in which God pours out his wrath upon the earth (Revelation ch 4-19; ; Matthew 24:4-28; Revelation 19:19-21) and draws Israel back to Himself (Revelation 7:4). This is the time when the antichrist is revealed and the 666 mark of the beast is enforced as well as the abomination that Daniel and Jesus spoke of.
- b. Though there are differing viewpoints, the majority of support biblically (1Thessalonians 1:10; Revelation 3:10) and the absence of the Church in Revelation 4-18 suggest that the Tribulation begins after the Rapture and is culminated by the Second Coming of Christ. (see Pre-tribulationism described previously)

3. Bema Seat of Christ

- a. A short time after the Rapture and during the Tribulation, several events will take place in heaven between Christ and His bride (the Church). First, Christ will be seated on His “bema” (*raised seat for judging Olympic games - Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthian 5:10, compared to the “krima” (judgment) toward sin - Romans 2:5*) where He will reward the believer for Christ-honoring service (1 Corinthians 3:12-14).
- b. However, self-exalting service will not be rewarded but removed by fire (1 Corinthians 3:15). This is not a judgment against sin because the Lord took judgment for all sin (Romans 8:1). Rather, this is a blessed occasion where Christ makes ready and adorns His bride for marriage.

4. Marriage of The Lamb

- a. In Revelation 19:7, Christ will be married to His Bride, the Church, a concept that Paul seemed enamored with (Ephesian 5:32).
- b. The Church already possesses Christ’s imputed righteousness, and then will be made ready (Revelation 19:8) by her righteous acts while on earth (probably has reference to her reward of crowns – 2 Timothy 4:7-8).

5. Second Coming of Christ

- a. The culmination of the Tribulation is the return of Christ. This is His second advent in which He comes to earth.
- b. The characteristics of the Second Coming of Christ will be: glorious appearing (Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 9:14), unexpected (Matthew 24:36-39; Revelation 16:15), accompanied by believers (Jude 14; Revelation 19:14), bring judgment (Jude 15; Revelation 19:19-21), deliver Israel (Jeremiah 23:6; 31:31-34), usher in the Millennium (Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5), denied by skeptics (2 Peter 3:4-9), and sanctify waiting believers.

6. Battle of Armageddon

- a. The nations, led by the unclean spirits from the dragon, will gather against Israel at the climax of the Tribulation (Revelation 16:13-16).
- b. It is this gathering that prompts the Lord’s return to defeat the Gentile nations in the “war of the great day of God, the Almighty”

and deliver Israel (Zechariah 14:1-3). It will take place in the plain of Jezreel near Har-Megiddo, west of Jordan.

7. Resurrection of The Old Testament (OT) and Tribulation Saints

- a. Something that is not overwhelmingly understood is that the Bible teaches there are numerous resurrections. They are all based upon Christ's resurrection, which revealed the first of the resurrections with some of the OT saints (Matthew 27:52-53). Then we have the Rapture, which is the resurrection of dead believers (those alive receive resurrection bodies) (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17). The question that remains is what about Old Testament and dead Tribulation saints?
- b. Revelation 20:4 refers to the resurrection of the Tribulation saints who have been martyred. The background of this resurrection will be after the Second Coming and just before the Millennium. Daniel 12:1-3 most likely refers to the OT saints, "Daniel's people" who are resurrected after the Tribulation, "time of distress" and most likely at the same time as the Tribulation saints.
- c. The succession of all these resurrections are part of what is called in Revelation 20:5, the "first resurrection".

8. Judgment of Surviving Unbelieving Jews and Gentiles

- a. Before Christ brings in the Kingdom, a judgment must take place against the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles who survived the Tribulation.
- b. Jesus spoke of these judgments in Matthew 24:32-25:30 (Unbelieving Jews) and Matthew 25:31-46 (Unbelieving Gentiles). At this time, the "goats" (unbelievers) are separated from the "sheep" (believers) and recompensed appropriately (Matthew 25:32-34, 41, 46).

9. The Millennium Kingdom

- a. Revelation 20:1-7 is the most clear Scripture on the Millennium in the NT. Satan is bound at the beginning of the Millennium (20:2) and released at the end (20:3,7); Christ reigns as ruler during the Millennium (20:4,6); Resurrected Church Age believers (20:6) and martyred Tribulation Saints (20:4) will reign with Christ during the Millennium; Unbelievers are resurrected after the Millennium (20:5).

- b. The Millennial Kingdom is one of the most extensively prophesied topics in Scripture. Isaiah 11:1-16 is one of the best passages on the Millennium in the OT. Christ will rule during the Millennium (11:1-5); Righteousness and peace will characterize the Millennium (11:6-8); Jerusalem will be the capital in the Millennium (11:9); the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord (11:9-10); Israel will be featured in the Millennium (11:11-16).
- c. The subjects of the Millennium who will live their lives out on earth will be those who were saved and survived the Tribulation, both Jew and Gentile, including the 144,000 Jews. They will serve the Lord on earth. Children will be born during the Millennium; however, they also will have to place their faith in Christ as Savior to be saved.

10. Marriage Supper of The Lamb

- a. Like the Jewish custom of marriage, a marriage feast is involved with the ceremony (Matthew 22:2-4). It will include Israel in the Kingdom as the “friend of the bridegroom” (John 3:29).
- b. There will be a “marriage supper” for Christ and His bride (Revelation 19:9). It is a joyous occasion that speaks of a very close and intimate relationship with Christ for eternity.

11. Satan Is Loosed and Judged

- a. After Satan is released at the end of the millennium, he will make one final attempt in battle against Christ and His people (Revelation 20:8); Some will be deceived by Satan and join him in the battle (verse 9).
- b. But without hesitation, the multitudes will be devoured by fire and Satan will be thrown into the Lake of Fire for eternal torment (Revelation 20:10).

12. Resurrection of Wicked Dead and Great White Throne Judgment

- a. The wicked dead of all ages, who were already in Hell, will be resurrected (“standing” - Revelation 20:12) to stand before the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:12-13).
- b. This is obviously the second resurrection, which fits them for the “second death” (Revelation 20:14).
- c. The Great white Throne Judgment is the final judgment upon man and sin (Revelation 20:11).

- d. Everyone who stands before God in the Great White Throne Judgment is an unbeliever. Therefore, everyone who stands in that judgment will be punished (Revelation 20:12-13).

13. Lake of Fire

- a. The Lake of Fire is the final place where all those who have rejected Christ will be cast (Revelation 20:13).
- b. The Lake of Fire was originally designed for Satan and His demons (Mat 25:41); is a place of conscience and continual torment and punishment with “fire and brimstone” and is eternal (“day and night forever” (Revelation 20:10).

14. New Heaven And New Earth

- a. What appears to be the final dispensation and final destiny of the saved is the creation of the New Heaven and Earth (Revelation 21:1-4; 2 Peter 3:3-13).
- b. The old heaven and earth have “passed away” been “destroyed” “burned up” (2 Peter 3:10), and the elements “melted” (3:12).
- c. The description of the new Heaven and Earth will be “without sea” and includes the “New Jerusalem” (Revelation 21:2), emphasizes the “tabernacle of God” among men (21:3), and will be without “tears,” “pain,” or “death” (21:4).

E. Where Are We Now As It Relates To Eschatology?

An early church writer named Barnabas, writing about A.D. 100, paralleled world history to the six creative days and one day of rest in Genesis. After the six days of human history, which he interpreted to be 6000 years, Christ would come again, and I quote, “destroy the time of wicked man, and judge the ungodly, and change the sun, and the moon, and the stars, then shall He truly rest on the seventh day.” He continued by saying that the eighth day is the beginning of another world (the new heaven and earth?).

In Barnabus’ eschatology, Jesus first coming is considered to be the beginning of the last days, then there had been approximately 4000 years of old testament history until the beginning of what the apostles considered the start to the beginning of the last days (Jesus first coming). We are now 2000 years since Jesus birth, with a promised 1000 year millennial reign of Jesus yet to be fulfilled.

That would put us somewhere near the end of the 6th thousand year day and on the very edge of the last 1000 year millennial reign day. What separates us from that last 1000 year rest period is one 7 year period, the last week of Daniel's 70 weeks of years prophecy. Of course this is all highly speculative but not without some scriptural basis (Daniel 9:20-27; Revelation 20:1-8) and very interesting to consider.

F. What is Next?

We believe that according to the Word of God the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself into heaven both His own who are alive and remain unto His coming, and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and to give His own new spiritual bodies. This event is the blessed hope (rapture) set before us in Scripture, and for this we should be constantly looking (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:2-3).

G. How Can We Prepare?

1. Be Saved - Believe on Jesus for Salvation and Follow him, not just as Savior, but as Lord and Master of your life.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. **John 3:16-18**

2. Live a Holy Life – We are called to a life of holiness and maturity that represents our savior; a life that is pleasing to Jesus.

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, **teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,” **Titus 2:11-13****

“but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”

1 Peter 1:15-16

“Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, **what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God**, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” **2 Peter 3:11-13**

3. Be Watching - In Matthew 24 Jesus told us to be ready, watching and waiting for His appearing, as does the writer of Hebrews and Paul.

“Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.” Matthew 24:42

“Therefore you also **be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” Matthew 24:44**

“so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. **To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.” Hebrews 9:28**

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also **eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.” 1 Corinthians 1:20-21**

“If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. **Oh Lord, come!” (Maranatha!) 1 Corinthians 16:22**

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