**Eschatology: What the Bible Says About the Future**

***Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary***

Rick Griffith, ThM, PhD

**Nineteenth Edition**

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“She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads”

(Rev. 12:2-3)

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**Old Syllabus (see separate file)**

**I. Course Description**

A. CCTE: What does the future hold? Do current events in the Mid-East, EU, China, and Russia relate to biblical prophecy? What happens to people after death? When will Jesus return in relation to the Tribulation? What are heaven and hell like? Answers to these questions about eschatology (study of the future) and how they affect you now will be explored in this two-part course that uses a nearly 400-page book of class notes ($20).

B. Day School: This course covers the biblical doctrine of the return of Christ and the events associated with it. It is divided into two main parts: individual eschatology, dealing with subjects such as the nature of death, the immortality of the soul, and the intermediate state, and general eschatology, including subjects such as the second coming and events preceding it, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment. The course will also include a survey of the various millennial views.

This course will follow a blended learning approach with two means of instruction: (1) face-to-face classroom learning via the instructor supplemented by outside reading, as well as (2) web-based individual learning via two websites:

1. All course PowerPoint and notes can be downloaded free at the Theology course link at [http://www.biblestudydownloads.com](http://web.me.com/singaporerick).
2. Online quizzes are at <https://www.sbc.edu.sg/moodle/login/index.php>. If this SBC moodle site says cookies are not enabled, then enable your cookies under “Options.” If it still does not work, try <https://www.sbc.edu.sg/moodle/login/index.php>.

To get into the SBC website, log on with your normal SBC username and password (or the password sent to you by SBC IT), and then click on the CCTE course name. Read announcements that I have posted, and then take your quiz for that week. For tech issues (e.g., getting online), contact Joshua Tew in the IT department at [joshua@sbc.edu.sg](mailto:joshuadaniel@sbc.edu.sg) (ext. 1509 or HP 91376504). He notes, “Based on recent experience, turning off Norton anti-virus is not effective. Somehow Norton still has some residual effect after it has been turned off. You will need to turn off ‘automatic start up of Norton Antivirus during System Startup’ through the Norton Antivirus Options window. After doing that, restart your computer and you should be able to access the quiz after that. You may want to consider Avast antivirus which is free for home use as we have had much better experience with it than Norton.”

**II. Course Objectives**

By the end of this part of the course the student will be able to…

A. Defend the biblical view of personal eschatology (death, intermediate state, existence of hell, judgments, etc.).

B. Compare and contrast the Church and Israel.

C. Show familiarity with the various eschatological viewpoints concerning the millennium (pre-, a-, and postmillennial) and the rapture (pre-, mid-, and posttribulational), while at the same time holding one of these views (at least temporarily!).

D. Articulate the biblical covenants and their relationship to eschatology.

E. Feel acquainted with eschatology to be able to confidently preach and teach on the subject.

F. See the relevance of eschatology to personal holiness, world mission, contemporary events, and Asian culture and religions.

**III. Course Grading**

A. Readings (50%) of the next week’s class notes are assigned for each session. On each online quiz, you will report if you did your reading since the last quiz. This includes the reading for the day of the quiz. Students taking this course for credit must buy the class notes or else download them in pdf format at <http://www.biblestudydownloads.com/Theology_PPT/Theology_PPT.html>.

B. Quizzes (50%) must be taken by midnight the night before the class period for which they are assigned. Half of the quiz grade will ask if you completed the readings since the last quiz (50 points per quiz) and half will generally comprise five questions (10 points each or 50 points total). There are no makeup quizzes. I will put the quizzes on the Moodle site (see page 1) one week before they are due. Each quiz can be taken throughout the week prior to the due date but will expire at midnight the night before class. You should take this quiz by yourself (closed book, closed Bible, closed notes, opened mind). Also, do not wait until just before the quiz closes, as the server cannot handle everyone taking it at the same time. Further, when taking the quizzes, do not let the timer go all the way down to zero. This will delete all of your answers! Instead, click the “submit my answers” button before the time limit so that your answers will be recorded on the database. Finally, do not discuss the quiz with other students as they may not have taken it yet.

C. There will be no midterm exam, no final exam, and no papers. Praise the Lord!

D. Students who hate to take quizzes and/or memorize readings but can translate into another language can substitute translating 50-70 PPT slides for the online quizzes. After getting approval from Dr. Rick on which file to translate, download your English file from the course link for PPT and notes at http://www.biblestudydownloads.com/Theology\_PPT/Theology\_PPT.html. After the course I will upload the newly translated presentations for all to use. You will be graded based on the PowerPoint Translation Grade Sheet (p. 8) or TBB Script Translation Grade Sheet (p. 9). The files to translate come from either of two sources:

1. Translate 1-2 PPT presentations of the course teaching into your native tongue. After I edit your work, I will upload it at <http://www.biblestudydownloads.com> under its language tab for others in your language group to download. This site has teaching in 40 languages—including all the PPT for this and my other courses. Another option is to adapt the course PPT for a certain age group (e.g., primary 3-4 or youth), including a brief syllabus of how this could be taught.

2. Translate one “The Bible…Basically” presentation or script. This 10-hour seminar by Dr. John Fryman brings listeners through the entire Bible six times in 945 PPT slides. We need help in Arabic, Bisaya, Burmese, Chiru, Dutch, French, Hindi, Japanese, Kachin, Khmer, Kiswahili, Malayalam, Mao, Mizo, Nepali, Sinhala, Tagalog, Tamil, Tangkhul, Tenyidie, Thai, Vaiphei, and Vietnamese. Presentations already translated are also at <http://www.biblestudydownloads.com>. Download the previous presentations before yours under your language group to make sure you are translating concepts consistently. New languages are welcome.

### Course Grading Summary

As students take this course at 2 different levels, the grading requirements vary accordingly:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Certificate (Eve. Sch.) | Audit (Eve. Sch.) |
| Readings | 50% | – |
| Quizzes | 50% | – |
| Project | – | – |
| Midterm Exam | – | – |
| Final Exam | – | – |
| Total | 100% | No grade or credit |
| Attendance | 70+% (5 sessions) | No Minimum |

**IV. Course Bibliography**

\* Sources marked with an asterisk are especially significant and helpful (on reserve).

\*Allis, Oswald T. *Prophecy and the Church: An Examination of the Claim of Dispensationalists that the Christian Church is a Mystery Parenthesis which Interrupts the Fulfillment to Israel of the Kingdom Prophecies of the Old Testament.* N.p.; Presbyterian & Reformed, 1945. Library: 236 ALL

Amillennial, posttribulational. Probably the best statement of this view and the most thorough attempt to discredit dispensationalism.

\*Benware, Paul N. *Understanding End Times Prophecy: A Comprehensive Approach.* Chicago: Moody, 1995. 344 pp.

Pretribulational, premillennial work which lives up to its name, incorporating teaching on biblical and theological covenants, the intermediate and final states, and views on the rapture and millennium. Includes a glossary and other helpful appendixes and indexes. Benware teaches at Moody Bible Institute and is a clear and concise writer.

Berkof, Louis. *Systematic Theology.* N.p.; rev. ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953.

Amillennial, posttribulational. p. 696 The standard systematic theology for Reformed theology though somewhat dated.

\*Beyerhaus, Peter. “Eschatology: Does it Make a Difference in Missions?” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 26 (October 1990): 366-76.

Notes how all the various eschatological viewpoints can be a stimulus towards world evangelisation and addresses threats to our really looking to the future with confidence.

\*Blaising, Craig A., and Bock, Darrell L., eds. *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: The Search for Definition.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 400 pp. US$19.99.

This compiled work has articles that view “Israel and the church as distinct theological institutions, but also successive phases in a historically progressive and eschatologically converging redemptive program. This redemptive program accounts for both the similarities and the differences between Israel and the church. The book suggests that the similarities are greater than dispensationalists have previously thought to be the case” (Fall/Winter 1992 Zondervan Academic and Professional Catalog, 6). Edited by Dallas Seminary faculty members and includes responses from non-dispensational scholars Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Willem A. VanGemeren, and Bruce K. Waltke. This is more difficult reading and thus only for the masters students in this course.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Progressive Dispensationalism: An Up-to-Date Handbook of Contemporary Dispensational Thought.* Wheaton, IL: Bridgepoint (Victor Books), 1993. 336 pp.

Explores historical, hermeneutical, and expositional aspects of dispensationalism, showing how it has changed over the years (including helpful charts) and addressing concerns within this community about progressive dispensationalism (which this book articulately defends). This branch of dispensationalism advocates aspects of the Davidic Covenant operative now in the church and greater continuity between the OT and New Testament than traditionally argued by dispensationalists.

Bock, Darrell L., ed. *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999. 330 pp. $16.99. Witmer BibSac 156 (Oct-Dec 1999): 493.

Presentations of postmillennialism (Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., Behnsen Theological Seminary), amillennialism (Robert B. Strimple, Westminster Theological Seminary), and premillennialism (Craig A. Blaising, South Baptist Theological Seminary). Premillennialism has more attention to address the historical (nondispensational) form as well as classical and progressive dispensationalism. Each essay has responses from the other viewpoints.

Braun, Jon E. *Whatever Happened to Hell?* Nashville: Nelson, 1979.

A not-so-popular book on a not-so-popular subject today, but much needed.

\*Campbell, Donald K., and Townsend, Jeffrey L., eds. *The Coming Millennial Kingdom: A Case for Premillennial Interpretation.* Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1997. Originally pub. as *A Case for Premillennialism: A New Consensus.* Chicago: Moody, 1992. 290 pp. Reviewed in *BibSac* 150 (April-June 93): 236. Library: 236.6 CAM

The foreword by Kenneth Kantzer explains the Church’s recent shift back toward premillennialism as attributed to increased Bible study, a literal hermeneutic, and studies of the early church. Chapters by various scholars expound premillennial teaching in biblical order by examining evidence in Genesis, Psalm 89, Isaiah 2, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel and Amos, Matthew, Acts, Romans 9–11, 1 Corinthians 15, and Revelation 20. Helpful subject and Scripture indices. Campbell is former President of Dallas Seminary and Townsend a pastor in Colorado.

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Major Bible Themes.* Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1926, 1953; Revised by John F. Walvoord, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974.

Simple and excellent introductory guide to theology, nicely outlined into 52 concise chapters (approx. 6-8 pages), includes study questions. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Systematic Theology: Abridged.* 2 vols. Abridged by John F. Walvoord. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1988.

Summarizes Chafer’s 8 volumes into two volumes. Premillennial, pretribulational.

Chan Kai Lok. *Who is Mystery Babylon?* Singapore: by the author, 1992. 151 pp.

Gives 13 “proofs” that the US is Mystery Babylon that pollutes the world until its destruction by a nuclear attack from Russia in 1993 (Rev. 17–18). Author is a Ph.D. in Entomology (bugs); associated with the charismatic group called Omega Ministries.

\*Clouse, Robert G., ed. *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1977.

Presents all four of the millennial views by men who hold them. Clouse provides an introduction and conclusion, but the bulk of the book comprises articles by George Eldon Ladd (nondispensational premil), Herman A. Hoyt (dispensational premil), Loraine Boettner (postmil), and Anthony Hoekema (amil). Each article is followed by rebuttals written by those of the other persuasions. Similar in format to Reiter above.

Cone, Christopher, ed. *Dispensationalism Tomorrow and Beyond.* Fort Worth, TX: Tyndale Seminary Press, 2008. 492 pp. US$29.00.

This *Festschrift* in honor of Charles Ryrie has several helpful articles, including comparisons of covenant premillennialism, covenant amillennialism, covenant postmillennialism, and dispensationalism. Two chapters address dispensational approaches to Daniel 9:24-27. Others address Ezekiel’s temple, freedom from the Law, and the relation between the rapture and day of the Lord, and even American policies in the Middle East, emergent theology, and the church and social responsibility. It has 23 chapters in all. What appears to be lacking is a comparison of revised with progressive dispensationalism.

Couch, Mal., ed. *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology.* Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996. 442 pp.

An encyclopedic resource on nearly every premillennial subject with concise, well-written articles by the foremost premillennial scholars today. Highly recommended!

Criswell, W. A., and Patterson, Paige. *Heaven.*  Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1991. 233 pp.

Includes personal opinions by Dr. Criswell, biblical perspectives by Dr. Patterson, and words of hymns and poems of writers through history. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\*Crockett, William V.; Hayes, Zachary J.; Pinnock, Clark H.; and Walvoord, John F. *Four Views on Hell.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 192 pp. US$10.99. Library: 236.25

Presents four views on hell: literal (Walvoord, Dallas Seminary), metaphorical (Crockett, Alliance Seminary), conditional immortality/annihilation (Pinnock, McMaster Divinity College), and purgatory (Hayes, Catholic Theological Union). Each author also responds to the other views.

Crockett, William V., and Sigountos, James G., eds. *Through No Fault of Their Own? The Fate of Those Who Have Never Heard.* 278 pp. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.

A collection of chapters by those calling themselves evangelicals, one of whom (Clark Pinnock) advocates that the heathen who never heard will be saved by Christ’s blood. Much interaction with John Stott and some with Clark Pinnock and Philip Hughes—all three seeking to be called “evangelical annihilationists” (see p. 50). A helpful theological section of four articles (Part 1) but weaker (i.e., does not address implications of key passages) exegetical section of nine chapters (Part 2) and excellent missiological section (Part 3) comprising six practical articles. *BS* 596:500

\*Crutchfield, Larry V. “Rudiments of Dispensationalism in the Anti-Nicene Period [AD 100-325].” (A two part series) “Israel and the Church in the Ante-Nicene Fathers.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 144 (July-September 1987): 254-76; “Ages and Dispensations in the Ante-Nicene Fathers.” 144 (October-Dec. 1987): 377-401.

Successfully responds to the thesis promoted by non-dispensational scholars that the church in the early centuries did not distinguish between Israel and the church nor between differing economies (dispensations).

Dillow, Joseph C. *Final Destiny: The Future Reign of the Servant Kings.* 2nd ed. Monument, CO: Paniym Group, 2012. 1093 pp. US$50 pb.

Can a Christian lose his salvation? This question is often answered from either the Calvinistic or Arminian persuasion. However, this third, meditating view draws from both of these views. This Partakers view, or Inheritance view, sees the believer’s rewards as being largely enjoyed in the millennium. This monumental work is very scholarly and yet extremely readable, comforting and convincing to me. The first edition was called *The Reign of the Servant Kings* (1992), but this second edition is a massive volume of 66 chapters articulating this mediating position between the Reformed and Arminian views that Jody Dillow calls the “Partakers” view, based on Hebrews 3:14. It argues for eternal security (Reformed) but against perseverance of the saints (Arminian). Premillennial, pretribulational.

Dolan, David. *Holy War for the Promised Land.* Nashville: Nelson, 1991. 252 pp.

Argues that the Arab-Israeli conflict is a religious, not a political one. Dolan is a Christian journalist who has reported for CBS in Jerusalem since 1980.

\*Enns, Paul. *The Moody Handbook of Theology.* Chicago: Moody, 1989.

An excellent premillennial, pretribulational perspective in concise form as part of a larger work on the whole study of theology.

\*Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology.* 3 vols. in 1. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983, 1984, 1985. 1302 pp.

Nondispensational premillennial, moderate Calvinist viewpoint. Evangelical (e.g., upholds inerrancy), exhaustive, readable, good with alternate views, highly useful for preaching and teaching due to Erickson’s extensive pastoral experience. Erickson is dean and professor of theology at Bethel Theological Seminary.

\*Feinberg, John S., ed. *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway (Good News Pub.), 1988. 410 pp. S$28.50. Library: 220.6 FEI

Essays in honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., former professor at Dallas Seminary. One article demonstrating continuity (Covenant Theology) and one showing discontinuity (Dispensationalism) appears for each of six basic categories: theological systems, hermeneutics, salvation, the Law of God, the people of God, and kingdom promises. Gives perspectives on whether the Church is the “new Israel” and whether believers today should follow the Ten Commandments (e.g., sabbath observance) in the context of how much the OT relates today—especially on eschatology (but not exclusively).

Gloer, W. Hulitt, ed. *Eschatology and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of George Raymond Beasley-Murray.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988. 154 pp.

Essays from a non-dispensational perspective on NT texts (teaching of Jesus, Matt. 12:28/Luke 11:20, Acts, Romans 9-11, 2 Corinthians, etc.).

Grenz, Stanley J. *The Millennial Maze: Sorting Out Evangelical Options.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992. 239 pp.

Evaluates strengths and weaknesses of the four positions: postmillennialism, dispensational premillennialism, “historic” (nondispensational) premillennialism, and amillennialism. Also addresses how dispensational and covenant theologians have recently come together in many areas of former debate. Grenz is professor of theology and ethics, Carey/Regent College in Vancouver, Canada.

Hoehner, Harold W. *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977.

Helpful, detailed chapter on Daniel’s “70 Weeks.” Premillennial, pretribulational.

House, H. Wayne, ed. *Israel: The Land and the People.* Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998. 348 pp. $17.88.

A collection of 12 essays from a premillennial perspective that rejects amillennialism and progressive dispensationalism (pp. 82, 105, n. 18) and affirms a future for Israel in the land. Four issues are addressed: identity, historical, biblical, theological, followed by the conclusion. Good for group or individual study. Witmer BS Oct 1999: 494.

\*Hoyt, Herman A. *The End Times.* Chicago: Moody, 1969.

A nicely outlined, concise, basic, premillennial, pretribulational Bible College text.

Hubbard, David Allan. *The Second Coming: What Will Happen When Jesus Returns?* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1984. 121 pp. Paper, US$2.95.

A brief, simple, understandable work by the president of Fuller Theological Seminary. Non-dispensational premillennial, posttribulational.

James, Edgar C. *Arabs, Oil, and Armageddon.* Rev. ed. Chicago: Moody, 1991. 108 pp.

An excellent review of the history of the Arabs up to the present, the importance of the oil problem in the world today, histories of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Iraq, and history and prophecies relating to Israel. The millennium and Second Coming are also given attention. James teaches at Moody Bible Institute and is premillennial, pretribulational.

Walvoord review BS 593: 110

Jeffrey, Grant R. *Armageddon: Appointment with Destiny.* New York: Bantam Books, 1988. 249 pp.

A popular level paperback that discusses current fulfillment of prophecies relating to Israel, Russia, chronology, the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, and the location of the Ark of the Covenant in Ethiopia. Interesting reading! Some is even believable!

Lalonde, Peter. *One World Under Antichrist.* Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1991. 307 pp.

A Canadian evaluation of how current events (globalism, ecumenism, the EC, etc.) are preparing the way for the New World Order under the Antichrist. Lalonde is publisher of *The Omega-Letter* and *The Christian World Report*, newsletters with a combined circulation of over 70,000. Premillennial, pretribulational.

Larsen, David L. *Jews, Gentiles, and the Church: A New Perspective on History and Prophecy.* Grand Rapids: Discovery House (distributed by Thomas Nelson), 1995. 425 pp.

One of the few scholarly works integrating both biblical and historical data on Israel (ancient and modern, including Islam’s onslaught and the Holocaust). Argues that Israel still has a prophetic future based in God’s covenants. Extensive footnotes, bibliography, and applications for the Church. Easy reading for scholars and laymen alike. Larsen is a pretribulational Fuller M.Div. graduate who teaches practical theology at TEDS.

Lewis, Gordon, and Demarest, Bruce A. *Integrative Theology.* 3 vols. Vol. 3: *Spirit-Given Life and God’s People, Present and Future.* Grand Rapids: Academie Books (Zondervan), 1994.

Strong in interacting with recent developments in eschatology and in its practical effects of eschatology (which most works omit). Both authors are non-dispensational premillennialists, but Lewis is pretribulational and Demarest posttribulational.

Lightner, Robert P. *Evangelical Theology.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986.

Helpful summary of various theological views held by evangelicals on a variety of topics. The chapter on eschatology comprises only 34 pages and is the essence of his *The Last Days Handbook.* Premillennial, pretribulational.

\*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *The Last Days Handbook.* 2d ed. Nashville: Nelson, 1990, 1997.

Presents all views at a lay level without taking a stand. Very simplified approach to eschatology. Many helpful diagrams. Does not address individual eschatology.

Lindsey, Hal. *The Late Great Planet Earth.* New York: Batam Books, 1968?.

The most read book on eschatology in the twentieth century, with 28 million copies in print in 53 languages. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\*Ludwigson, Raymond. *A Survey of Bible Prophecy.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1951, 1973, 1975.

Premillennial? (difficult to tell) Arranged alphabetically. A wealth of charts and maps. Brief, well written chapters which present views objectively without supporting only one position. Includes research paper topics and creative ideas for group projects.

Marrs, Texe. *Millennium: Peace, Promises, and the Day They Take Our Money Away.* Austin, TX: Living Truth Pub., 1990. 272 pp.

Warnings of America’s coming economic disaster by a retired USAF officer and expert on the New Age Movement. Premillennial.

Mathison, Keith A. *Dispensationalism: Rightly Dividing the People of God?* Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1995. 160 pp. US$9.99 pb.

An up-to-date critique of dispensationalism’s doctrines of the church, salvation, and last things by one who attended Dallas Seminary two years before transferring to Reformed Theological Seminary to obtain the Master of Arts in Theological Studies. Includes an appendix which responds to progressive dispensationalism (by saying that it isn’t really dispensationalism!).

McClain, Alva J. *The Greatness of the Kingdom.* Chicago: Moody, 1959.

One of the best and most complete explanations of the coming thousand year reign of Christ on the earth. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\*Morey, Robert A. *Death and the Afterlife.* Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1984. Library: 237 MOR.

Probably the best work on proving the existence of eternal hell and punishment. He read over 1000 books on hell before writing this one! Amillennial (?). He is a M.Div. and D.Min. graduate of Westminster Seminary.

\*Pentecost, J. Dwight. *Things to Come.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1955.

The most thorough premillennial, pretribulational eschatological work to date, responding to the various views current in the 1950s (many of which are still valid today though the names have changed).

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *Thy Kingdom Come: Tracing God’s Program and Covenant Promises Throughout History.* Wheaton: SP Pub., Victor Books, 1990. 360 pp.

An inductive study of the kingdom of God chronologically from eternity past to eternity future. Premillennial (dispensational), pretribulational.

\*Reiter, Richard. *The Rapture: Pre-, Mid-, or Post-Tribulational?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Academie Books, 1984.

Presents all three views above by men who hold them. Reiter provides an introduction, but the bulk of the book comprises articles by three professors at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, IL: Drs. Paul D. Feinberg (Pre), Gleason L. Archer (Mid), and Douglas J. Moo (Post). Each article is followed by rebuttals written by those of the other persuasions.

Richards, Larry. *Tomorrow Today.* Wheaton, IL: SP Publications, Victor, 1986. 129 pp.

Here’s a different kind of prophecy book which applies texts in the Minor and Major Prophets and the NT to their original audience and to us today. Richards makes no attempt to support any particular view towards eschatology, looking upon such efforts with disfavor as he feels that a specific order of events is unknowable.

Robertson, O. Palmer. *The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow.* Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Pub. (Presbyterian & Reformed), 2000. 224 pp. $14.99 pb.

A newer work advocating the continuity between the testaments to the extent that the church is viewed as the “new Israel” which replaces national Israel. Robertson teaches OT at Knox Theological Seminary.

Rosenthal, Marvin. *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church.* Nashville: Nelson, 1990. 319 pp.

A recent interpretation of the time of the Rapture which places it 18 months before the end of the Tribulation at the breaking of the seventh seal. Rosenthal is executive director of Zion’s Hope (a faith mission).

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *Zion’s Fire.* Orlando, FL: Zion’s Hope, September/October 1993. Vol. 4, Number 5. 32 pp.

This entire issue of this bimonthly magazine is devoted to a comprehensive but concise history of Israel from the death of Christ until 1993. Of particular interest are rarely published stories about Israel’s wars with the Arab nations in 1948-49, 1956, 1967, 1973, and 1982 and how recent history fulfills some prophecies in Ezekiel 37. Chapter 4 is reproduced in these notes.

\*Ryrie, Charles C. *Basic Theology.* Wheaton: SP Pub., Victor Books, 1986.

An easy-to-understand introduction to all views, dispensational, helpful diagrams.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith.* Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1953.

Explains dispensationalism of the 1950s. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *Dispensationalism Today.* Chicago: Moody, 1965.

Here’s a basic text, but it doesn’t really describe present dispensationalism as much as it does the status of the view in 1965. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *Dispensationalism.* Chicago: Moody, 1995. 224 pp.

Expands and updates his *Dispensationalism Today* (Moody, 1965) to correct misconceptions about dispensationalism in a very readable manner typical of the author. The work defends revised (not Scofield) dispensationalism against covenant theology, covenant premillennialism, ultradispensationalism, and progressive dispensationalism.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Final Countdown.* Wheaton: SP Pub., Victor Books, 1982.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *What You Should Know About the Rapture.* Chicago: Moody, 1981.

Definitely the simplest book on the Rapture which I have read, complete with helpful charts and easy-to-comprehend concepts. Premillennial, pretribulational.

Saucy, Robert L. “The Eschatology of the Bible.” In *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 1: Introductory Articles, pp. 103-26. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979.

Helpful emphasis on the significance of prophesied events over their chronology. Includes 6 pages on individual eschatology. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism: The Interface Between Dispensational and Non-Dispensational Theology.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993. 336 pp. US$19.99.

Helpful in identifying new trends in dispensationalism which argue for greater continuity between the Old and New Testaments (the present age is not a parenthesis) , church participation in the New Covenant, etc. BibSac Pyn151: 360-61; JETS 38:116

Stam, Cornelius R. *Things That Differ: The Fundamentals of Dispensationalism.* Chicago: Berean Bible Society. N.d. 292 pp.

Helpful charts, explanation of the “mystery,” and contrasts between Paul and the apostles as it relates to dispensationalism. Ultradispensational.

\*Tan, Paul Lee. *A Pictorial Guide to Bible Prophecy.* Hong Kong: Nordica Int’l, 1991. 413 pp. US$29.95. Library: 236 TAN.

Dispensational (premillennial, pretribulational). The most complete pictorial guide to eschatology with over 600 graphs, charts, photographs, and line drawings. Has special sections on Daniel and Revelation as well as 50 major topics. Unfortunately sources are not cited and contains several grammatical and typographical errors. Dr. Tan is a pastor, author, and adjunct professor at Dallas Theological Seminary.

Van Kampen, Robert D. *The Sign.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1992. 528 pp.

A massive volume basically following Rosenthal’s pre-wrath view and arguing that the sign of Christ’s return will be the sun darkening and the moon turning blood red. See also his *The Rapture Question Answered Plain and Simple* (Revell, 1997), 211 pp.

Walvoord, John F. *Armageddon, Oil, and the Middle East Crisis.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974, 1976, 1990. Van Kampen 1997 reviewed by Witmer in BS 155 (Jan-Mar 98): 113

Shows how the Mid-East land will become increasingly important because of its oil which will lead to fulfilled Bible prophecy. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook.* Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1990. 809 pp.

Lists in order every Bible prophecy and its fulfillment (if fulfilled) in the order in which they appear in Scripture. Unfortunately, inadequate treatment is given at points on particular passages (e.g., Deut. 30) to cover a wide scope of texts. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Millennial Kingdom*. Grand Rapids: Dunham, 1959.

A classic work on the future earthly reign of Christ. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Rapture Question*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979.

Addresses various issues relating to the Rapture and explains the premillennial, pretribulational view against other views.

Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., eds. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*. 2 vols*.* Wheaton: SP Pub., Victor Books, 1983, 1985.

The best premillennial, pretribulational, commentary on the whole Bible.

Please also note the excellent bibliographies in *The Meaning of the Millennium* at the end of this syllabus which categorizes several authors by theological perspective, as well as that at the back of Robert P. Lightner’s *The Last Days Handbook* which does the same but also divides works into beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. For extra sources on heaven, see also the final page on the section on heaven near the end of this syllabus. I am also indebted to Dr. J. Paul Tanner for allowing me to reproduce his bibliography on the book of Revelation after this syllabus.

**VI. Course Schedule: CCTE Evening School (July-Nov 2015)**

Session Date (W) Subjects & PPT Number Reading & Quiz # Pages

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 15 July | 01-Introduction & Syllabus | Class Notes, 1-11 |  |
|  |  | 02-Intermediate State | Class Notes, 12-14 | 14 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 22 July | 03-Reincarnation & Spirits in Prison | Class Notes, 15-17d (12 pp.) |  |
|  |  | 04-Covenant Theology | Class Notes, 18-19  Quiz 1 | 14 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | 29 July | 05-Biblical Covenants | Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 30:1-10; |  |
|  |  | 06-Millennialism Intro | 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Jer. 31:31-34 |  |
|  |  | 07- Premillennialism & Dispensationalism | Class Notes, 18-30  Quiz 2 | 15 |
| 4 | 5 Aug | 08-Signs of Christ’s Return | Class Notes, 31-34, 193-210 |  |
|  |  | 09-Rapture Part 1: Premil | Class Notes, 55-65a (12 pp.)  1 Thess. 4:13-18  Quiz 3 | 44 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | 12 Aug | 09-Rapture Part 2: Other Views | Class notes, 66-74 |  |
|  |  | 10-Bodies & Judgment Seat of Christ | Class Notes, 75-77; Rev. 19  Quiz 4 | 12 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | 19 Aug | 11-Marriage Supper | Class Notes, 77-78c |  |
|  |  | 12-Antichrist & Daniel 9 | Class Notes, 79-86g  2 Thess. 2; Daniel 9  Quiz 5 | 21 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 26 Aug- 16 Sep | Four-Week Break | No class or assignments |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | 23 Sep | 13-Tribulation Rev 4–18 Judgments | Class Notes, 86h-110 |  |
|  |  |  | Matt. 24–25  No Quiz | 32 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | 30 Sep | 14-Tribulation in Ezekiel, Zechariah  Matthew 24, Babylon | Class Notes, 110a-q;  Rev. 17–18 | 18 |
|  |  | 15-Preterism | Quiz 6 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | 7 Oct | 16-Kingdom & Millennialism Part 2 | Class Notes, 116-121b, 122-32b (w/o footnotes) | 39 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | 14 Oct | 17-Ezekiel’s Temple/Topography | Class Notes, 133-49; Ezekiel 40–48; Psalm 72; Rev. 20  Quiz 8 | 19 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | 21 Oct | 18-Amillennialism | Class notes, 150-61, 196-207 |  |
|  |  | 19-Postmillennialism | Romans 9–11 | 25 |
|  |  | 20-Resurrections & Judgments | Quiz 9 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | 28 Oct | 21-Hell | Luke 16; Class Notes, 162-74a |  |
|  |  | 22-Heaven | Class Notes, 174b-92; Rev. 21—22  Quiz 10 | 31 |

**V. Other Matters**

A. Contacting Me: You can contact me at SBC by box L19 or by phone (6559-1513). Also, my home is at 2-302 on the SBC campus, mobile is 9113-7090, and email griffith@sbc.edu.sg. My office hours when I can talk are from 11:00-1:00 from Tuesday to Friday and afternoons on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Let’s have lunch too!

B. Copying Class Notes: This is allowed when you give credit where credit is due (unless it makes you rich). You may also copy all course PPT and translate them into other languages.

C. Commentaries: Have you ever wondered *which* of the numerous commentaries you should look up when you need help with a passage? Get my newly revised study of what I believe to be the best 5-12 commentaries on every book of the Bible and the best reference books to purchase (470 books surveyed). It’s called *Reference Books and Commentaries You Should Buy* and is available for only $5.00 in the SBC Book Centre (what a bargain!). This resource may help you save a lot of money buying books for the long-term.

**My Biographical Sketch**

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**Rick & Susan Griffith**

**Kurt & Cara (28), John (22) & Stephen (25)**

**Background**

“Never say ‘never.’” Rick and Susan Griffith both learned this age-old tip the hard way.

Rick recalls sitting in his elementary school classes thinking, “If there’s one thing I’ll *never* become it’s a *teacher.* Imagine saying the same stuff over and over, year after year!”

Yet after trusting Christ in junior high and acquiring a taste for teaching the Word of God, Rick’s attitude began to change. After his business degree at California State University, Hayward, and Master of Theology degree (Pastoral Ministries) and the Doctor of Philosophy degree (Bible Exposition) from Dallas Theological Seminary in Texas, Dr. Griffith soon found himself on the other end of the classroom—and loving it!

Susan, from Yucaipa, California, also learned not to say “never.” As she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in piano at Biola University, several friends married and worked to put their husbands through three more years of seminary training. “I’ll never do that!” she exclaimed. Soon afterwards she invested three years (1981-1983) singing together with her future husband in the Crossroads, Campus Crusade's traveling music team in Asia. This nine member Philippines-based group shared Christ in the Philippines, China, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, Macau, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore.

In December 1983 Susan’s “never” became a reality. She and Rick were married and like Jacob and Rachel of old, Susan also worked for her mate. During these seven seminary years Rick served as a pastor, corporate chaplain, and International Students church consultant. Susan taught women's Bible studies and often ministered by singing. Their primary church in Texas is Christ Chapel Bible Church in Fort Worth.

The Griffiths have three sons: Kurt is an IT guy in Chicago (28 yrs.) with his wife Cara, Stephen is a pilot (25 yrs.) with his wife Katie in Boise, and John a graphic design student at Biola in the LA area (22 yrs.).

**Ministry**

However, since 1991 the Griffiths’ home has been Singapore where Rick serves as Doctor of Ministry Director with 30 other full-time faculty at Singapore Bible College. SBC has 460 full-time students from 24 countries and 25 denominations, as well as many professionals in the certificate-level Centre for Continuing Theological Education (CCTE). During his first term he taught a variety of courses: Old Testament Survey, New Testament Survey, New Testament Backgrounds, Eschatology (the study of future things), Evangelism, Pastoral Epistles, Psalms, Homiletics (preaching), Hebrew Exegesis, and four Old Testament exposition courses. For many years he also taught Pentateuch, Gospels, Eschatology (theology of the future), Ecclesiology (theology of the church), and Pneumatology (theology of the Holy Spirit). Now he teaches mostly Bible Exposition classes, including Homiletics, World of the OT & NT, and OT & NT Survey. He has also written three Advanced Studies in the Old and New Testament courses at the Internet Biblical Seminary (www.internetseminary.org).

Dr. Griffith loves the variety and strategic nature of his teaching. He invests his life into Anglicans from Sri Lanka, Lutherans from Singapore, Presbyterians from Korea, Conservative Baptists from the Philippines, and missionaries from Campus Crusade, OMF, and Operation Mobilisation—sometimes all in one class! One class had 17 of the 20 students training for ministry outside of Singapore. Nearly all SBC graduates enter pastoral or missionary ministries due to Asia’s shortage of trained leaders.

Ministry opportunities abound. Rick and Susan have conducted premarital counseling for students and their home has an open door to students and guests traveling through Singapore. They have sung in evangelistic thrusts and in 1992 also participated in founding International Community School, an expatriate Christian primary and secondary school in Singapore now with 430 students. The Griffiths are missionaries with WorldVenture and Rick serves as the Singapore field leader.

Dr Griffith also enjoys several other partnerships. He also serves as Asia Translation Coordinator for "The Bible... Basically International" seminars; web author & editor, Internet Biblical Seminary; and itinerate professor for 54 trips throughout Asia in places such as Lanka Bible College (Sri Lanka), Myanmar Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, Union Bible Training Center (Mongolia), Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary, and Biblical Education by Extension training in three restricted access countries.

In 2006 the Griffiths also helped begin Crossroads International Church, Singapore. Here “Dr. Rick” is “Pastor Rick” in his role as pastor-teacher and elder. The church meets at 4 PM on Sundays at the Upper Room of the Metropolitan YMCA at 60 Stevens Road. See cicfamily.com for details.

In 2009 Dr. Rick began [biblestudydownloads.com](http://biblestudydownloads.com/Site/Homepage.html) to offer his courses for free download. It has 5000 pages of course notes in Word and pdf, 400+ PowerPoint presentations in English, and hundreds of translations of these by his students into 40 languages. Current languages include Ao, Arabic, Bangla, Bisaya, Burmese, Chin, Chiru, Chinese, Dutch, English, French, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Kachin, Khmer, Kiswahili, Korean, Lotha, Malay, Malayalam, Mao, Mizo, Mongolian, Nepali, Nias, Paite, Rongmei, Russian, Sinhala, Spanish, Sumi, Tagalog, Tamil, Tangkhul, Tenyidie, Thai, Vaiphei, and Vietnamese.

**Field**

Singapore Bible College is strategically located at the “ministry hub” of Southeast Asia, the Republic of Singapore. A small island of only 14 by 26 miles, Singapore is a city-nation located on the tip of the Malayan Peninsula in Southeast Asia. The population of this multi-cultural society is 75 percent Chinese, 15 percent Malay and 8 percent Indian. Other groups include Filipinos, Thais, Japanese, Americans, and Europeans. This beautiful island nation, with dynamic growth in churches and missionary force, has been called the “Antioch of Asia.” The Singaporean cross-cultural missionary force is increasingly contributing to God’s work in overseas ministries.

**Passion**

Rick’s passion is for God’s leaders to preach and live the Word of God. The servant of God’s role is clearly given in the following verses:

* Teaching obedience to Christ’s teaching is key to our commission to make disciples (Matt. 28:20)
* The priority of the apostles was teaching and prayer (Acts 6:1-16)
* Paul’s legacy to Timothy focused on exposition: “Preach the Word” (2 Tim. 4:2-3)

However, recent trends include the following:

* Church people are biblically illiterate—Amos lamented that his day of prosperity had a “famine for hearing the words of the Lord” (Amos 8:11)
* Pastors are doing too many things so they have too little time to feed the flock
* Preachers give empty and simplistic sermons
* Attempting to be “relevant,” pastors preach what people want to hear—not what they need

**VI.** **Schedule (previous years graduate level)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Session** | **Date (Tue)** | **Subject** | **Assignment** |  |
| 1 | 24 Feb (T1) | Eschatology  Death | Benware, 11-17 intro, 345-52 interm state  Bring $20 for Eschatology notes | 15 |
| 2 | 24 Feb (T2) | Intermediate State | Presentation #5: Intermediate State  Benware, 21-33 hermeneutics  Blaising/Bock, Mystery, 127-55 = 28 | 13 |
| 3 | 26 Feb (Th) | Abrahamic Covenant | Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 30:1-10;  2 Sam. 7:12-16; Jer. 31:31-34; Benware, 35-54 = 20  Blaising/Bock, 1 Pet 2, 156-87 = 30 | 20 |
| 4 | 3 Mar (T1) | Other Covenants  Quiz 1 | Benware, 55-78  Study for quiz | 23 |
| 5 | 3 Mar (T2) | Covenant & Dispensational Views | Benware, 81-89 cov/disp  Blaising/Bock, Rom 11, 188-229 = 42 | 9 |
| 6 | 5 Mar (Th) | Pre- or Amillennialism? | Assignment #6: Millennialism  Benware, 197-203 overview | 7 |
| 7 | 10 Mar (T1) | Signs of the Second Coming | Notes, 31-34, 199-210  Blaising/Bock, Rom 10:4, 230-47 = 18 | 16 |
| 8 | 10 Mar (T2) | Rapture: Pretribulational | Benware, 207-37 | 31 |
| 9 | 12 Mar (Th) | Rapture: Mid-, Partial, Prewrath, Post-  Quiz 2 | Benware, 239-61 Posttrib  Study for quiz | 43 |
| 10 | 24 Mar (T1) | Judgment Seat of Christ;  Marriage Feast of the Lamb | Presentation #6: Marriage & Feast  Benware, 263-91 Mid, Partial, Prewrath (No Jud Seat/Marriage read) | 29 |
| 11 | 24 Mar (T2) | Antichrist & Daniel 9  Midterm distributed | Benware, 293-320 = 28 Antichrist, Dan 9  Notes, 233 | 28 |
| 12 | 26 Mar (Th) | Tribulation: Book of Revelation | Benware, 365-76  Blaising/Bock, Fulfill Law, 248-63 =16 | 12 |
|  | **16-20 Mar** | **Mid-Semester Break** | **No class or assignments** |  |
|  |  | **Part 2 (A separate CCTE Course)** |  |  |
| 13 | 31 Mar (T1) | Tribulation: Misc. Texts, Babylon | Take Home Midterm Exam Due Ludwigson, 184-87, 27-39 = 17  Notes, 110a-110o = 13 | 30 |
| 14 | 31 Mar (T2) | The Kingdom & Millennialism  Quiz 3 | Benware, 185-95; Psalm 72; Revelation 20; Study for quiz | 11 |
| 15 | 2 Apr (Th) | Premillennialism: Dispensational | Benware, 91-101 = 11  Notes, 111-121b = 13 | 24 |
| 16 | 7 Apr (T1) | Israel and the Church | Benware, 103-20 Israel v. Church | 18 |
| 17 | 7 Apr (T2) | Preterism | Presentation #7: Preterism  Benware, 155-84 = 30 | 30 |
| 18 | 14 Apr (T1) | Ezekiel’s Temple & Topography | Ludwigson, 50-56 Ezekiel’s Temple  Ezek. 38-48; Notes, 133-41 | 26 |
| 19 | 16 Apr (Th) | Postmillennialism  formerly Clouse, 117-41 = 25 | Gentry, in *3 Views*, ed. Bock, 13-57 = 45  Benware, 139-54 = 16 | 61 |
| 20 | 21 Apr (T1) | Amillennialism  Quiz 5 formerly Clouse, 176-212 = 36 | Strimple, in *3 Views*, ed. Bock, 83-129  Revelation 20; Study for quiz = 47+1 | 48 |
| 21 | 21 Apr (T2) | Resurrections & Judgments | Benware, 321-29 = 9  Blaising/Bock, Responses, 331-76 = 46 | 9 |
| 22 | 23 Apr (Th) | Eternal States: Hell | Rev. 20:1-6 Research Paper Due  Benware, 353-61hell/annih = 9; Notes, 163-72 = 8 | 17 |
| 23 | 28 Apr (T1) | Eternal States: Heaven Part 1 | Revelation 21—22; = 2  Benware, 331-42 = 12  Blaising/Bock, New Jer, 264-92 = 28 | 14 |
| 24 | 28 Apr (T2) | Eternal States: Heaven Part 2  Quiz 6 | Notes, 173-88 = 14  Study for quiz | 14 |
| 25 |  |  |  |  |

**Clouse’s Bibliography**

**From *The Meaning of the Millennium*, 217-20**

Clouse 2 of 2**Eschatology**

**I.** **Introduction**

A. Defining Eschatology

1. Definition: the study of last things

2. Compound word: *eschatos* (“last” or “latter”) and *ology* (“study of”), taken from lovgo" (“discussion” or “doctrine”).

3. Therefore, eschatology concerns the final outcome of the present order. This presumes a linear view of history in contrast with eastern religions (cf. pp. 215-17).

B. Reasons for Studying Predictive Prophecy

1. Prophecy proves the authority of the Bible (Dan. 9:25-27; cf. pp. 80-86e).

2. Prophecy reveals God’s power and wisdom since only He knows the future (Isa. 44:7; 45:11).

3. Prophecy reveals God’s goal for us to reign with Christ as victor (Rev. 5:10; 22:5).

4. Prophecy is an excellent means of evangelism (Rev. 3:20), showing God’s patience (2 Pet. 3:9).

5. Prophecy benefits the believer (Rev. 1:3) by giving him…

a. Peace, comfort, and assurance (1 Thess. 4:18; cf. Christian vs. unbeliever’s funerals)

b. Faith (Heb. 11:10), hope (Tit. 2:13), and God’s patience (2 Pet. 3:9)

c. Motivation for service (1 Cor. 15:58; Heb. 11:10)

d. God’s perspective on life and values (2 Pet. 3:8-13; 2 Cor. 4:18)

e. Protection against materialism (Rev. 21:1; 2 Pet. 3:10)

f. Protection from liberalism (2 Pet. 3:3-4; liberals don’t study prophecy but do scoff)

g. Incentive for holy living (2 Cor. 5:6-10; 2 Pet. 3:11; 1 John 3:1-3)

C. Dangers in Studying Eschatology and Prophecy

1. Spiritual pride

2. Test of fellowship

3. Christ loses centrality

4. Satisfying man’s curiosity

D. Major Divisions in Eschatology

1. Individual eschatology concerns each person’s future from physical death through the person’s eternal state. Issues such as death, the immortality of the soul, and the intermediate state are addressed in the next few pages; hell and heaven are considered at the end of the course.

2. General eschatology concerns the future of all mankind in the culmination of history itself beginning at Christ’s return and including His rule, the resurrections, judgments, and the creation of the new heaven and earth (Thiessen, 337).

**II.** **Individual Eschatology**

A. Physical Death

1. Origin of Physical Death

a. Pre-Fall Life (Gen. 2:16-17)

b. Fall Decision (Gen. 3:4-7)

c. Post-Fall Consequences

1) Spiritual Death—present separation from God while on earth (Isa. 59:2)

—experienced by all unbelieving people now (i.e., one’s state before salvation) because of a depraved nature which Adam passed on to his descendants (Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:1)

—relates to the soul

2) Physical death (Gen. 2:17)—separation of the body from the soul/spirit (James 2:26; cf. Gen. 35:18; Eccl. 12:7; Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59) as a result of man’s previous experience of spiritual death (Rom. 5:21; 1 Cor. 15:56)

—experienced by all people except Enoch and Elijah

—relates to the body

3) Second death—future separation from God in Hell (Rev. 20:14-15)

—experienced by no one yet but will be by all unbelievers in the future

—relates to the soul and the body

N.B. “The central idea in each case is separation and not annihilation” (Hoyt, 24).

**Summary of Types of Death**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Spiritual** | **Physical** | **Second** |
| Definition: Separation | of man & God | of body & soul/spirit | of man & God |
| Experienced by | unbelievers only | all mankind | unbelievers only |
| Location of soul | earth | Hades or Paradise/Heaven | Hell (Lake of Fire) |
| Part of man affected | soul | body | soul and body |
| Time period involved | before conversion | between life & resurrection | after resurrection |
| Duration | temporal | temporal | eternal |
| Key passage | Eph. 2:1, 5, 12 | James 2:26 | Rev. 20:14-15 |

2. Responses to Physical Death (adapted from Hoyt, 30-31)

a. To the Unsaved = Fear

1) Loss of “good things” (Eccles. 5:15-16)

2) Escape from evils of life (Job 3:21)

3) Precursor of divine judgment (Heb. 9:27)

b. To the Old Testament Saints = Fear + Hope

Due to “progressive revelation” OT believers in God had little knowledge of the afterlife (Heb. 1:1-2; cf. Robert Morey, *Death and the Afterlife*, 22-25). Results:

1) Dreadful experience (Isa. 38:10-12, 18 [Hezekiah’s 15 more yrs.]; Job 10:20-22)

2) Bondage caused by fear (Heb. 2:15) since most blessings seen on the earth (Isa. 38:11)

3) Hope of resurrection (2 Sam. 12:12-23; 1 Kings 2:10; 11:21; Job 19:25-27; Ps. 16:8-11; Hos. 13:14; Isa. 25:6-8)

c. To New Testament Saints = No Fear

1) Gateway to God’s presence (1 Cor. 15:54-57)

2) Confidence (2 Cor. 5:8)

3) Desire for death (Phil. 1:21-23)

4) Still sorrow though (1 Thess. 4:13)

3. Future of Physical Death

a. Church Age (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-52) universal

b. Tribulation Period (Rev. 6—19) increased

c. Millennium (Isa. 65:20) decreased

d. Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:14) eliminated

B. The Intermediate State i.e., Where do people go between their death and resurrection?)

(

1. The Importance of this Doctrine:

a. *We must have practical answers for bereaved people on this question.* “Many pastors and parents have been asked at a graveside, ‘Where is Grandma now? What is she doing? Is she with Jesus already? Are she and Grandpa back together? Does she know what we are doing?’ These questions are not the product of idle speculation or curiosity; they are of crucial importance to the individual posing them” (M. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1174).

b. *Unfortunately, often we don’t have answers for such questions.* This is due to: (1) the scarcity of biblical teaching on the intermediate state, and (2) the theological controversy on this doctrine where liberals deny the resurrection and neoorthodoxy denies the immortality of the soul (ibid., 1175-1176). We will address the resurrection issue later in the course, but for now let’s see the biblical teaching on…

2. The Immortality of the Soul:

a. Definition of the intermediate state

1) The intermediate state debate is not about the *body* since it “suffers dissolution into its component chemical elements… As a result the body goes back to the dust from whence it came, until the resurrection (Gen. 2:7; 3:19; Eccles. 3:20)” (Hoyt, 34).

2) Rather, the intermediate state issue mostly concerns the existence of the *soul and spirit* after physical death and before resurrection.

b. Hebrews 9:27 eliminates soul sleep, reincarnation, purgatory, and escaping judgment. For more support of the immortality of the soul see Jacques Maritain, *The Range of Reason* (London: Geoffrey Bles., 1953), 60; John W. Cooper, *Body, Soul, and Life Everlasting* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 17; Murray J. Harris, *Raised Immortal: Resurrection and Immortality in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 189-205. (Pinnock in Crockett, 148)

3. Pertinent Terms (cf. Morey, 72-93)

a. *Sheol* = Underworld (Hebrew)

1) Usage: “The Hebrew word Sheol is found 66 times in the Old Testament. While the Old Testament consistently refers to the body as going to the grave, it always refers to the soul or spirit of man as going to Sheol” (Morey, 72). Enns, disagrees, saying that the OT concept includes the grave as well as the place where good and bad people go after death (*Moody Handbook of Theology*, 374).

2) Lexical Meaning: “the underworld… whither man descends at death” (BDB [Brown, Driver, Briggs] 982).

3) KJV Confusion: The KJV mistranslates *Sheol* as “grave” (31 times) and “hell” (31 times) and “pit” (3 times). But *Sheol* cannot mean “grave” for several reasons. At least 20 contrasts exist between *Sheol* and grave (Morey, 76-77)…

a) OT writers always use the word *kever* when they speak of the grave. Never are *Sheol* and *kever* (“grave”) used as synonymous (e.g., in parallelisms).

b) The LXX never translates *Sheol* as “grave” (Gr. *mneema*) nor *kever* as Hades.

4) Sections: *Sheol* has two different parts, including a “lowest part”: “For a fire is kindled in my anger, and burns to the lowest part of Sheol” (Deut. 32:22 NASB; cf. Morey, 78).

b. *Hades* = Underworld (Greek)

1) Usage: *Hades* (aJ/dh") is the Greek counterpart for the Hebrew *Sheol.* “In the Septuagint, Hades is found 71 times. It is the Greek equivalent for Sheol 64 times. The other seven times… it is the translation of other Hebrew words, some of which shed significant light on what Hades meant to the translators of the Septuagint” (Morey, 81). These seven include Job 33:22; 38:17; Prov. 2:18.

The NT uses the word 11 times, the most significant being Acts 2:27, 31. Here Peter quotes the prophecy about Christ in Psalm 16:10, “Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Sheol” (NASB), using the Greek *Hades* for the Hebrew *Sheol*—thus equating the terms. Unfortunately, here the NIV mistranslates *Hades* as “grave.”

2) Lexical Meaning: *“the underworld* as the place of the dead” (BAGD 16).

3) KJV Confusion: “The KJV mistranslated the word Hades in every occurrence just as it did with the word Sheol” (Morey, 83). Hades does not mean “death” (*thanatos*, Rev. 1:18), nor “grave” (*mneema*), nor “hell” (*Gehenna*), nor “heaven” (*ouranos*), nor the place of eternal bliss for the righteous (the new heavens and the new earth; Rev. 21:1). Hades simply means the place of the disembodied spirits.

4) Sections: Prior to Christ’s death *Sheol-Hades* had two different sections, or compartments: a place of torment for the wicked (specifically called Hades; Luke 16:23) and a place of conscious bliss for the righteous (“Paradise,” or “Abraham’s bosom”; Luke 16:22). It was referred to as a dual compartment place often in the intertestamental era (Morey, 84).

However, in Hades after His death (Acts 2:31) Christ proclaimed his resurrection to “spirits now in prison” (1 Pet. 3:18-22). Christ took the righteous out of Hades and brought them to heaven (Eph. 4:8-9; ibid, 86). One of the most problematic NT passages is found in 1 Peter 3:18-22, which states that after His death, Christ "preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago…" See the following pages.

**The “Spirits in Prison” of 1 Peter 3:18-20**

One of the most problematic NT passages is 1 Peter 3:18-20, which states…

18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, 19 through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison 20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water.

Several attempts seek to answer six questions about this event: when it occurred, who preached, what was preached, to whom the message was preached, where it was preached, and the reason for the preaching (summarized from Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 204; Davids, *1 Peter*, NICNT, 138-39):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Time** | **Messenger** | **Content** | **Spirits/Place** | **Purpose** |
| 1 | Noah's day | Christ in Noah | Repentance/ righteousness | Live humans on earth (but now spirits in hell) | Judgment |
| 2 | Between Christ's Death & Resurr. | Christ | Gospel | Dead unsaved humans in Hades who perished in Noah’s flood | Judgment |
| 3 | Between Christ's Death & Resurr. | Christ | Gospel | Dead unsaved humans in Hades from OT times | Second chance  to believe |
| 4 | Between Christ's Death & Resurr. | Christ | Defeat of Death | Dead unsaved humans in Hades from OT times | Judgment |
| 5 | Between Christ's Death & Resurr. | Christ | Release | Dead humans in Purgatory who repented just before dying in Noah’s flood | Lead them to heaven |
| 6 | Between Christ's Death & Resurr. | Christ | Redemption | Dead saved humans in Hades | Lead them to heaven |
| 7 | After Christ’s Resurrection | Christ | Defeat of Death | Imprisoned angels of Genesis 6 in Tartarus | Victory of Resurrection |
| 8 | After Christ’s Resurrection | Christ | Invasion of Place of Demon Refuge | Demonic offspring of fallen angels of Genesis 6 in the earth | Victory of Resurrection |
| 9 | After Angels Fell in Genesis 6 | Enoch | Word of  Judgment | Spirits of fallen angels of Genesis 6 | Judgment |

It is my opinion that views 3 and 5 have the least support (both contextually and theologically) and that view #7 has the best evidence. However, each of the above views are surveyed with both their strengths and weaknesses in the following study…

**Analysis of Views:**

#1. Noah preached repentance to his generation who are now in Hades.

A. Advocates: Augustine, Aquinas, Leighton, 354-66; Zahn, 289; Guthrie, *NTI*, 842; Grudem, 156-57, 205.

B. Strengths

1. The relative pronoun in 1 Peter often changes from its immediate antecedent in a transition from one section to another, so the “whom” of verse 19 need not refer to Christ (1:6, 8, 10; 2:4, 22; 3:21; Grudem, 157).

2. Peter says Christ preached through prophets (1 Pet. 1:11; 2 Pet. 2:5; cf. 2 Cor. 13:3).

3. Noah and Peter’s readers shared in common many characteristics such as being a righteous, persecuted minority (Grudem, 160-61).

C. Weaknesses

1. A new section is not being addressed here, so the force of the above pronoun argument is not applicable here.

2. Although 1 Peter 2:5 says that Noah was a preacher, this is not taught in the present text before us. Rather, the subject of the verb in verse 18 (“Christ died…”) continues into verse 19 when it notes that “he went…”

3. Christ inspiring prophets is not the same as Christ himself preaching and there are no other parallels to Christ temporarily inhabiting OT characters (Marshall, 124)..

4. Actually, *Christ* is the model of righteous suffering here—not Noah. The reference to Noah shows only the time in which the spirits lived.

5. This view doesn’t relate the event to the death and resurrection of Christ which is noted in the context. This event occurred after Christ was *made alive.*

#2. Christ preached judgment to unsaved human spirits in Hades who died in Noah’s flood.

A. Advocates: C. E. B. Cranfield, “An Interpretation of 1 Peter iii.19 and iv.6” *ExpT* 69 (1957-58), 369-72; E. Stauffer, *New Testament Theology*, trans. J. Marsh (London, 1955), 133-34; also commentators Beare, Goppelt, Windisch, and Wand.

B. Strengths

1. The view addresses both Noah’s and Christ’s involvement in the event.

2. This view sees the recipients as remaining unsaved and since the message is one of judgment it avoids the problematic “second chance to believe” theory.

C. Weaknesses

1. In the NT “spirits” always refers to nonhuman spiritual beings (angels) unless specifically noted as human (verses cited under view #7).

2. This view does not explain why Noah’s generation is singled out in particular among the numerous wicked generations.

#3. Christ preached a second chance to accept the gospel to unsaved human spirits in Hades.

A. Advocates: Reicke, 90-91, 118, 120-22, 130-31; Cranfield, 84-86; Hart, 68-69 (to repentant disobedient angels); Bigg, 162-63; Beare, 170-73; Best, 140-47. This view is called “further probation” and is taught by Franz Delitzsch (19th century scholar) and modern “evangelicals” such as Dale Moody (1962), Donald Bloesch, and Clark Pinnock.

B. Strengths

1. The idea of providing a “second chance” would at first seem to be consistent with the compassionate nature of Christ.

2. Other texts are used to support the idea of a second chance to believe. Appeal is made to Isaiah 26:19; John 5:25-29; Ephesians 4:8, and 1 Peter 4:6.

C. Weaknesses

1. The text nowhere states that any second chance to believe is provided for the recipients of the message, so this is an argument from silence.

2. Hebrews 9:27 notes that judgment (not opportunity to believe) follows after the death of each person. It says “man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.”

3. Where persons end up immediately after death is a fixed condition with no “crossing over” possible (Luke 16:26; cf. 13:28). In parabolic form the irreversibility of one’s state is indicated as the door being shut (Matt. 25:10-12; Luke 13:22-30).

4. Why would pre-cross persons get a second chance to believe but not post-cross persons? Post-death opportunities to believe today is clearly unscriptural as the above indicates.

5. The distinction between this view and the Catholic concept of purgatory is difficult to determine except that punishment is downplayed. Therefore, many of the arguments against purgatory under view #5 below would apply here as well.

#4. Christ announced victory over unsaved human spirits in Hades whose condemnation was final.

A. Advocates: Lenski, 160-69 and many 17th-century supporters (cited by Reicke, 44-45, who calls this the “Orthodox Lutheran Theory”).

B. Strengths

1. This view acknowledges Christ as the preacher.

2. The timing of this event would make sense.

3. It does not argue an unscriptural “second chance” theology.

C. Weaknesses

1. “Spirits” when unqualified never refers to humans in the NT (only to angels).

2. The concept of preaching to the dead is a foreign idea to the NT.

#5. Christ released human spirits from Purgatory because they repented at Noah’s Flood.

A. Advocates: Robert Bellamine (AD 1586) first proposed this view now common among Catholics (e.g., H. Willmering, *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, [London: Nelson, 1953], 1179).

B. Strengths

1. The concept of purgatory stems from a compassionate God.

2. This view does bring into account both the contexts regarding Christ and Noah.

C. Weaknesses

1. The place where these spirits were held was a “prison” which seems an odd description of the place of the righteous.

2. Why would people who repented before death be held in purgatory (if it existed) for the unsaved anyway?

3. The scriptural basis for purgatory is lacking. The following shows that a temporary place of punishment for those eventually going to heaven does not exist:

a. Even Catholics admit that purgatory is *not taught in the Bible*. Support used to be sought in some verses (e.g., Isa. 4:4; Micah 7:8; 1 Cor. 3:13-15), but even these are rarely cited by Catholics anymore. Hayes says that “although there is no clear textual basis in Scripture for the later doctrine of purgatory, neither is there anything that is clearly contrary to that doctrine” (Hayes, 107). In response, Scripture clearly says that punishment is “for ever and ever” (Rev. 20:10). Also, no text can be found that indicates a second chance to believe after death.

b. *Support for purgatory is mostly found in the Apocrypha.* Appeal has long been to Judas Maccabeus in 2 Maccabees 12:41-46 (c. 200 BC), who found that some of his men killed in battle were wearing pagan amulets. Judas took up a collection from his surviving soldiers and sent it to Jerusalem as an “expiatory sacrifice,” with the result, “And thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from their sin” (v. 46).

c. *Hebrews 9:27* says “man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.” Where we are immediately after death is a fixed condition with no “crossing over” possible (Luke 16:26; cf. 13:28). In parabolic form the irreversibility of one’s state is indicated as the door being shut (Matt. 25:10-12; Luke 13:22-30).

d. *The foundation for purgatory is salvation by works,* which is destroyed when salvation by faith is seen clearly (Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:21; Eph. 2:8-9). Believers are *in Christ* and enter God’s presence on this basis, not on their works.

#6. Christ preached redemption through the Holy Spirit to saved human spirits in a place where they awaited Christ.

A. Advocates: John Calvin, *Hebrews, 1-2 Peter*, 292-95

B. Strengths

1. Christ is seen to have done the preaching.

2. This view sees the recipients as already beneficiaries of the gospel and thus avoids the problematic “second chance to believe” theory.

C. Weaknesses

1. “Prison” is taken in a nonhostile sense.

2. These people disobeyed (v. 20) which is an unlikely description of believers.

#7. Christ proclaimed triumph over imprisoned, fallen angels who married women before the flood

A. Advocates: Peter H. Davids, 140; Selwyn, 197-203, 314-62; Dalton, 135-201; Kelly, 151-58, Fitzmyer, *JBC*, 2:366-67; Stibbs/Walls, 142-43; Blum, 241-43; Leaney, 50-52; France, 264-81; Marshall, 128. This is probably the most widely held view today.

B. Strengths

1. “Spirits” can refer to angels as much as to humans (1 Enoch uses it both ways) and in the NT “spirits” always refers to nonhuman spiritual beings (angels) unless specifically noted as human (Matt. 12:45; Mark 1:23, 26; 3:30; Luke 10:20; Acts 19:15-16; 16:16; 23:8-9; Eph. 2:2; Heb. 1:14; 12:9, 23; Rev. 16:13, 14).

2. Angels (“sons of God”) were involved in the disobedience of cohabiting with women while Noah built the ark (Gen. 6).

3. This view of fallen angels being imprisoned was a commonly held interpretation during the first century (e.g., 1 Enoch 21:6, 10). In fact, a proclamation to these spirits in prison was a proclamation of judgment (1 Enoch 16:3).

4. Peter gives a clear indication of imprisoned angels in Tartarus in 2 Peter 2:4.

5. “In the NT the Greek term *kerysso* normally refers to the proclamation of the kingdom of God or the gospel (e.g., 1 Cor. 9:27), but it does on a few occasions retain its secular meaning of ‘proclaim’ or ‘announce’ (e.g., Luke 12:3; Rom. 2:21; Rev. 5:2). Furthermore, while Peter refers to the proclamation of the gospel clearly four times, he never uses this verb to do so. Although the NT never speaks of evangelizing anyone’s spirits, it does speak of the victory of Christ over spirits (e.g., 2 Cor. 2:14; Col. 2:15; Rev. 12:7-11; cf. Eph. 6:11-12, which implies the same, and Isa. 61:1; Jon. 3:2, 4 in the LXX)” (Davids, 140-41).

C. Weaknesses

1. Never are angels said to have disobeyed during the building of the ark (though they did disobey just prior to this).

2. This view argues on the less likely (secular) meaning of the word for “preached” (which is not impossible but only unusual).

3. This view assumes the possibility of sexual relations between angels and humans. (Yet an alternate view is that angels possessed human kings who committed the immorality; thus both the humans and the angels would be judged for the sin.)

#8. Christ proclaimed an invasion of the refuge of demonic offspring of fallen angels of Genesis 6.

A. Advocates: J. R. Michaels, 205-11

B. Strengths

1. Christ did invade and disarm the demonic sphere following his death (Col. 2:15).

2. This view adheres to the normal meaning of “spirits” as denoting angels.

C. Weaknesses

1. It is highly unlikely that demons have offspring (can reproduce themselves).

2. One wonders why, even if demonic offspring existed, they would have to be punished for the sins of their “parent demons.”

#9. Enoch preached judgment to the fallen angels of Genesis 6.

A. Advocates: William Bower (AD 1772), E. J. Goodspeed, “Some Greek Notes,” *JBL* (1954), 91-92.

B. Strengths

1. Enoch was indeed a preacher of righteousness.

2. This perspective seeks to deal with the context which addresses Noah’s time (Noah and Enoch were contemporaries).

C. Weaknesses

1. The passage never even mentions Enoch, so how can he be the subject?

2. This view ignores the death and resurrection context concerning Christ.

**Summary of Scripture on Hades**

So believers who die now do not go to Hades but to Heaven to be with Christ (Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:5-9) and the angels (Heb. 12:22, 23) at the altar of God (Rev. 6:9-11). “Whereas ‘paradise’ in the gospel account (Luke 23:43) referred to the section of Hades reserved for the righteous, by the time Paul wrote 2 Cor. 12:2-4, it was assumed that paradise had been taken out of Hades and was now placed in the third heaven” (Morey, 86). Several confessions teach that believers go directly to Christ now at death: the Heidelberg Catechism, Westminster Confession, and Second Helvetic Confession (Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 679).

“According to the post-resurrection teaching in the New Testament, the believer now goes to heaven at death to await the coming resurrection and the eternal state. But, what of the wicked? The wicked at death descend into Hades which is a place of *temporary* torment while they await the coming resurrection and their *eternal* torment… (2 Pet. 2:9)…until Hades is emptied of its inhabitants… (Rev. 20:13-15)” (Morey, 86-87). Thus, so far no one has ever gone to hell.

c. *Gehenna* = Hell (Greek)

1) Usage: *Gehenna* is found 12 times in the NT with the meaning of “hell.” It describes the ultimate fate of the wicked (the lake of fire, Rev. 20:14-15) after the Great White Throne Judgment. Gehenna is the Greek equivalent for “the valley of Hinnom” (Josh. 15:8; 18:16; Neh. 11:30) that was the dump just outside Jerusalem where garbage and unclean corpses were tossed. Here “the fires never stopped burning and the worms never stopped eating” (Morey, 87).

2) Lexical Meaning: “The place of judgment” (BAGD 152).

3) KJV: The KJV correctly translates Gehenna as “hell” in every instance. Unfortunately, whereas Berkhof (p. 680), the Westminster Confession and Second Helvetic Confession correctly identify the place of the believer after death, they all incorrectly say that unbelievers presently enter hell at death.

4) Sections: No sections are specified in Scripture, although Christ intimated that there would be different degrees of punishment after death (Matt. 11:20-24).

**Summary: Where Did/Do the Deceased Go?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Before the Death of Christ** | **After the Death of Christ** |
| **All People** | Sheol-Hades, a “dual compartment” place (Luke 16) | Paradise compartment emptied of OT saints and brought to Heaven (Eph. 4:8; Prov. 15:24; Matt. 27:50-53; Rom. 10:7; Heb. 12:23; 2 Cor. 12:1-4; Rev. 1:18) |
| **Believers** | Paradise or “Abraham’s side” in Hades (Luke 16:22; 23:43) | Christ’s presence in Heaven  (Acts 7:55, 59; Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:8) |
| **Unbelievers** | Place of torment in Hades  (Luke 16:23) | Place of torment = Hades  (2 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 6:8) |

**The Transfer of Paradise**

Heaven

Hades 4. If dead believers go to Christ and dead unbelievers go to Hades but the resurrection of   
 their bodies comes later (cf. p. 160), are they then bodiless until the resurrection?

1 Peter 3:18-20

**HADES**

**Paradise**

Luke 16

Sheol

Luke 23:43

2 Corinthians 12:1-4

**Hell**

**Gehenna**

**Lake of Fire**

Revelation 20:14-15

**HADES**

Ephesians 4:8-10

a. No, for perhaps all the saved have an intermediate body (e.g., Moses in Luke 9:30).

Certain texts strongly intimate that there is such a body. There is “a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens” (2 Cor. 5:1, KJV). This body is said to be eternal because it is finally merged with the resurrection body at the time of the resurrection. The preparation of the intermediate body is a miraculous operation of God. Therefore, to be clothed with this body during the intermediate state will not leave one naked (2 Cor. 5:2-4, KJV). This may be part of the explanation for the Old Testament saints who came out of the graves after the resurrection of Christ (Matt. 27:50-53, KJV). This may also explain the white robes of the tribulation martyrs under the altar (Rev. 6:9-22; cf. Rev. 7:9, 14, KJV)” (from Hoyt, 47).

b. Likewise, by implication, every unbeliever must also have an intermediate body which experiences pain and torment (?)—unless this can be felt by a soul alone (?).

5. In light of the preceding Scripture, the Bible refutes all of the following erroneous intermediate state philosophies (see these notes, 163-70; Erickson, 1176f.; Hoyt, 47; Berkhof, 686-94):

a. Universalism: all persons upon earth will be saved regardless of their belief (held by liberalism). See my response on p. 163.

b. Annihilationism: the soul of unbelievers is not immortal and will die; thus the punishment for sin is missing out on heaven since there is no eternal hell (held by Jehovah’s Witnesses and “evangelicals” such as F. F. Bruce, John Stott, Clark Pinnock, and Philip Hughes). See my response on pp. 164-67.

Crockett, 148, n. 25

c. Soul-Sleep: the soul cannot be conscious without a body; “the condition of man in death is one of unconsciousness… all men, good and evil alike, remain in the grave from death to the resurrection” (*Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine* [Review & Herald, 1957], 13; cited by Millard Erickson, 1176).

Response (cf. p. 170):

1) Consciousness after death is revealed repeatedly: “remember” (Luke 16:25), “today” (Luke 23:43), Stephen’s prayer (Acts 7:59), OT persons (Matt. 17:1-8).

2) Pain is experienced after death (Luke 16:24)

3) After death Christians “live together with” Christ (1 Thess. 5:10; cf. Luke 20:38; Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:6, 8), so a soul sleep is impossible.

4) Why would a soul need to sleep? Isn’t sleep a bodily function—not of the soul? How could a disembodied soul sleep? Sleep is but a euphemism for death (Matt. 9:24; John 11:11; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor. 11:30; 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thess. 4:13-15).

5) A body is not needed for consciousness (Holy Spirit, Father, angels, demons).

d. Purgatory: an additional place for cleansing “venial" sins (but not mortal sins) between death and the resurrection awaits those who “are in a state of grace but not yet spiritually perfect”; it is “a state of temporary punishment for those who, departing this life in the grace of God, are not entirely free from venial sins or have not yet fully paid the satisfaction due to their transgressions” (Joseph Pohle, *Eschatology or The Catholic Doctrine of the Last Things: A Dogmatic Treatise* [St. Louis: B. Herder, 1917], 18). [Notice *who* pays for sin!] A related doctrine is that of *limbus infantium* whereby unbaptised babies suffer punishment for original sin, which is the loss of beatific vision or the presence of God, but they are not punished for *actual* sin. They also think Matt. 12:32 teaches forgiveness after death.

Pohle cited by Erickson1179

Response (cf. p. 167): The dead have a fixed state (Heb. 9:27) with no crossing over from one place to another (Luke 16:26). Matt. 12:32 teaches *no* forgiveness later.

e. Reincarnation: the intermediate state is experienced over and over between various times an individual lives on earth (held by Hindus, New Agers, and many others). See pages 17a-d.

**III.** **Covenants**

A. Introduction (adapted from Pentecost, *Things to Come*)

1. Importance: An understanding of eschatological agreements will enhance one’s ability to understand many other verses related to prophecy throughout the pages of the Bible.

2. Definition of a Covenant: an arrangement between God and man in which one or both must fulfill certain responsibilities for man’s benefit and God’s glory.

3. Kinds

a. Covenant Theology Covenants (Theological)

1) The Covenant of Redemption *between members of the Godhead* is believed by covenant theologians to be taught from passages such as Ephesians 1:3-14 (cf. 3:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9; Jas. 2:5; 1 Pet. 1:2).

a) This covenant says that in eternity past the Father agreed to predestine, the Son to redeem, and the Spirit to regenerate and seal believers (cf. Enns, 508).

b) While certainly this was part of the eternal plan of God, to state this as a *covenant* is only an inference without support in the text.

2) The Covenant of Works *between God and Adam* refers to the statement that Adam’s disobedience would lead to death (Gen. 2:16-17) and his obedience would lead to life (inferred).

a) In a sense this covenant has not been abrogated as God still expects perfect obedience and man still dies, yet it is done away in that we have no command today not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and have a sinful nature which Adam did not have.

b) While the text never says that Adam agreed to such an arrangement and doesn’t state it as a covenant as such, Hosea 6:7 does mention it. Referring to the sins of Israel, he notes, “But like Adam they transgressed the covenant…” (cf. Rom. 5:12-21 both Adam and Christ as heads of people they represent; cf. Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 516).

3) The Covenant of Grace *between God and elect sinners* (or elect sinners in Christ) is based on the frequently repeated phrase, “I will be God to you and to your descendants after you” (Gen. 17:7; cf. Jer. 31:33; 32:38-40, etc.; cf. Enns, 509).

a) It teaches that Christ atones for those who will accept Him (limited atonement) and saves them by His grace. This emphasis on grace is biblical and important.

b) However, this single covenant is an oversimplification that does not distinguish between biblical covenants (below), ages (OT vs. New Testament), or peoples (Israel vs. Church).

\* Some covenant theologians see only two covenants (2 & 3 above) whereas others see all three. Shedd even teaches that the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace should not be seen as distinct covenants but “two modes or phrases of the one evangelical covenant of mercy” (William G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, 2:360 in Enns, 508, n. 20).

Theological Covenants (next page)



Robert Lightner, *The Last Days Handbook*, 76



Charles Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (1995), 188



Paul Enns, *Moody Handbook of Theology*, 509

**Covenant Conditions**

Adapted from John F. Walvoord, “The New Covenant,” in *Integrity of Heart, Skillfulness of Hands*, eds. Dyer & Zuck (Baker, 1994), 186-200

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Covenant** | | **God’s Part** | | **Man’s Part** |
| **Edenic**  Gen. 1:26-31; 2:16-17 | * Gave man rule over all creatures * Commanded man to be fruitful * Permitted man to eat green plants | | * Adam and Eve could not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil | |
| **Adamic**  Gen. 3:14-19 | * Judged Satan (3:14-15) * Judged Adam & Eve (3:16-19) * Cursed ground (3:17-19) * Promised Redeemer (3:15) | | * **RESULTS (not conditions)** * Difficult to find food (3:17-19) * Sorrow & death (3:19) | |
| **Noahic**  Gen. 6:18;  9:9-16 | * Instructions on ark * Promised no more worldwide floods * Invented rainbow (9:13) | | * **RESULTS (not conditions)** * Noah got drunk but covenant still unconditional (9:20-23) * Assumed that Noah would build ark | |
| **Abrahamic**  Gen. 12:1-3 | * Made Abram great (12:2b) * Made Israel great from Abram (12:2a) * Blesses all [believing] peoples through him (12:3b) * Will give land eternally (Gen. 12:7; 17:8; Jer. 23:5-8; 31:4-11; 35-37; Ezek. 20:33-38; 47–48) | | * Abram left Ur (a condition?) * Man must bless Israel as persecutors are always judged (12:3a) * Circumcision is the sign (Gen. 17) * Land possession conditioned on obedience (Deut. 28; 30:1-10) but the covenant is unconditional as its ultimate fulfillment is certain | |
| **Mosaic**  Exod. 20;  Lev. 26;  Deut. 28 | * Imposed this works covenant on Israel (not on any other nation) * Warned of blessings & cursings * Set standards for temporal blessing (not eternal salvation) | | * “Be holy, because I, the LORD your God, am holy” (Lev. 19:2) * Obey covenant stipulations such as Ten Commandments (Exod. 20) | |
| **Land**  Gen. 15:18; 17:7-8;  Deut. 30:1-10 | * Provide Abraham’s descendents the land from the Wadi of Egypt (south) to the Euphrates River (Gen. 15:18) * Land an eternal, unconditional possession for the nation (17:7-8) | | * Possession based on conditions of repentance and a changed heart towards Christ as Messiah (Deut. 30:2, 6, 8, 19) | |
| **Davidic**  2 Sam. 7:12-17;  1 Chron. 17:10b-14; Ps. 89 | * Promised far beyond what David deserved (thus unconditional) * Descendent will rule Israel forever (7:13, 16) * Never will rescind the covenant (7:15-16) * Will fulfill at Israel’s regathering (Ps. 72; Jer. 23:5-8; Ezek. 39:25-29; Jer. 30:5-9) | | * Accept divine discipline for sin (7:14), which would interrupt the line of kings by disobeying the Mosaic covenant (Ps. 132:11-12) * The covenant applies only to David’s descendants and thus is limited in scope (not for all people not even for all Israel directly, though indirectly all will be blessed in Christ’s reign) | |
| **New**  Jer. 31:31-37;  Isa. 61:8-9;  Jer. 32:27-41;  Ezek. 16:60-62;  Ezek. 36:26-27;  Ezek. 37:1-22 | * Will make it with Israel and Judah (31:31) * Will make it unlike Mosaic law * Write His laws on hearts (31:33) * Promises that all on earth will know Him (31:34a) * Will forgive and forget Israel’s sins (31:34b) * Unconditional promise for Israel to be a nation forever (31:35-37; 33:25-26) | | * The new covenant is by grace through faith in Christ (Rom. 3:21-24) and not works (Eph. 2:8-10) to bring redemption (Eph. 2:4-7) so no conditions are given beyond faith * The sign of this covenant is the cup of the Lord’s Supper (Luke 22:20), which believers are commanded to take (1 Cor. 11:24-25) | |

b. Scriptural Covenants (Biblical)

1) The five major covenants are: "I will" formula "If you will" formula

(Unconditional) (Conditional)

a) Abrahamic (Gen. 12:1-3) 7 times

b) Land (Deut. 30:1-10) 12 times

c) Davidic (2 Sam. 7:10-16) 7 times

d) New (Jer. 31:31-40) 7 times

e) Mosaic (Exod. 19:5ff.; Deut. 28) numerous times

2) Eschatology relates mostly to the first four major covenants—not minor covenants between men or the Mosaic covenant since these are temporary and reveal little about future things. Therefore, the rest of this section concerns these four unconditional covenants.

B. Abrahamic Covenant

1. Definition: God’s unconditional promise to Abraham that his descendants would be a nation which would bless the entire world through possessing the land from the Euphrates River to the Wadi of Egypt

2. Key Passage: Gen. 12:1-3 (cf. 12:6-7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14; 22:15-18)

3. Provisions:

a. *Personal*—be a father of a great nation, be blessed, his name made great and be a blessing (v. 2)

b. *National*—a great nation from him to possess the Promised Land (Gen. 15:18)

c. *Universal*—all peoples on earth blessed through him

4. Unconditional Nature

a. Eternal (Gen. 13:15; 17:7-8, 13, 19; 1 Chron. 16:16-17; Ps. 105:9-10; Jer. 31:35-36)

b. No conditions are attached except for leaving his homeland/relatives (e.g., Terah and Lot, 13:14-17) and going to the Promised Land (Gen. 12:2-3)

c. Mesopotamian Covenant Ritual (Gen. 15:7-21; cf. Jer. 34:18-20)

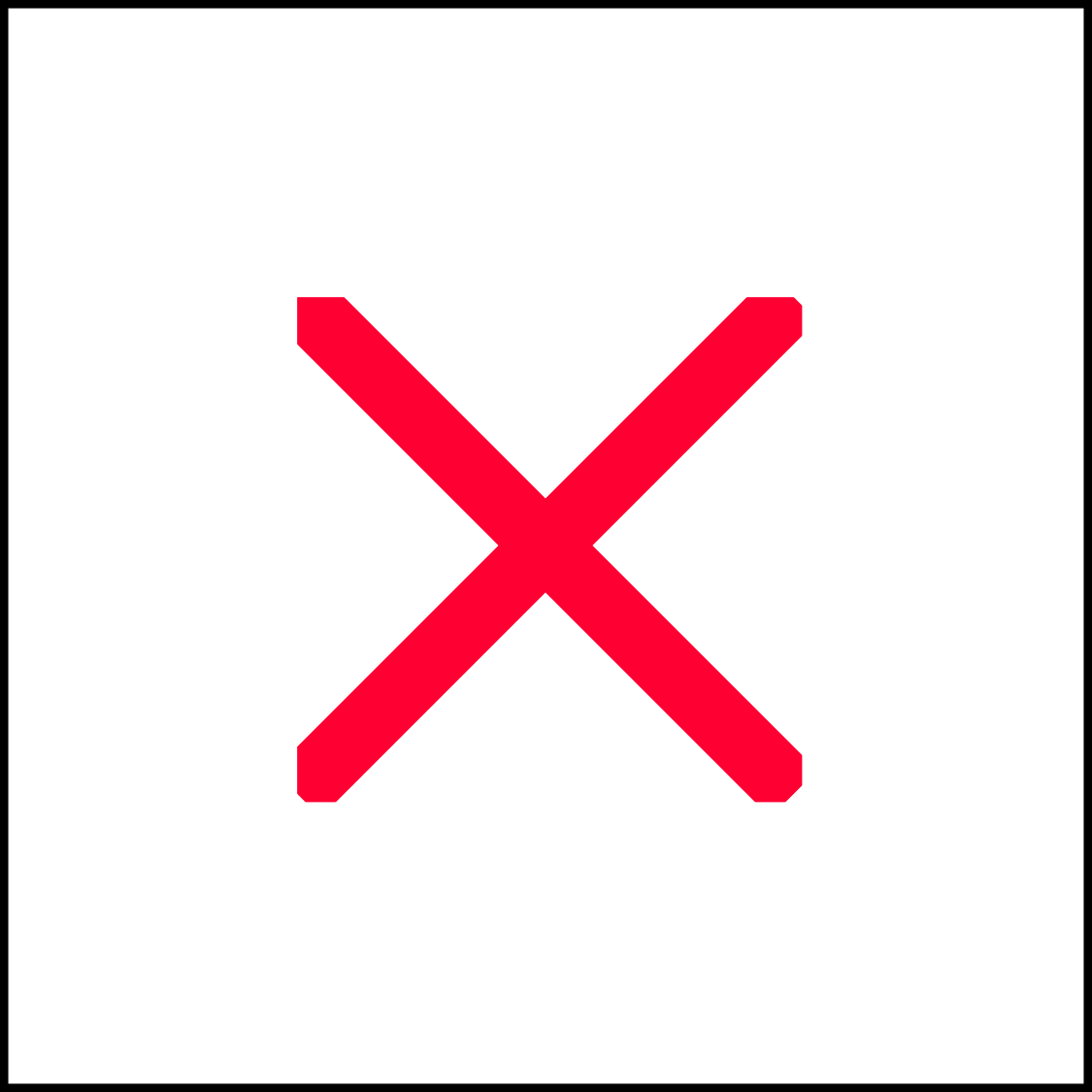
d. Promised despite disobedience (Gen. 12:10-20; Isa. 54:10)

e. Israel herself is eternal (Jer. 31:36; Isa. 55:10)

f. Immutable (Heb. 6:13-18; cf. Gen. 15:8-21; Jer. 34:18-20)

One recent article argues for both conditional *and* unconditional elements in the Abrahamic Covenant. See Bruce K. Waltke, “The Phenomenon of Conditionality within Unconditional Covenants,” in *Israel’s Apostasy and Restoration*, ed. Avraham Gileadi (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 123-39; cf. Ronald Youngblood, ed., *The Living and Active Word of God*. Waltke says that God’s oaths here presume an existing spiritual relationship and apply only to obedient Israelites (especially those circumcised; cf. Gen. 17:9-14; 18:19). It is true that while God gave the promise to Abraham and through him to the *whole* nation, only those who are obedient will participate in its blessings. But God never says that His faithfulness to the *nation* depends on an *individual’s* obedience to the sign of the covenant (i.e., circumcision). Any Jew without faith will not participate in its fulfillment, for “not all who are descended from Israel are Israel” (Rom. 9:6). Blessings in an unconditional covenant are still conditioned by obedience (Pentecost, *Thy Kingdom Come*, 52-54, 59-62)

5. Time of Fulfillment: Complete when the three associated covenants are fulfilled in the millennial kingdom (cf. p. 128).



Lightner, 77

C. Land Covenant

1. Definition: God’s unconditional amplification of the *land* promise in the Abrahamic Covenant in which Israel will forever possess the *physical* land from the Euphrates River to the Wadi of Egypt (W. el ‘Arish) after disobedience and restoration.

Note: Some amillennialists believe this wadi (stream) is the Nile River (e.g., Leupold, *Genesis*, 1:490). However, Genesis 15:18 makes a deliberate contrast between a small river and a great one (Euphrates), so a reference to the great Nile would not fit such a contrast. The Wadi of Egypt was the extent of Solomon’s empire later (1 Kings 8:65), a border which did not extend to Egypt (Beitzel, 121; cf. notes, 146-47; cf. Ezek. 47:19).



Terry Hall, *Bible Panorama*, 49 (adapted)

2. Key Passage: Deut. 30:1-10

a. “When… (vv. 1-2)

1. all these blessings and curses come upon you
2. and you take them to heart wherever the Lord God disperses you…
3. and when you and your children return to the Lord…

b. “Then… (vv. 3-10)

1. the LORD your God will restore your fortunes…
2. and gather you again…
3. and circumcise your hearts…”

3. Provisions:

a. National: the land is Israel’s forever (Gen. 13:15; 17:8; Ezek. 16:60)

b. Universal: possession of the land is for the benefit of all nations (Isa. 14:1-2)

4. Unconditional Nature

a. Eternal (Ezek. 16:60) as God will do it for His own holy name (Ezek. 36:21-24, 32; cf. 2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 43:25; Ezek. 20:9, 14, 17, 22, 33-44).

b. Amplification of the Abrahamic Covenant, which is unconditional

c. Possession of the land is based on obedience (“if…” Deut. 30:10) so that the only conditional element is the time element (Deut. 30:1-3, “When…then…”)

5. Time of Fulfillment: follows national repentance (Deut. 30:2, 6, 8, 10; Jer. 17:24-27; 18:7-10) that would take place *after* the return from Babylon (Zech. 10:9-10). This will not occur until the Second Coming of Christ (Rom. 11:26-27). See pp. 156-57.

D. Davidic Covenant

1. Definition: God’s unconditional amplification of the *seed* promise in the Abrahamic Covenant in which David was promised that his lineage would never be broken as the royal line in a literal, *political* kingdom.

2. Key Passage: 2 Sam. 7:12-16 (cf. Ps. 89)

3. Provisions:

a. House: perpetual lineage (physical descendants never wiped out)

b. Kingdom: would never pass away permanently (Benware, 59; cf. Ps. 89:4, 36)

c. Throne: permanent right to rule in a *literal* kingdom

1) Ordinary language for “kingdom” is used.

2) Prophets interpreted the kingdom literally (cf. Isaiah on pp. 119a-c).

3) The nation of Israel has interpreted it literally throughout history.

4) The kingdom overthrown in 586 BC is the same nature as the kingdom to be restored (both literal), so since this date Israel has not had a king on the throne.

5) The Davidic covenant is associated with Israel only (Ps. 89; Luke 1:32-33).

6) David applied God’s promise to a literal and eternal throne for Israel (2 Sam. 7:24-29), which God never corrected as applying only spiritually to the church.

7) Portions have been fulfilled literally: e.g., partial fulfillment by Solomon, but not permanent, and only a portion of the land was only occupied (not owned).

8) NT Usage: “Of the 59 references to David in the New Testament, there is not one connecting the Davidic throne with the present session of Christ” (John F. Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy*, 96).

9) John, Jesus, the 12, and the 70 all offered Israel a literal kingdom (Matt. 3:11).

10) The Jerusalem Council decision to not require Gentile obedience to the Law (Acts 15:14-17) is based upon Gentiles living as Gentiles (not Jews) in the future kingdom (Amos 9:9-10).

11) The present mystery form of the kingdom (Matt. 13) does not cancel out the promise for a future, literal kingdom.

4. Unconditional Nature

a. Eternal (2 Sam. 7:13, 16; 23:5; Isa. 55:3; Ezek. 37:25)

b. Amplification of the Abrahamic Covenant, which is unconditional

c. Reaffirmed even after repeated acts of disobedience by the nation (e.g., Christ came and offered this kingdom after generations of apostasy)

5. Time of Fulfillment: This ultimately follows Israel’s preservation as a nation, restoration to her land, return of her King, and establishment of the earthly kingdom.

Amillennialists claim that the Davidic Covenant is being fulfilled now in the spiritual (not political) kingdom of the Church, which has replaced Israel and thus been given the fulfillment of promises made to her. The fact that Christ presently sits at the right hand of God is viewed as a fulfillment of Christ sitting on the throne of David.

Dispensationalists have typically argued against such an interpretation, noting that the throne of God and the throne of David are not one and the same. However, the extent that the Davidic Covenant is being fulfilled in the present age has been debated among dispensationalists since the mid-1980s when Darrell Bock, Craig Blaising, and Robert Saucy postulated a progressive fulfillment of this covenant. They suggested the term “Progressive Dispensationalists” for their view and the term has stuck, despite the displeasure of older dispensationalists. Part of the support for this view is the New Testament teaching that the Church is a spiritual temple (Eph. 2:19-22) in partial fulfillment of the literal temple God promised David would be built (2 Sam. 7:13).

E. New Covenant

1. Definition: God’s unconditional amplification of the *blessing* promise in the Abrahamic Covenant in which Israel and Judah will experience national and spiritual redemption.

2. Key Passage: Jer. 31:31-34

3. Provisions:

a. Indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Jer. 31:33 with Ezek. 36:27)

b. New nature, heart, and mind (Jer. 31:33; Isa. 59:21)

c. Forgiveness of sins (Jer. 31:34b)

d. No need for evangelism (Jer. 31:34a)

e. Reuniting of Israel and Judah as one nation (Jer. 31:31, 33)

4. Unconditional Nature

a. Eternal (Jer. 31:36, 40; 32:40; 50:5; Isa. 61:2, 8-9; 24:5; Ezek. 37:26)

b. Amplification of the Abrahamic Covenant, which is unconditional

c. Unqualified “I will” statements of God (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 16:60-62)

5. Time of Fulfillment (cf. chart on next page)

a. Partial fulfillment in the present church age: Three premillennial views have been given on how to correlate Jeremiah 31:31ff. with the NT passages (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6; Heb. 8:8; 9:15).

1) Only one New Covenant for Israel (Darby)

2) Two New Covenants: one for Israel and one for the church (Chafer)

3) One New Covenant with a two-fold application: to the church now and to Israel in the future (Scofield and others)

b. Complete fulfillment after return of Christ

c. The time of fulfillment began as soon as the old (Mosaic) covenant was no longer in force. The night before Christ’s death, He instituted the new covenant in his blood, knowing that the next day the old covenant would be abolished (cf. Rom. 7).

1) In fact, only the Mosaic Covenant is noted to be the “old covenant” in Scripture. Grudem emphasizes this point (p. 521, emphases his):

What then is the “old covenant” in contrast with the “new covenant” in Christ? *It is not the whole of the Old Testament*, because the covenants with Abraham and David are never called “old” in the New Testament. Rather, *only the covenant under Moses*, the covenant made at Mount Sinai (Ex. 19-24) is called the “old covenant” (2 Cor. 3:14; cf. Heb. 8:6, 13), to be replaced by the “new covenant” in Christ (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6; Heb. 8:8, 13; 9:15; 12:24).

1. No Scripture refers to the Abrahamic, Land, or Davidic Covenants as “the old covenant” since they are still in effect. God has not yet finished fulfilling promises made to His people Israel.

5. Some Implications for Us as Believers

1. We’re not under the Mosaic Law (Old Covenant) as our rule for life. This means:

* no sabbath requirement (Exod. 20:8-11 vs. Col. 2:16-17)
* no command to tithe (Mal. 3:8-10 vs. 2 Cor. 9:6-7)
* no prohibition of charging interest (Exod. 22:25; Deut. 23:19 vs. Matt. 25:27)

1. We never have to sin (Rom. 6:6; 1 Cor. 10:13) because God strengthens us from the inside out—through the indwelling Spirit—rather than requiring us to obey on our own strength. This does not imply that Israel couldn’t obey at all (Deut. 30:11-20).
2. We need not live in fear of ungodly world leaders destroying the world through nuclear weapons since many prophecies to Israel are yet to be fulfilled.
3. We should support Israel’s right to exist as a nation since God Himself has claimed that the nation will last into eternity (Jer. 31:35-37). This includes Israel’s right to rebuild Jerusalem (Jer. 31:38-40).
4. We must reach the nations with the gospel (Matt. 24:14) since the new covenant is not yet fully enacted (i.e., since “all will know Me” of Jer. 31:34 is not yet fulfilled).

**Views on the New Covenant**

Issue: How can the OT and NT data on the New Covenant be reconciled? Jeremiah 31 declares it is for Israel and Judah but the NT (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6; Heb. 8:8; 9:15) apply it to the church. Is there actually *no* New Covenant, is it only for *Israel* or only for the *church*, or are there *two* New Covenants, or does the *church participate* in some of its aspects while awaiting the final fulfillment of the covenant? This study takes the last view, as do most modern premillennialists.

**View Explanation School/Scholars Problems**

Restated No New Critical 1. OC/NC distinctions in text ignored

Mosaic Covenant -Couturier 2. OC=conditional, NC=unconditional

-Duhm 3. OC=temporal, NC=eternal

-Schmidt 4. OC=external, NC=internal

-Potter 5. OC=no enablement, NC=enablement

6. NC=peace, prosperity, sanctuary, Spirit (parallel passages)

Church No Israel Amillennial/ 1. Ignores OT data by equating

Alone Participation Postmillennial Israel and the Church

-Allis 2. NC introduced≠fulfilled to Israel

-Cox 3. Present need to know YHWH

-Smick (need for Great Commission)

-Boettner 4. AD 70 Jerusalem vs. Jer. 31:40

Israel No Church Misc/Classical 1. Ignores NT data

Alone Participation Dispensational -Christ's Last Supper words

-Darby -Paul's statements

-Thompson -Hebrews application to Church

-von Rad 2. Ignores present work of Spirit

Two NC for Israel Early 1900s 1. Same terminology for OT & NT NCs

New NC for Church Dispensational 2. Israel/Church distinction too sharp

Covenants -Chafer 3. Basis of forgiveness the same

-Walvoord (old) 4. If 2 NCs then no OC for Church

-Ryrie (old) 5. Church doesn’t possess Israel's

promises

Church Primarily Misc/Present Support:

Partici- for Israel Dispensational 1. Primary fulfillment future—Rom 11

pation Secondarily -Keil 2. Deals with both OT & NT data

for Church -Lemke 3. Forgiveness/Spirit=blessings now

-Bright 4. NC has new law

-Scofield 5. Rebuttals to above views

-Walvoord (DTS)

-Ryrie (DTS)

-Archer (TEDS)

-Kaiser (TEDS)

-Feinberg (Talbot)

-Thiessen (Talbot)

**Contrasting the Abrahamic & Mosaic Covenants**

cf. Esch, 25a; OTS, ; NTS, 155

Distinguishing these covenants provides a foundation for interpreting the OT and NT, especially the prophets as they look back on covenants with both Abraham (e.g., Ezek. 36–37; OTS, 508) and Moses (e.g., Lam. 1:3; OTS, 496). Knowing the conditional and temporal nature of the Law prevents misapplying obsolete commands to the Church today (e.g., Sabbath, charging interest to believers, tithing). Also, God’s faithfulness to sinners is clear due to Abraham.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Abrahamic Covenant | Mosaic Covenant |
| *Recipient*  *(Date* *& Place)* | Abraham as mediator for all nations  2060 BC, Ur of the Chaldees | Moses as mediator for Israel  1445 BC, Mount Sinai |
| *Scripture* | Genesis 12:1-3 (but formalized into a covenant in Genesis 15) | Exodus 20—31 is the heart of the covenant |
| *Between God &* | A person (for a future nation) | A nation |
| *Scope* | Universal (“all peoples will be blessed through you”) | Only Israel received the Law (Deut. 4:8; Ps. 147:20) |
| *Character & Significance* | Grace (promises)  —primary (what God will do) | Works (laws)  —secondary (how God will do it) |
| *Promises* | Land, seed, and blessing (without indication of time of fulfillment) | Blessing for obedience and cursing for disobedience (Lev. 26; Deut. 28) |
| *Conditions* | Unconditional: “I will…” | Conditional: “If you will…then I will…” |
| *Participation* | Abraham asleep (Gen. 15:17) | Israel agreed to obey (Exod. 19:8) |
| *Analogy* | Father to son (royal grant) | Suzerain (superior king) to vassal (servant nation) |
| *Purpose* | Clarified Israel’s blessings in general terms to motivate the nation towards righteousness by faith in God’s provision of a wonderful future (Gen. 12:1; 15:1, 6) | Clarified how Israel could be blessed in the Abrahamic Covenant as soon and full as possible; didn’t restate or expand the Abrahamic Covenant but revealed sin (Rom. 5:20; Gal. 3:19, 24) |
| *Form* | Oral (no written stipulations) | Written on tablets of stone & Pentateuch |
| *Emphasis* | Blessing over discipline/judgment  (five “blessings” in Gen. 12:1-3) | Judgment/discipline over blessing  (contrast Deut. 28:1-14 & 28:15-68) |
| *Christology* | Ultimate seed (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:16) | Typified in tabernacle (Heb. 8–10) |
| *Sign* | Circumcision (Gen. 17:11) | Sabbath (Exod. 31:13, 17) |
| *End* | Never been terminated (deemed an eternal covenant in Gen. 17:8) | Ended at Christ’s death (Rom. 7:6; 10:4; 2 Cor. 3:7-11; Gal. 5:1; Heb. 7:11-12) |

While most of the above is original, some is based on Thomas L. Constable, “A Theology of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth,” in *A Theology of the Old Testament,* ed. Roy B. Zuck (Chicago: Moody, 1991), 100-101.

**Covenant Contrasts in Galatians 4:21-31**

In the Book of Galatians Paul is arguing for justification by faith against Judaizers who followed up his ministry in these churches with a heretical doctrine of justification by the law (specifically circumcision). In chapter 3 he argues that believers are spiritual sons of Abraham because they, like him, trust God by faith (3:1-15). Also, since the Abrahamic promise preceded the law by 430 years, salvation cannot be in the law—otherwise Abraham couldn’t have been saved hundreds of years earlier (3:15-29).

In the next chapter Paul continues his argument for salvation by faith contrasting the Sinai covenant (law) with the covenant of Abraham within which Christians participate. Paul contrasts these diametrically opposing ways of salvation by contrasting Sarah and Hagar through using a figurative teaching technique (v. 24, Gr. ajllhgorouvmena, from which we get our word “allegory”). This Sarah-Hagar passage is not a true allegory in that true allegories do not point back to historical persons, places, and events. For this reason the NIV translates the word as “figuratively.”

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Covenant** | **Law (24-25)** | **Abrahamic (28b; cf. 3:16-18)** |
| **Son** | Ishmael (not specifically named) | Isaac (28) |
| **Mother** | Hagar (24-25) | Sarah (not specifically named) |
| **Freedom** | Slave (22a, 24b, 31a) | Free (22b, 26a, 31a) |
| **Birth** | Ordinary (23a) | Of Promise (23b) |
| **Mount** | Sinai in Arabia (24) | Calvary (implied?) |
| **Jerusalem** | Present Earthly (25b) | Future (?) Heavenly, Mother (26) |
| **Followers** | Children of Hell (implied) | Children of Promise (28b) |
| **Persecution** | Persecutor (29a) | Persecuted (29b) |
| **Teachers** | Judaizers | Paul & True Evangelists |
| **Salvation by** | Works | Faith in Christ |
| **Result** | Unsaved | Saved |

This account does *not* teach that physical descendants of Ishmael (Arabs) are lost while physical descendants of Isaac (Jews) are saved! Why not? Paul specifically says that his is a spiritualized interpretation of two covenants (v. 24) rather than people. On the other hand, in the same verse he says that those who follow the law are indeed lost and slaves while those who place their faith in Christ are saved and free (cf. v. 31).

**Signs of the Covenants**

God has made several covenants with man throughout the ages. With several of them he has attached a sign or memorial as reminders of his and/or our responsibilities to keep these covenants.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Covenant* | *Definition* | *Promise* | *Fulfillment* | *Sign* |
| **Noahic** | **Unconditional promise not to flood the earth again** | **Gen. 9:12-17** | **No more sea**  **(Rev. 21:1)** | **Rainbow**  **(Gen. 9:12-17)** |
| **Abrahamic** | **Promise to provide Israel a land, rule, and spiritual blessing** | **Gen. 12:1-3; 15:13-18** | **Continues at present (Gal. 3:17) but Israel still has a future (see Rom. 11:25-27)** | **Circumcision**  **(Gen. 17:11)** |
| **Mosaic** | **Conditional stipulations for blessing on Israel** | **Exod. 19—31; Deut. 28** | **Death of Christ (Rom. 7:4-6)** | **Sabbath**  **(Exod. 31:13)** |
| **Land** | **Promise of physical land from the Wadi of Egypt to the River Euphrates** | **Deut. 30:1-10** | **Land blessed (Amos 9:13-15)** | **No sign**  **(that I know of)** |
| **Davidic** | **Promise of eternal,**  **political rule of a descendant of David** | **2 Sam. 7:12-17** | **Rule renewed (Amos 9:11-12)** | **Christ seated at the Father’s right hand**  **(Acts 2:34-36)** |
| **New** | **Promise of spiritual indwelling of the Spirit (“law written on hearts”), forgiveness, and total evangelization of Israel** | **Jer. 31:31-34** | **Paul & the Apostles (2 Cor. 3–4)**  **All Israel saved (Rom. 11:26-27)** | **Cup of the Lord’s Supper (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25)** |

**Kingdom & Covenants Timeline**

**Prophecy Percentages of Each Biblical Book**

Tim LaHaye, ed., *Prophecy Study Bible* ([www.prophecybible.com:](http://www.prophecybible.com:) AMG Pub., 2000)

How many verses of each book in the Bible are actually predictive? As one might expect, this varies markedly book by book. On the low end are Song of Songs, Philemon and 3 John (all 0%) as well as Proverbs (1%) as it only refers infrequently to the sacrifices typical of Jesus. On the other end of the scale is the Book of Revelation, which is 95% prophetic. (If Song of Songs is typical of Christ and the Church then it is 100% prophetic.)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| OT Book | **Prophecy Percent** | **Number of Prophecies** | **Prophetic Verses** | **Total Verses** |
| Genesis | 14 | 77 | 212 | 1533 |
| Exodus | 40 | 69 | 487 | 1213 |
| Leviticus | 59 | 37 | 506 | 839 |
| Numbers | 36 | 50 | 458 | 1288 |
| Deuteronomy | 36 | 58 | 344 | 959 |
| Joshua | 12 | 27 | 89 | 658 |
| Judges | 7 | ? | 41 | 618 |
| Ruth | 18 | ? | 15 | 85 |
| 1 Samuel | 15 | 31 | 124 | 810 |
| 2 Samuel | 10 | 22 | 68 | 695 |
| 1 Kings | 23 | 44 | 189 | 816 |
| 2 Kings | 20 | 50 | 144 | 719 |
| 1 Chronicles | 14 | ? | 132 | 942 |
| 2 Chronicles | 31 | 37 | 268 | 882 |
| Ezra | 23 | 10 | 63 | 280 |
| Nehemiah | 11 | 14 | 45 | 406 |
| Esther (6:13) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 167 |
| Job | 2 | ? | 22 | 1070 |
| Psalms | 10 | 59 | 242 | 2526 |
| Proverbs | 1 | ? | 7 | 915 |
| Ecclesiastes | 3 | ? | 7 | 222 |
| Song of Songs | 0 | 0 | 0 | 117 |
| Isaiah | 59 | 111 | 754 | 1292 |
| Jeremiah | 60 | ? | 812 | 1364 |
| Lamentations | 5 | 4 | 8 | 154 |
| Ezekiel | 65 | ? | 821 | 1273 |
| Daniel | 45 | 58 | 162 | 357 |
| Hosea | 56 | 28 | 111 | 197 |
| Joel | 68 | 25 | 50 | 73 |
| Amos | 58 | 25 | 85 | 146 |
| Obadiah | 81 | ? | 17 | 21 |
| Jonah | 10 | 4 | 5 | 48 |
| Micah | 70 | 40 | 73 | 105 |
| Nahum | 74 | 35 | 35 | 74 |
| Habakkuk | 41 | ? | 23 | 56 |
| Zephaniah | 89 | ? | 47 | 53 |
| Haggai | 39 | ? | 15 | 38 |
| Zechariah | 69 | ? | 144 | 211 |
| Malachi | 56 | 19 | 31 | 55 |

**Prophecy Percentages of Each Biblical Book (2 of 2)**

Tim LaHaye, ed., *Prophecy Study Bible* ([www.prophecybible.com:](http://www.prophecybible.com:) AMG Pub., 2000)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| NT Book | **Prophecy Percent** | **Number of Prophecies** | **Prophetic Verses** | **Total Verses** |
| Matthew | 26 | 81 (47 OT) | 278 | 1067 |
| Mark | 19 | ? (22 OT) | 125 | 662 |
| Luke | 22 | 75 (24 OT) | 250 | 1146 |
| John | 20 | 45 (25 OT) | 180 | 866 |
| Acts | 13 | 63 (31 OT) | 125 | 1003 |
| Romans | 21 | 29 (58 OT) | 91 | 433 |
| 1 Corinthians | 19 | ? (17 OT) | 85 | 437 |
| 2 Corinthians | 5 | 7 (9 OT) | 12 | 257 |
| Galatians | 11 | 7 (10 OT) | 16 | 149 |
| Ephesians | 5 | ? (4 OT) | 8 | 155 |
| Philippians | 10 | ? (1 OT) | 10 | 104 |
| Colossians | 9 | ? (0 OT) | 9 | 95 |
| 1 Thessalonians | 18 | ? (0 OT) | 16 | 89 |
| 2 Thessalonians | 40 | 12 (0 OT) | 19 | 47 |
| 1 Timothy | 4 | 2 (2 OT) | 5 | 115 |
| 2 Timothy | 20 | ? (0 OT) | 17 | 83 |
| Titus | 2 | ? (0 OT) | 1 | 46 |
| Philemon | 0 | ? (0 OT) | 0 | 25 |
| Hebrews | 45 | 52 (39 OT) | 52 | 137 |
| James | 6 | ? (5 OT) | 7 | 108 |
| 1 Peter | 20 | ? (11 OT) | 21 | 105 |
| 2 Peter | 41 | 11 (1 OT) | 25 | 61 |
| 1 John | 6 | 4 (0 OT) | 6 | 105 |
| 2 John | 15 | 2 (2 OT) | 2 | 13 |
| 3 John | 0 | ? (0 OT) | 0 | 14 |
| Jude | 40 | 8 (0 OT) | 10 | 25 |
| Revelation | 95 | ? | 383 | 404 |
| Averages & Totals | 28%/book  27%/verses | — | 8410 | 31028 |

**General Eschatology**

I. Introduction

**A. The Importance of Studying General Eschatology**

Many Christians approach eschatology in bewilderment and confusion. For some these "last days mysteries" have led them to a deep study of the teaching of Scripture, but, unfortunately, most believers prefer to remain ignorant in this area. This latter view has sometimes been affectionately referred to not as amillennialism, postmillennialism, or premillennialism, but "*pan*millennialism," meaning that it doesn't matter what the Bible teaches regarding the future since "it's all gonna pan out in the end anyway!"

However, the study of millennialism and tribulationalism should be extremely important to Christians for several reasons:

1. The Bible has an extraordinary amount of teaching on prophecy.

a. Over one-fourth (27%) of the Bible concerned the future at the time it was written (p. 25e).

b. The New Testament mentions the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ more than 300 times alone! This means every 25 verses (1.2 times per chapter)!

c. No serious Bible student or teacher can ignore the Old Testament prophetical books, the Book of Revelation, and the numerous passages concerning Israel, the Church, Christ's Second Coming, the Millennium, the Tribulation, and other millennial and tribulational issues.

2. One's view on millennialism affects his entire approach to interpreting Scripture.

a. While all of the various perspectives interpret prophecy literally to some extent, the premillennialist employs the literal hermeneutic most consistently.

b. Both the amillennialist and postmillennialist interpret much of Bible prophecy with a non-literal methodology, often even "spiritualizing" passages.

3. Satan hates any such doctrine as the second coming of Christ that announces Jesus as the final victor in the age-old battle between the devil and the Lord (Hoyt, 49). Therefore, Satan has made this doctrine a prime target for division in the Church. This concerns the *time* of His return and even the teaching of many that He will not return *bodily*, which is in direct conflict with Scripture (e.g., Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:16).

**B. The Procedure for this Study**

Essentially the rest of the course follows the chart on the cover of these notes:

1. First we’ll briefly see the three main millennial views, dispensationalism, and signs.

2. Then we will discuss the five major interpretations on the *Tribulation* (concerning the timing of the Rapture) and the support for the pretribulational view as the best model.

3. After discussing the nature of the judgment of believers and the Tribulation, we will critically discuss three views of millennialism (concerning the timing of the Second Coming of Christ) and support the dispensational premillennial view as the best model.

4. The course will end with teaching on the resurrections, judgments, and eternal states.

II. **Contrasting Millennial Views** (from Ludwigson)

III. **Dispensationalism**



Lightner, 114

A. Definition: Dispensationalism is a theological system of normal interpretation that distinguishes between Israel and the Church to the degree that national Israel still has a future as a believing nation on earth after the return of Christ. Three stages are charted on page 132b.

B. Terminology: The concept of “dispensations” as meaning differing economies under which man has operated is biblical as the word “administration” conveys the same concept in Ephesians 3:2 (cf. 1:10; 3:9). Here Paul says that the administration of God’s grace with Jews and Gentiles in the same body (church) was a mystery unseen in the OT but true now in this age. Thus he acknowledges that a change in administration (dispensation) has taken place.

Terminology used by present-day dispensationalists now avoids some of the older terms—even the word “dispensational” itself. This is because dispensationalism has been so abused and misinterpreted by its opponents (and some dispensationalists too!) that using the word causes hot feelings to surface. One example of avoiding the term completely is the 1991 Dallas Seminary faculty publication of *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, edited by Roy B. Zuck. Although this is a dispensational work, the term is never used.

One encouraging development is on the horizon. Dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists are coming together in their viewpoints, having laid aside much of the harmful ammunition. Some dispensational works that call themselves “progressive dispensationalism” provide “new” views that traditionally have been argued only by non-dispensationalists:

Blaising, Craig A., and Bock, Darrell L., eds. *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: The Search for Definition.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 400 pp. US$19.99.

Views “Israel and the church as distinct theological institutions, but also successive phases in a historically progressive and eschatologically converging redemptive program. This redemptive program accounts for both the similarities and the differences between Israel and the church. The book suggests that the similarities are greater than dispensationalists have previously thought to be the case” (Fall/Winter 1992 Zondervan Academic and Professional Catalog, 6). It is edited by Dallas Seminary faculty members and includes responses from non-dispensational scholars Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Willem A. VanGemeren, and Bruce K. Waltke. This is difficult reading.

Saucy, Robert L. *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism: The Interface Between Dispensational and Non-Dispensational Theology.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993. 336 pp. US$19.99.

C. Elements: The nature of modern (not “progressive”) dispensationalism can be seen by contrasting it with non-dispensational (or covenant) systems of theology. The following is an attempt to make such contrasts for the sake of clarity *although not all non-dispensational theologies adhere to every description given* in the right side column. Exceptions do exist, though this generalization is mostly true:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Dispensational** | **Non-Dispensational** |
| *Israel and the Church* | Separate  (Israel ≠ Church) | Same people of God (Israel = Church) |
| *Literal Interpretation* | Consistently employed | Spiritualizing acceptable |
| *Unifying Theme of the Bible* | Glory of God or KingdomRule (Sovereignty) of God | Redemption of man (though many see kingdom here too) |
| *Millennial View* | Premillennial | Pre-, Post-, or Amillennial |
| *Tribulational View* | Pretribulational | Mid- and Posttribulational, etc. |
| *Recognizes Differing Economies* | Yes—often 7 dispensations(see chart above) | Yes & No—Covenant of Grace but no sacrifices now |
| *Biblical Covenants* | Unconditional | Conditional or fulfilled |
| *Is there a future for Israel?* | Yes | No (though covenant/historical premillenarians say yes) |
| *Is the Church foreseen in the OT?* | Generally No | Yes |
| *Distinguishes law and grace* | More sharply | Not so sharp |
| *Theological Stance* | Almost always conservative (i.e., there are few if any premillennial liberals!) | Conservative or liberal |
| *Number of Adherents* | Many–especially at lay level and at Bible colleges | Growing–especially at seminary level and Catholic Church |

**A Unifying Principle for Eschatology**

“Covenants and Promises” in Paul Lee Tan, *A Pictorial Guide to Bible Prophecy*, 56

**The Second Coming**

***including the time of the Rapture in relation to the Tribulation***

I. Introduction

**A. Definitions**

1. The Tribulation is a future period of the outpouring of God's wrath upon unbelievers (revealed in detail in Rev. 6–19). This period is also called Daniel’s Seventieth Week and will last seven years (Dan. 9:27; cf. pp. 80-86d)). The last 3.5 years is especially intense and is called the Great Tribulation (Rev. 7:14; cf. “great distress,” Matt. 24:21; “time of distress,” Dan. 12:1; and “time of trouble for Jacob,” Jer. 30:7).

2. Whereas millennialism concerns the timing of the Second Coming (used in the general sense), tribulationalism addresses the timing of the Rapture (the removal of the Church from the earth). Amillennialists and postmillennialists see Christ's Second Coming as a single event when saints are caught up to be with Christ in the clouds and then return immediately to the earth. Premillennialists often advocate two stages: the Rapture (Christ takes believers from the clouds) and the Revelation (Christ reaches the earth).

3. The term *rapture*, despite what many believe, is a biblical term: "The Greek word from which we take this term *rapture* appears in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and is translated 'caught up.' The Latin translation of this verse uses the word *rapturo*, from which we derive our English word *rapture”* (Charles C. Ryrie, *What You Should Know About the Rapture*, 27-28).

4. However, most premillennialists distinguish between the Rapture and the Revelation as two separate aspects of the Second Coming. Therefore, the five different views on the time of the Rapture in this section concerns itself only with premillennialists, who hold five different views.

**B. Areas of Agreement** (from Lightner, 30-50)

1. Fulfilled prophecies about Jesus Christ

2. Intermediate state

3. Future bodily resurrection

4. Future divine judgment

5. Future bodily return of Christ

6. Eternal State

\* Lightner also includes the “Immortality of the soul” in his 1990 work but since then some evangelicals (former evangelicals?) have propagated annihilationism. This view teaches that unbelievers’ souls suffer temporarily before being extinguished and thus this view cannot be said to believe that the soul is immortal (see pp. 164-67).

**C. Signs of the Second Coming**

1. Note that when we speak of “signs” we are referring to signs of the *Second Coming* (Revelation) of Christ at the end of the Tribulation. This does not refer to the Rapture, which is imminent and thus has no preceding signs (cf. pp. 57-65).

2. It is debated concerning how close we can know the Lord’s return:

a. Some have been so bold as to assign an actual day, month, or year for His return. In the early 1970s Hal Lindsey predicted 1988 as the year. In 1991 Dr. Jack Van Impe predicted September 1999 as the beginning of the Millennium. He’s pretribulational, so by subtracting seven years the implication is that Christ should have come in September 1992. “No one knows the day or the hour” (Matt. 24:36) is dismissed by his declaration that he doesn’t know the day or hour—only the month! (See the top middle column on p. 38.)

b. Others say that even the general era is unknowable since “it is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority” (Acts 1:7).

c. Still others have said that while we can’t know the *exact* date, we still can discern the *general* time period. I fit into this group because otherwise Christ’s words would make no sense in Matthew 24:32-35 (cf. Mark 13:28-31; Luke 21:29-33). Here He declares that just as a fig tree shows that summer is near when it sprouts its leaves, so certain signs indicate that Christ’s coming is near. This finds a parallel in the parable of the ten virgins who knew the general time period when the bridegroom would return but not the exact time (cf. Matt. 25:1-13).

3. No matter where one places the return of Christ in relation to the Tribulation, many factors hint that Christ’s return may be during this very generation. Here are some general signs which, while to some extent have always been with us, will nevertheless intensify at the end:

a. *Religious deception* both outside and inside the Church (Luke 21:8; 2 Thess. 2:9-12; 2 Tim. 3:5-9; 2 Tim. 4:3-4) including a world religion (Rev. 17)—p. 38 right

b. *War and aggression* will lead to a desire for peace (Luke 21:10; 1 Thess. 5:3)—pp. 34b, 34d

c. Natural phenomena will be very unusual in their increased frequency:

1. *Earthquakes* (p. 34b top)
2. *Famines*
3. *Diseases and pestilences* (Luke 21:11; cf. p. 34a top)
4. *Signs in the skies* (Luke 21:25b; cf. p. 34c)

d. Rise of evil leading to *indifference* by many in the Church (Matt. 24:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Rev. 3:15-17)

e. Opportunity for the *Gospel to be preached to the whole world* during the seven year Tribulation period (Matt. 24:14; Rev. 5:9; 7:9)

f. Incredible *increase in travel* to gain *knowledge* (Dan. 12:4)—pp. 34d, 38 center

g. *Potential for “every eye to see Him”* (Rev. 1:7) when Christ returns after the Tribulation: Ted Turner and CNN make worldwide viewing of events possible—p. 34c, 36

h. *Rise of an eastern power* (China) with an army of 200 million characterized by anti-Semitism, (p. 35) and which can cross a dried up Euphrates River (Rev. 9:15-16). Syria has completed its Euphrates dam that can dry up this huge river (p. 36)

i. *Rise of a 13-nation confederacy* that occupies the land of the old Roman Empire (Dan. 7:8, 24): the 13th nation (Austria) joined the EU in 1991, as well as others since then. If the EU is what the Bible predicted then it will once again return to 13 nations—pp. 40-43, 52-53

j. The fulfillment and/or potential fulfillment of many *prophecies relating to Israel* indicates that the time of the Rapture may be at hand:

1) Jews will gather from the four corners of the earth and return to their ancient homeland of Palestine (Isa. 11:11-12; Jer. 16:14-15; 23:3; 24:6-9; 31:17; 32:41-42; Ezek. 20:32-34; 36:16-24; 37:1-14; Amos 9:14-15; Zech. 10:10). This prophecy applies to *both* Israel and Judah (Ezek. 37:15-21)—not just Judah as in the return from exile in 516 BC. This regathering has been happening since 1881—see pp. 33-34 below and pages 42, 194-210—and it has never happened in this way since the prophecy was given.

2) Israel must again become a nation in Palestine for many end-time prophecies to be fulfilled (Ezek. 37:22a, 25). This establishment of the nation of Israel occurred in 1948 against all odds. Never before has a people been disbursed into many nations for nearly 2000 years, retained its ethnic and religious identity, then returned to its ancient homeland!

3) Israel must control the city of Jerusalem (Luke 21:24), which resulted from the Jewish victory in the 1967 Six Day War.

4) Israel must control enough of Jerusalem’s Temple Mount to rebuild their temple (Dan. 9:27). Recent studies believe that the temple may not have been built on the site of the Mosque of Omar. Thus it could be rebuilt next to this mosque. For further details see pp. 43-53.

4. Are Any Prophecies Being Fulfilled in Our Day?

Can we be absolutely sure that any biblical prophecies today are being fulfilled? To give a short answer to this, I’d say, “No, not absolutely.” But if any single prophecy has been fulfilled it would be the partial restoration of the nation of Israel to the land.

Why? I’m fairly convinced that the 1948 establishment of Israel as a nation started in motion the fulfillment of the dry bones prophecy of Ezekiel 37. Ezekiel was away in Babylon wondering when the nation will be restored to the land. Then God gave him a vision of a valley of dry bones which came together with tendons and muscles and finally the breath of life. This pictures the restoration of the nation in various stages.

A major question here is whether this prophecy has already been fulfilled in the restoration of the nation from the Babylonian exile. After all, the people did get to go back to the land and enjoy a measure of freedom, especially during the Hasmonean period (166-63 BC). Many commentators feel it was fulfilled during this time.

But several items in this text and others indicate that it awaits a yet future fulfillment:

a. The nation must be restored in belief. The restoration is climaxed by the reception of the Spirit in the nation (v. 14), which never happened in the return from exile in Babylon. The nation was still unbelieving, even culminating in the crucifixion of its Messiah! Since the time of Solomon (ca. 1000 BC) the *shekinah* glory had been above the ark in the Holy of Holies in the Jerusalem temple. The book sadly reports the process of God’s glory departing from the temple in successive stages:

8:4 North gate of inner court

9:3 Temple threshold

10:4 Temple court

10:18-19 East gate of the temple court

11:23a Within the city (outside the temple)

11:23b East mountain (Mount of Olives)

Up to this point in Ezekiel’s prophecy the glory still had not returned, but in 37:14 he promises that the Spirit’s return will occur. This prophecy is fulfilled at the end of the book (43:1-12).

But under what conditions will the Spirit return? It will happen when Israel is restored in belief. In fact, the nation will be “saved from all their sinful backsliding” (37:23), which certainly didn’t occur under Ezra, Nehemiah and Malachi with the people’s intermarriage, ritualistic worship, etc. (cf. 37:24b).

The historical record is clear that the Israel of the intertestamental and NT period didn’t fair much better. Certainly it can’t be said that this nation lived up to the biblical requirement: to “follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees” (37:24). In fact, the NT nation was so corrupt that it killed the Messiah and had to be judged by God in the destruction of the land, Jerusalem, and the temple (AD 70).

b. Another sign of a future fulfillment is the associated reunification of the northern and southern kingdoms (37:15-23). When the people returned from Babylon it wasn’t all the tribes in a great dispersion from many nations that came back but rather only the tribe of Judah. Only until the last century under the Zionist movement have we seen a fulfillment of verse 21: “I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone...”

c. One other indication that Ezekiel 37 hasn’t yet been fulfilled is the leadership of the Messiah over the nation. “David” is said to be their king (37:24), picturing the Messiah’s role as a descendant of David. In contrast, Israel of the intertestamental or NT period had no Davidic king reigning over it. In fact, in nearly all those years Israel was under the bondage of foreign powers. The only exception was the Hasmonean dynasty, whose rulers were of the priestly line (Levi) rather than the royal line (Judah and David).

d. The restoration also will be “forever” (37:25). Such a requirement excludes the possibility of the nation which returned from exile, for even if one could argue that it had a “king” of its own, it certainly wasn’t permanent.

e. Permanence is also seen in Israel enjoying privileges of an “everlasting covenant” (37:26), including a permanent temple (36:26b, 28). Few, if any, would argue that Israel saw the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant during the exile.

f. Zechariah 10:9-10 says Israel will be scattered and return to the land once again. This sounds much like the many other regathering prophecies except for one major issue—Zechariah is postexilic! In other words, Judah had already returned from exile in Babylon, yet this prophet looks to second scattering and return yet future. The scattering occurred in AD 70 and AD 132 and the return in the 20th century.

g. Isaiah 11:11 also depicted a second regathering of Israel: “In that day the Lord will reach out his hand *a second time* to reclaim the remnant…” The return from Babylon in 539 BC was still future when Isaiah wrote, but the prophet here distinguishes this first return from the second (modern) return.

Therefore, if Ezekiel 37 wasn’t fulfilled in the past, and God keeps His promises, then it must find future fulfillment. But is this what we see today? Is the modern nation of Israel a fulfillment of this prophecy? It is possible that modern Israel could lose its statehood and be scattered a third time, then after a third regathering the prophecy be fulfilled by yet future State of Israel—but Isaiah 11:11 (above) seems to prohibit this.

I am convinced that the events of the past century or so wonderfully parallel Ezekiel’s prophecy. The Zionist Movement is very close to bones rattling together, and the flesh and tendons coming together depict the birth of the nation as a political entity (1948). Yet it is not a full nation in the prophetic sense as it doesn’t yet have spiritual “life” or “breath.” (For the full story see pages 199-210.)

**Signs of His Coming!**

Technically, since Christ can come at any time, there exist no necessary signs before Jesus will return. However, even today we see the “stage being set” for possible signs to occur in the Tribulation which will point as signs to His Second Coming.

**China’s Mid-East Role**

*The Straits Times (1991)*

**CNN and Revelation 1:7**

*The Straits Times (December 30, 1991)*

**Anti-Semitism**

Dr. Jack Van Impe, *Perhaps Today* (March/April 1992), p. 5

**World Ends in September 1999**

Dr. Jack Van Impe, *Perhaps Today* (March/April 1992), p. 6

**Spain Fulfills Daniel 7:8, 20, 24 Prophecy**

Dr. Jack Van Impe, *Perhaps Today* (March/April 1992), p. 7

**The Common Market**

Dr. Jack Van Impe, *Perhaps Today* (September/October 1991), p. 2

**The Common Market**

Dr. Jack Van Impe, *Perhaps Today* (September/October 1991), p. 3

**A Brief Chronology of Israel**

Dr. Paul Lee Tan, 91

**The Location of the Jerusalem Temple**

Dr. Leen Ritmeyer, Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) Seminar, November 1996

**I. Temple Mount** (see p. 49a)

A. West

1. The part of the western wall exposed today is only the small, upper part of a mostly underground wall.

2. The trumpet blower stood on the SW corner of the temple mount (at the south end of the western wall).

3. Excavations show that the wall was lined with shops.

B. South

1. The lower part of the steps were cut from living stone but the top was imported.

2. The staircase is 220 feet wide (only 100 feet exposed at present).

3. Inside, the hallway of El Aksa Mosque is made of Herodian stones, based on Roman architectural style of decorative domes and a double gate. The Mishna reports that worshippers entered in the right gate and exited in the left gate. (Those in mourning would do the opposite so that people would know that something was wrong and thus would be able to offer a word of encouragement.)

4. Two buildings on the south housed the ritual baths between the double gate on the left and the triple gate on its right.

C. East

1. The Golden Gate had a staircase going to the left (south).

2. Inside the gate it was covered all the way to the north gate into the temple outer court.

D. North

1. The Pool of Israel just outside the wall is now a parking lot.

2. Antonia Fortress had one tower higher than the others.

**II. Herod’s Temple**

A. The Nicanor Gate between the court of the women and the inner court had 15 steps for Levite singers. There were 12 steps on the south as well.

B. The temple was half again as high as the Dome of the Rock. Made of white stone, it was beautiful beyond description!

C. The Mishna notes that the veil was three fingers thick and took 300 priests to carry it. It was woven together from 72 squares. There’s no way it could be torn by human hands! The Mishna says *two veils* existed at the time of the destruction of the temple in AD 70!

D. Herod expanded the temple mount from its existing size at that time (500 by 500 cubits) to twice its size in a rectangular shape. Ezekiel’s temple is based on this square. This is supported by both a bend in the SE wall and tunnels from the south going north only until perpendicular to this bend.

1. Hasmoneans added on the south end in the second century BC.

2. Herod’s extensions included additions on the south, west, and north to twice the original size. The Jews didn’t consider Herod’s addition as holy but only this square upper level.

E. Location

1. The court on the south was the largest since most people approached it from the south.

2. Rebuttals to the Northern Theory (Dome of the Tablets and Spirits)

(Please correlate this with Dr. Paul Lee Tan’s study on pages 46-49)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Argument for Northern View | Rebuttal (Traditional/Southern View) |
| a. | The Golden Gate faced the temple directly from the east. | The present Golden Gate was built in the 6-7th century by Moslems. Today it can be entered only by Muslims. Besides this, no ancient documents state that the Golden gate was in front of the temple anyway. |
| b. | The bedrock of the Dome of the Tablets and Spirits is original. | This may be true, but it is not conclusive, especially since it is much smaller than the rock within the Mosque of Omar. |
| c. | The Dome of the Tablets and Spirits derives its name from the Holy Place. | The bedrock of the Dome of the Rock shows cuts from walls which stood at the exact dimensions of Holy of Holies within the temple (20 x 20 cubits), as well as a portion of the rock cut to the ark’s dimensions at the exact spot. |
| d. | A temple on the present Dome of the Rock site would be impossible as it would be too close to the eastern wall. | The map on page 49a shows that, while this site would be closer to the wall, there still exists plenty of room for it. |
| e. | A cave exists inside the present Dome of the Rock, which would be unlikely underneath a threshing floor. | Stigers, H. G. *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible.* 5 vols. s.v. “Temple, Jerusalem,” 5:626 argues for a site 2-3 meters above the present rock of the Dome of the Rock. The cave was for storage of grain from the threshing floor. |

Further Sources Arguing for the Northern Site:

Kaufman, Asher S. “Where the Ancient Temple of Jerusalem Stood.” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 9 (1983): 42. He is the source of Dr. Paul Lee Tan’s summary on pages 46-48.

*Student’s Map Manual: A Historical Geography.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979.

**The Temple and Temple Mount**

Dr. Paul Lee Tan, 92

**Will the Temple be Rebuilt?**

Dr. Paul Lee Tan, 93

\*Asher S. Kaufman, “Where the Ancient Temple of Jerusalem Stood.” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 9 (1983): 42. See Leen Ritmeyer’s rebuttals to Kaufman’s Northern View on page 44 of these notes.

**Will the Temple be Rebuilt? (cont’d)**

Dr. Paul Lee Tan, 94

**Will the Temple be Rebuilt? (cont’d)**

Dr. Paul Lee Tan, 95

**Will the Temple be Rebuilt? (cont’d)**

Dr. Paul Lee Tan, 96

**The Temple** **Mount**

**The Jewish Temple**

(1 of 2)

The Jewish Temple (2 of 2)

**Temple Mount Lawsuit**

*The Straits Times*

**Temple Rebuilding**

Dr. Jack Van Impe, *Perhaps Today* (January/February 1992), p. 4

**Ark of the Covenant**

Dr. Jack Van Impe, *Perhaps Today* (January/February 1992), p. 5

**More on the EC**

Dr. Jack Van Impe, *Perhaps Today* (January/February 1992), p. 6**Still More on the EC**

Dr. Jack Van Impe, *Perhaps Today* (January/February 1992), p. 7

**D. Fact of the Rapture: 1 Thess. 4:13-18**

1. Problem: The Thessalonians were in grief because some of their members had died. Paul had shared with them that believers who are *alive* will be taken with Christ at His return, but they did not know the status of their *dead* loved ones at Christ’s return.

2. Solution: The Rapture will reunite believers with others who have died before us.

a. Believers need not grieve without hope because of their ignorance whether they would ever see fellow believers who had died (13).

b. Christ is alive and coming to reunite dead and alive believers at the Rapture (14-17).

1) Christ conquered death so all believers who have died will conquer death (14).

2) In fact, their bodies will rejoin Christ faster than us who are alive (15-17)!

a. Here’s one time when *dead* people move faster than people who are *alive!*

b. Verse 17 is where we get our word “Rapture,” which actually comes from the Latin translation of *rapturo*, “to be caught up.” So, you see, “Rapture” actually is a translation of a biblical term.

c. Application: The coming reunion is a great reason to encourage one another (18).

**E. Time of the Rapture: Five Tribulational Views** (all are premillennial)

1. Pretribulationalists argue for a seven-year gap between the Rapture (at the beginning of the Tribulation) and the Revelation (at the end of the Tribulation). The teaching that the Rapture will occur *before* the Tribulation yields the name "pretribulationalist."

2. Midtribulationalists advocate a three and one half year gap between the Rapture (at the *middle* of the Tribulation) and the Revelation (at the end of the Tribulation).

3. The Partial Rapture View maintains that there will be several raptures at various times during the Tribulation (including the beginning and the end), each time only removing faithful saints. In a sense, this view is the sum of all of the other views!

4. The Pre-Wrath Rapture View is the newest view (1990), espoused by Marvin Rosenthal (former executive director of Friends of Israel Ministries) and Robert van Kampen. It maintains that Christians will not be removed at the beginning of the Tribulation, but they will be raptured before God’s wrath is unleashed upon the earth, viewed as coming 18 months before the end of the Tribulation.

5. Posttribulationalists teach that the Rapture and the Revelation are facets of a single event at the *end* of the Tribulation period. Their belief in a single Second Coming is similar to the views propagated by both the amillennialists and postmillennialists.

After the following chart is a brief evaluation of each of these five views.

II. Pretribulationalism

**A. Definitions**

1. Pretribulationalists teach that the Rapture of the Church will precede the Tribulation.

2. They believe no Christians will be on the earth at the start of the Tribulation.

**B. Advocates**

1. "In… the early Church Fathers, there is almost complete silence on the subject of the tribulation. They often speak of going through tribulations, but very seldom of a future period known as the tribulation. This is probably because during the first few centuries of the church, the church was passing through many persecutions and it did not concern itself with the future tribulation. There are a couple of intimations, however, of a belief in the pretribulational return of Christ [see under imminency in these notes, 121a]…" (Thiessen, 371).

2. Modern day advocates of the pretribulational rapture include: E. Schuyler English, Paul D. Feinberg, Herman A. Hoyt, Robert L. Lightner, J. Dwight Pentecost, Charles Ryrie, Henry C. Thiessen, John F. Walvoord, Leon J. Wood, and Paul Benware. This is the most common premillennial viewpoint on the time of the Rapture (cf. p. 149 question 4).

**C. Diagram**



**D. Support Cited**

1. Christ told the Philadelphia believers, "I will keep you from the hour of testing (ka,gw se thrh,sw e,k th~j w[raj tou~ peirasmou`), that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10). The definite article before "hour" indicates that the Tribulation period is in view (cf. Rev. 4–19). Posttribulationalists claim that "to keep from" (thrh,sw e,k) means not "to exempt (remove) out of" but "to preserve through," thus advocating that the Church will go through the Tribulation. Appeal is especially made to John 17:15 for support. Although either interpretation (“remove out of” or “preserve through”) is possible grammatically, the former is preferable for several reasons:

a. Several believers will *die* during the Tribulation so it can hardly be stated that they will be guarded in the hour of testing (Rev. 6:9-11; 20:4). The posttribulational Mounce (p. 119) declares that the promise is not physical preservation but *spiritual* preservation shown in the sealing (7:1f.) and flight into the wilderness (12:6); yet both of these verses apply to Israel and not to the Church.

b. "…Revelation 3:10 not only guarantees being kept from the trials of the Tribulation period but being kept from the time period of the Tribulation. The promise is not, I will keep you from the trials. It is, I will keep you from the *hour* of the trials" (Ryrie, *What You Should Know About the Rapture*, 116, emphasis his).

c. "He could not have stated it more explicitly. If Christ had meant to say that they would be preserved *through* a time of trouble, or would be *taken out* from within the Tribulation, a different verb and a different preposition [dia,, "through"] would have been required" (Walvoord, *BKC*, 2:939; emphasis his).

d. The preposition ek, "from, out of, away from" (BAGD 234 1c) means to escape trouble that one is not already experiencing. This meaning is seen in the Septuagint (Greek) translation of the Old Testament (Josh. 2:13; Ps. 33:19; 56:13; Prov. 21:23) as well as in the New Testament (John 12:27; 17:15; Acts 15:29; James 5:20). The idea of being kept “through it” is not the usual meaning of the preposition ejk, so posttribulationalists are arguing from a very rare use.

e. Gundry appeals to John 17:15, which is the only other case in either classical or biblical Greek when the verb threvw and the preposition ejk occur together. Here Jesus says, "I do not ask you to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one” (oujk ejrwtw' i{na a[rh/" aujtou" ejk tou' kovsmou, ajll= i{na thrhvsh/" aujtou" ejk tou' ponhrou). Gundry says this argues for the posttribulational view since Christ did not ask God to remove the disciples from the world.

Response: When Christ asks for preservation from Satan, the idea cannot be "out from within." The disciples were not “in the Evil One.” The idea is protection, not motion. Though Gundry says that the disciples were in the sphere of the Evil One, Christ is clear that these disciples had believed in him (v. 6) and were kept safe so that none had been lost except Judas (v. 12).

2. The nature and purpose of the Tribulation is “to test those who dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10b), a phrase used over a dozen times in the Book of Revelation. Each time this “phrase occurs… the *enemies* of the church are always in mind” (Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 120, emphasis mine). Since the church is not to be tested, what would be the reason for the church to be present during this time of testing? The purpose of this time is clearly explained in Revelation 11:18:

“The nations were angry; and your *wrath* has come. The time has come for *judging* the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great — and for destroying those who destroy the earth.”

3. The Church will never come under God's wrath (John 5:24; Rom. 5:9; 8:1; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9). Although the church has been promised persecution and tribulation (John 16:33; Acts 5:41; Phil. 1:29), this is different from the wrath that describes the Tribulation (Rev. 6:15-17; 11:18; 14:10, 19). Wrath and persecution are not the same!

4. The Spirit’s work of restraining evil will be absent during the Tribulation (2 Thess. 2:7-8). His restraining ministry is mentioned elsewhere in Scripture (Gen. 6:3; John 16:8-11). It is hard to conceive of a time period when the Spirit’s restraining influence will be curtailed but the Church will still be present.

5. There is no mention of the Church in Revelation 4—19, the part of the book relating to the Tribulation. Rather, the church (the “tabernacle of God”) is in heaven (Rev. 13:6; cf. Eph. 2:21-22) as Bride (19:1, 7-8) ready to return to the earth at Christ’s Second Coming.

6. Since the Rapture is imminent (can happen at any moment) it must be pretribulational. Christians are not to wait for signs of His return but for His coming itself (Ludwigson, 40). The New Testament teaches that the next event on God's eschatological calendar is an imminent Rapture:

a. "… and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from [“out of” = pretrib] the wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1:10) is written in the present tense as if this great event could occur at any time.

b. Paul explains that our mortal bodies will all be changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet…" (1 Cor. 15:52a). That this event will be unexpected and happen at any time is supported by the apostle's concluding exhortation to "be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

c. At Christ’s second coming in the clouds (Rev. 19:11-21), his angels will gather all believers living on the earth (Matt. 24:30-31). Post-tribbers believe all believers will then receive glorified bodies to fulfill 1 Corinthians 15:51-54, so who will have mortal bodies to enter the millennium? It makes better sense that Christians will have been separated prior to this in an imminent rapture (giving them glorified bodies), but others who believed in the tribulation period are saved but enter into the millennium in mortal bodies.

d. "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren… that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep…we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with [the dead in Christ]…therefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. 4:13-18) clearly indicates that Paul fully expected to be alive at Christ's coming since he included himself ("we who are alive and remain") among those that would be alive at the time of the Rapture. What comfort would a posttribulational Rapture be?

e. "For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night… so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober… and build up one another, just as you also are doing" (1 Thess. 5:2-11). This maintains that the day of the Lord (which begins after the Rapture and continues through the Millennium) was imminent so that it would take people by surprise. Paul exhorted the Thessalonians to fight "sleep" (spiritual lethargy) to prepare for Christ's unexpected arrival.

f. When Jesus told the disciples, “I will come back and take you to be with me…” (John 14:3) He actually used the present tense (“I am coming”) with a sense of the immediate future without any intervening signs (Hoyt, 96).

g. Other NT passages imply imminency or that Christ will come unexpectedly or before the Tribulation (Matt. 24:36-39; 42-44, 50; 25:13; Mark 13:32-37; Luke 12:40; 1 Cor. 16:22; Phil. 3:20; Tit. 2:12-13; Heb. 9:28; 10:25; James 5:7-9; 1 Pet. 1:6-7; 4:7; 2 Pet. 3:10; 1 John 2:28; 3:2-3; Rev. 1:3; 22:7, 10, 12, 20).

7. The Second Coming will be in two stages: the Rapture (Christ’s coming for His own in the air to take them from the earth before the Tribulation) and the Revelation (Christ’s coming with His own to judge unbelievers upon the earth after the Tribulation).

a. These two events are *similar* in some respects:

1) Both events are literal returns. The Bible never refers to these events as only allegorical returns since in both instances Christ actually will return to the earth.

2) Both events find Christ as their central figure.

3) Both are future events which will come suddenly (Rapture in 1 Cor. 15:51-53; Revelation in Matt. 24:38-44).

4) Both events are sometimes referred to by the same word (e.g., "coming" refers to the Rapture in 1 Thess. 4:15 and to the Revelation in Matthew 24:27).

5) Like elements: Rapture Revelation

a) clouds 1 Thess. 4:17 Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Rev. 1:7

b) angels 1 Thess. 4:16 Matt. 24:31; 25:31; Mark 13:27

c) trumpet 1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:52 Matt. 24:31

b. However, there exist several *contrasts* between the Rapture and the Revelation:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **The Rapture** | **The Revelation** |
| 1 | Pretribulational (Rev. 3:10) | Posttribulational (Rev. 19:11-21) |
| 2 | Christ will come in the air (1 Thess. 4:16) | Christ will come to the earth, His feet touching the Mt. of Olives (Zech 14:4) |
| 3 | A coming for the saints (1 Thess. 4:15-17) to bring them to the Father’s house (John 14:1-2) | A coming with the saints (Matt. 25:31; 1 Thess. 3:13; Rev. 19:14) |
| 4 | Saints (dead and alive) will be caught up ("raptured") from the earth to meet the Lord in the air and taken to heaven (1 Thess. 4:16-17) | Saints who are already on earth will remain on the earth (no rapture) to be ushered into the Millennial Kingdom (Acts 15:16; Rev. 5:10; Matt. 6:10; ch. 24) |
| 5 | Produces comfort and hope (1 Thess. 4:18) | Produces fear and judgment (Matt. 24:27-31; Luke 21:20-28; Rev. 6:15-17) |
| 6 | Mystery truth revealed only in the New Testament age (1 Cor. 15:51) | Central in Old Testament prophecy but clarified in the New Testament (Jer. 30:7; Zech 14:1-3; Matt. 24:30; Col. 3:4) |
| 7 | Bodies of church saints glorified (1 Cor. 15:51-58; Phil. 3:20-21) and brought to heaven for seven years (1 Thess. 4:17) | Bodies of tribulation saints left in mortal state to continue to live on the earth in the millennium (Matt. 25:31-34) |
| 8 | Imminent, no signs needed (1 Thess. 4:16) | Not imminent but preceded by spectacular signs in the heavens and on the earth (Matt. 24:29-31; Luke 21:25-28; Acts 2:19-21; Rev. 1:7; chs. 6-19) |
| 9 | Primary purpose is deliverance of the saints from this world (1 Thess. 1:10) | Primary purpose is judgment of unbelieving (Matt. 25:31-46) |
| 10 | Invisible and private as only believers see Christ; God deludes via the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:11) | Visible and public since "every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7 |
| 11 | Fulfills a promise to the Church where Jew-Gentile distinctions do not exist (1 Thess. 4:15; cf. John 14:1-3; Eph. 2:11-16) | Fulfills promises to Israel of covenants made in the Old Testament (Gen. 12:1-3; Ps. 89; Isa. 11:11-14; cf. Rom. 11:26-27) |
| 12 | Evil begins to increase (2 Thess. 2:1-12) | Evil is suppressed (2 Thess. 1:7; Ps. 37:9-10) |
| 13 | Church removed (1 Thess. 4:13-18) | Satan removed (Rev. 20:1-3) |
| 14 | Christ shown as Head of the Church and all things (Eph. 1:10, 22; 4:15; Col. 1:18; 2:10) | Christ vindicated as Messiah to Israel (Zech. 14:3-4; cf. Acts 1:6 with v. 11) |
| 15 | Judgment seat of Christ for believers (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:13) | Judgment of Israel and Gentiles (Ezek. 20:34-38; Matt. 25; Zech. 14:4; cf. p. 160) |
| 16 | The Lord is at hand (Phil. 4:5) | The kingdom is at hand (Matt. 24:14) |
| 17 | Nature subsequently ruined (Rev. 6—16) | Nature subsequently restored (Rom. 8:19-22; Isa. 11:6-9; 35:9; 65:25) |

8. John F. Walvoord includes some of the foregoing and adds many more proofs for a pretribulational Rapture in his chapter called “Fifty Arguments for Pretribulationalism” in *The Rapture Question*, 269-76:

“Fifty Arguments for Pretribulationalism” in *The Rapture Question*, 269-76 (2 of 4)

“Fifty Arguments for Pretribulationalism” in *The Rapture Question*, 269-76 (3 of 4)

“Fifty Arguments for Pretribulationalism” in *The Rapture Question*, 269-76 (4 of 4)

**Chart of Christ’s Comings**

Herman Hoyt, *The End Times*, 57-58

**Opposition to the Pre-Trib Rapture**

A common belief today is that the post-trib view stems from the first century while the pre-trib perspective stems from John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) through a woman named Margaret MacDonald in 1830.[[1]](#footnote-1) But is this true? Actually, Darby could not have received this teaching from her in 1830 since he had embraced a pre-trib position three years earlier (1827) through his independent study of Scripture.[[2]](#footnote-2) Unfortunately, Rosenthal even calls the pre-trib position a satanic lie.[[3]](#footnote-3) Such language only fuels the debate unnecessarily.

Some pre-tribbers (as well as other views) have discredited the doctrine of his return by date-setting. My library has books predicting Christ’s return in 1988, 1993, 1994, and 2000. Each time the date passes, people become more skeptical whether he will come at all. This date-setting trend is partly due to an ignorance of the Scripture’s emphasis on imminency.

Some note that the Rapture and the Second Coming have many similarities. Page 59 notes a few of these similarities.[[4]](#footnote-4) Some references to the Second Coming also mention clouds but these texts also mention believers who *come back* to earth with Christ at his return (Matt. 25:29-31; 1 Thess. 3:13; Rev. 19:14). That the Second Coming results in Christ coming all the way to the earth is also seen in Matthew 25:31-46 where he judges on the earth (cf. Ezek. 20:33-38).

Actually, all of the various rapture views (cf. p. 56) acknowledge both the catching up and the return of the saints. The question remains how much time elapses between these two phases: eighteen months (Pre-Wrath view), three and half years (Mid-trib), seven years (pre-trib), or only moments (post-trib). However, several events must take place between these two phases that argue for at least a few years between them:

1. The judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10) must reward believers before they return to earth and take up their positions of responsibilities.

2. The judgment of Gentiles is *after* the Second Coming (Matt. 25:31-46) and yet still indicates that the saved and unsaved persons remain in earthly bodies. This would be impossible if no time period existed between the two phases of the Lord’s return; the post-trib view gives every believer a glorified body.

III. Midtribulationalism

**A. Definitions**

1. Midtribulationalists teach that the Rapture will occur after three and a half years of the seven-year Tribulation. This view “is essentially a compromise between the posttribulational and pretribulational positions. It concurs with the pretribulational view in holding that the church will be raptured as an event distinct from the second advent, that the restrainer of 2 Thessalonians 2 is the Holy Spirit, that the church is promised deliverance from wrath. In common with posttribulationalism it holds that the church is promised tribulation on the earth and is in need of purging, that Scripture does not teach imminence, and that the church is seen on the earth after Revelation 4:1” (Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 179; cf. Hoyt, 82-83).

2. Actually, midtribulationalists sometimes do not refer to themselves with this term but rather call themselves pretribulationalists since they believe Christ will rapture Christians before what they call the great tribulation or the last half of Daniel’s week. See Gleason L. Archer, “Jesus is Coming Again: Midtribulation,” *Christian Life* (May 1974): 21; idem., “The Case for the Mid-Seventieth Week Rapture Position,” in Reiter, 113-145; cf. Lightner, *The Last Days Handbook*, 65-66.

3. The midtribulationalist advocates that the church is in need of purging and therefore must participate in at least part of the Tribulation period. The latter half of the Tribulation is seen as much more severe than the first half.

**B. Advocates**

1. Midtribulationalism is the least held of the three major positions (pre-, mid-, and posttribulational) on the time of the Rapture of the church.

2. Advocates of midtribulationalism include Norman B. Harrison (the main proponent), Gleason L. Archer, W. H. Harrison, and J. Oliver Buswell.

**C. Diagram**

**D. Support Cited**

1. The Rapture is not imminent. "We see from the Scriptures that Christ could not have returned in the lifetime of Peter [John 21:18, 19; 1 Pet. 1:13]; …nor yet before the missionary program is completed [Mark 16:15]; nor yet before the apostasy has overtaken us [2 Thess. 2:3]; nor yet before the last days in which we seem to be living" (Harrison, *The End*, 231-33).

Response: Peter was already middle-aged at the time of the prophecy of John 21:18-19 was given, and this prophecy did not reach most Christians until years later when John penned his gospel (Walvoord, *The Rapture Question*, 167). Besides, Jesus does not indicate how old Peter would be but rather contrasts his youth with being aged.

Mark 16:15 indicates that the *second coming* (i.e., the Revelation, not the Rapture) cannot be fulfilled apart from the fulfillment of the Great Commission. This passage relates to the Tribulation itself when the church is gone, not to a time prior to the Tribulation (Feinberg, *The Rapture*, 154-55).

Also, 2 Thessalonians 2 was written in response to a newly held belief at Thessalonica in a posttribulational Rapture. The persecutions the church faced were leading them to believe that they already were in the Day of the Lord (Tribulation), so Paul wrote to correct this perspective. He had previously taught them a pretribulational Rapture which delivers them from God’s wrath (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9). Now he reiterated the same point with new information that the *judgments* of the Day of the Lord could not begin until the apostasy came (2 Thess. 2:3), the Antichrist was revealed (vv. 3-4, 8), and the restrainer was removed (vv. 6-7).

"While Harrison is seeking to disprove the doctrine of imminency by the Scripture quotations he cites, it is evident that the New Testament writers themselves believed in an imminent return. There is a distinction between the *soon* coming of Christ and the imminent coming. Scripture nowhere taught that the coming would be soon, but it consistently taught that the coming could be expected at any time" (Pentecost, *Things to Come,* 181).

Finally, imminency is actually not *required* for a pretribulational view. This view simply teaches that the Rapture will precede the Tribulation, not that no signs could precede the Rapture. Therefore, even a successful attack on imminency is not sufficient to defeat pretribulationalism.

2. The Tribulation is only the last half of Daniel's 70th week, or three and a half years (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 11:2; 12:6). See Ludwigson, 148 point #2.

Response: Nowhere in the Bible "is this period divided into two unrelated parts, each with a different characterization… Again, if the tribulation period is to be dated from the making of the covenant (Daniel 9:27), the church would know the time of the translation… Revelation 7:14… seems to indicate clearly that the time covered by the seals is considered a part of the tribulation period" (Pentecost, 184-185). Also, the seal judgments are God’s wrath (Rev. 6:16-17), which is not for believers (1 Thess. 5:9).

3. The scriptural emphasis upon the middle of Daniel's 70th week (Dan. 7:25; 9:27; 12:7, 11; Rev. 11:2) points to the Rapture being at this time.

Response: This emphasis is due not to the Rapture at this time but to the Antichrist breaking his covenant with Israel, thus substituting idolatry for their freedom to worship in their own way.

4. The last trump of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the same as the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15 which is sounded at the middle of the Tribulation. See Ludwigson, 148 point #1.

Response: These two trumpets cannot be the same for at least nine reasons (Pentecost, 188-91). The most significant reason perhaps is that while the former is a trumpet issuing blessing, life and glory, the latter issues judgment upon the enemies of God.

5. The resurrection of the two witnesses in the middle of the Tribulation pictures the Rapture of the Church (Rev. 11). The witnesses are symbolic of a "larger company of witnesses" and represent two groups: the dead and the living at the Rapture. The cloud represents the *parousia*—the Lord's presence, the great voice is the shout of 1 Thess. 4:16, and the trumpet is the trumpet of the same verse. See Ludwigson, 149 point #5.

Response: The "two witnesses are treated as two individuals in the passage… [and] the voice of authority is referred to a number of times in the Revelation and it can not be substantiated that it is the same 'shout' of which Paul spoke" (Pentecost, 186). The midtribulational view makes identifications in different passages which are difficult to show as referring to the same thing.

6. The 144,000 are on earth early in the Tribulation (7:1-8) but in heaven later (14:1-5), so they should be identified as raptured saints who were taken during the Tribulation.

Response: The 144,000 are explicitly stated as from the twelve tribes of Israel and thus are Jews, not the church—especially since they are contrasted with the Gentile multitude (7:9-12). Finally, “there is no clue as to whether they have been resurrected or await glorification” (Feinberg, *The Rapture*, ed. Richard R. Reiter, 149-50).

7. “The Day of Wrath is mentioned as at hand in Revelation 11:18; therefore, the preceding seals and trumpets were not events of wrath” (Ludwigson, 149). Thus, since wrath *follows* the seventh trumpet, the Rapture must come just before this wrath (since believers escape it).

Response: Revelation 6:16-17 refers to the seals as wrath (and the seals precede the trumpets). Also, the NIV translates the phrase as “your wrath has come,” meaning that the trumpet judgments occur during the time of God’s wrath.

IV. The Partial Rapture View

**A. Definitions**

1. Christians who uphold the partial rapture view believe that "only saints who are worthy will be raptured before the wrath of God is poured out; those who have not been faithful will remain on the earth to endure the Tribulation" (Ryrie, *Synopsis*, p. 1953).

2. "Actually the partial rapture view teaches that there will be several raptures. Like pretribulationalists, they teach that one will occur at the beginning of the Tribulation to take away the spiritually mature saints. Then at various times during the seven years of the Tribulation other raptures will occur to remove saints who were unprepared at the beginning of the Tribulation but who have shown themselves worthy in the meantime. There is even to be a rapture at the close of the Millennium" (Ryrie, *Rapture*, 13-14).

3. This view is not primarily concerned with the *time* of the Rapture (as is true of the other four views), but rather with the *people* who are to be raptured.

**B. Advocates**

1. "Generally speaking, the partial rapture teaching has barely touched the United States except recently through the Local Church movement of Witness Lee. This group teaches that only overcomers constitute the bride of Christ, and that other believers who are soulish [carnal?] will experience the Tribulation and be ruled by the overcomers in the Millennium" (Ryrie, *Rapture*, 14).

2. Partial rapture advocates view include: Ray Brubaker, R. Govett, G. H. Lang, Witness Lee, D. M. Panton, G. H. Pember, J. A. Seiss, Austin Sparks and Thomas Waugh.

**C. Diagram**



**D. Support Cited**

1. Only those who are "watching" and "waiting" for the Lord's return are worthy to escape the terrors of the Tribulation judgments (Matt. 24:41-42; Luke 21:36).

Response: The above passages apply not to the church but to the nation of Israel which will already be in the Tribulation period. The reference to being “taken away” (Matt. 24:41-42) refers to being taken away *to judgment* at the close of the Tribulation, not being taken away to blessing at the Rapture.

2. Christ will return only for "those who eagerly await Him…" (Heb. 9:28).

Response: The phrase "those who eagerly await Him" is simply a synonym for the church (cf. Phil. 3:20; Tit. 2:13). "These who look for Him are not contrasted with those who do not look for Him… The inference is that the same group to whom He *appeared* [v. 26], and for whom He *now* appears [v. 24], will be the one to whom He *will*  appear [v. 28]" (Pentecost, 162; italics mine).

3. 1 Corinthians 15:23 states that believers will be resurrected "each in his own order." This teaches that not all Christians will be raptured simultaneously.

Response: The main subject in view here is not the Rapture but the entire resurrection program of God in which different persons will be raised at different times, such as the resurrection of church saints at the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:16), Tribulation saints after the Tribulation (Rev. 20:4), etc. Besides, at the Rapture the bodies of *all* believers will be changed in an instant (1 Cor. 15:51)—not just the bodies of those who are presently in fellowship with the Lord. See p. 160.

V. Posttribulationalism

**A. Definitions**

1. Posttribulationalists assert that the Rapture will occur at the close of the Tribulation so that the Church will be on earth during the entire Tribulation.

2. "The Church of Christ will not be removed from the earth until the advent of Christ at the very end of the present age: the Rapture and the Appearing take place at the same crisis; hence Christians of that generation will be exposed to the final affliction under Antichrist" (Alexander Reese, *The Approaching Advent of Christ*, 18).

**B. Advocates**

1. This view is very common among amillennialists and postmillennialists. Some believe the tribulation began with the early church (e.g., George L. Rose, *Tribulation Till Translation*, 68-69) or even began with Adam (George H. Fromow, *Will the Church Pass Through the Tribulation?*, 1).

2. However, some premillennarians subscribe to it as well. The foremost premillennial posttribulationalists include: George E. Ladd, Douglas J. Moo, Robert H. Gundry, Norman S. McPherson, and Alexander Reese. Wayne Grudem notes that “it is unlikely but possible that the prediction of a great tribulation has already been fulfilled” (*Systematic Theology*, 1102).

3. No dispensationalists are posttribulationalists since they see the Tribulation pertaining only to Israel in the final week of years in Daniel’s Seventy Weeks Prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27). The Church is never mentioned in relation to this seven year Tribulation because it will be removed prior to God’s “prophetic calendar” resuming with Israel. Therefore, the Rapture concludes the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24) and initiates the Tribulation (cf. bottom of p. 127).

**C. Diagram**



**D. Support Cited**

1. The Rapture and the Second Coming are described by the same words and therefore refer to the same single event.

Response:

a. The main problem with this view is that it does not distinguish between Christ’s coming *for* His own (at the Rapture) and His coming *with* His own (to establish the earthly kingdom). The distinctions between these two events has already been discussed under the support cited for pretribulationalism (pp. 60, 64-65).

b. “Since the Lord's presence (*parousia*) will characterize both the rapture and the second coming, the word itself does not indicate whether these are a single event or separate events… the vocabulary used does not necessarily prove either pre- or posttribulationalism" (Ryrie, *What You Should Know About the Rapture*, 44-45).

c. In the posttrib view, Christ’s return will separate believers from unbelievers and immediately bring them up in the air to meet Christ only to return immediately to earth with him. This will be followed by a judgment separating sheep (believers) from the goats (unbelievers). But why would such a judgment be needed if moments before they already were separated (Matt. 25:31-46)?

d. John 14:1-3 says that after Christ’s return we will be in heaven with Him, not on earth as premil posttribbers advocate.

2. The Rapture of the Church is not imminent.

Response: The support for the doctrine of imminency has been considered under support #6 for the pretribulational position (pp. 58-59).

3. The Great Tribulation will be cut short "for the sake of the elect" (Matt. 24:22).

Response: Pretribulationalists believe that many of the unsaved at the beginning of the Tribulation will come to Christ during this outpouring of God's wrath. Matthew 24:22 proves only the existence of *some* persons who trusted Christ during the Tribulation, not the entire church. The church will have been raptured previously. The basis of the posttribulational view is that the Church is made up of all the saved of all the ages, so “saints” and “elect” are seen as synonymous (Hoyt, 87). But such a view is unnecessary and blurs the distinctions.

4. Revelation 3:10 declares that believers will be supernaturally protected from the wrath of God poured upon the unsaved during the Tribulation. This means preservation from wrath in the sense that Israel was protected from the plagues that struck Egypt.

Response: It seems best to interpret "keep from" as "preserve outside of" for the reasons cited under the support for the pretribulationalism (pp. 57-58). The example of Israel in Egypt is not actually parallel since the nation lived in an entirely different section of the country whereas those who come to Christ in the Tribulation are dispersed throughout the earth. Furthermore, these are not guaranteed divine protection since many will be martyrs (Rev. 6:9-11; 20:4).

5. Believers will go through the Tribulation period (see John 15:18-19; 16:1-2, 33).

Response: “Tribulation” in Scripture does not always denote the *Great* Tribulation. The term is also used in a non-technical, non-eschatological sense (e.g., John 15:18-19; 16:1-2, 33; Matt. 13:21; 2 Cor. 1:4; 2 Thess. 1:4; Rev. 1:9) for the age-long opposition from Satan which has existed since the founding of the church.

6. The resurrection after the Tribulation is called the “first resurrection” (Rev. 20:5-6). This term makes no sense if there is a pretribulational resurrection of the church.

Response: Being “first” doesn’t mean other resurrections can’t precede it, for believers were raised during Christ’s earthly ministry and at His death (Matt. 27:52-53; though all these subsequently died), and Christ Himself was raised. Revelation 20:5-6 notes only that this resurrection precedes the Great White Throne resurrection (Rev. 20:12).

7. Three events must take place before the judgments of the Day of the Lord begin: apostasy in the church, the revelation of the “man of lawlessness” (Antichrist), and the removal of the restraint against lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:3-8). This disproves a pretribulational rapture which can happen at any time without any signs.

Response: The Rapture does not begin the Day of the Lord, for Daniel’s 70th week begins at the beginning of the Antichrist’s covenant with Israel—not with the Rapture. This covenant commencement will reveal his true nature to many. Certainly with the church (restrainer?) gone at the Rapture, the professing church will be apostate to the core, thus fulfilling all three conditions prior to the beginning of the day of the Lord.

8. “It is unlikely but possible that the prediction of a great tribulation has already been fulfilled” (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1102). No one will ever know for certain that the great tribulation has occurred until after the fact.

Response: Grudem is to be commended for his awareness that 20th century believers have seen more persecution than in any other century. However, this has not been under the direction of a single world leader (the man of sin in 2 Thess. 2), nor has the persecution included 100 pound hailstones (Rev. 16:21), the death of a fourth of the world by sword, famine, plague, and wild beasts (Rev. 6:8), and many other specific judgments noted in Revelation 6–16.

E. Contrasting Pretribulationism and Posttribulationism

Ryrie, Basic Theology, 500-501

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VI. Pre-Wrath Rapture

**A. Definitions**

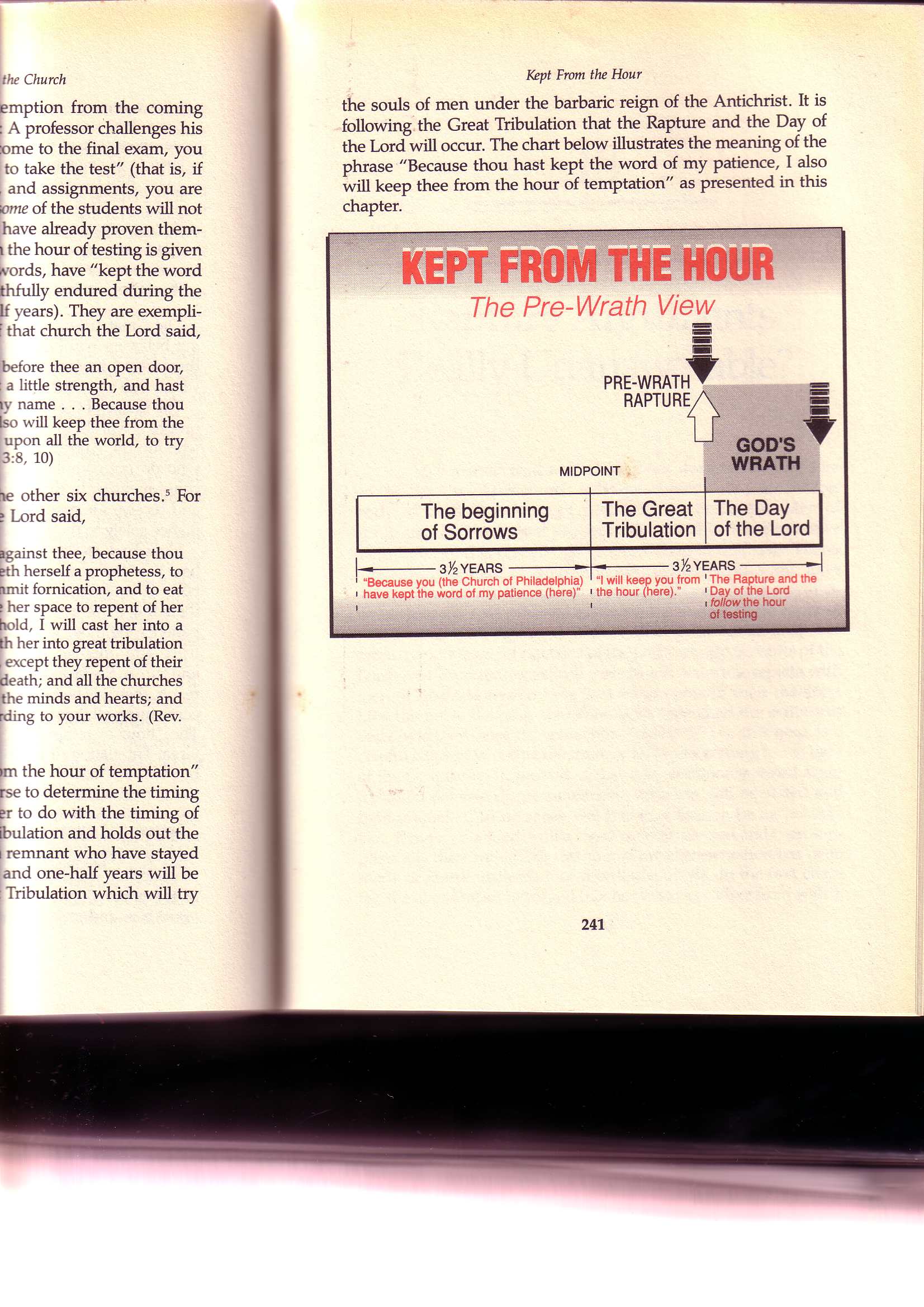
1. The Pre-Wrath Rapture View asserts that the Rapture will occur 18 months before the end of the Tribulation so the Church will be on earth during most of the Tribulation.

2. This view is similar to midtribulationalism in that both views do not see the church being raptured before the Tribulation begins. However, it differs from this view in that it does not place the rapture exactly in the middle of the week but 24 months later.

**B. Advocates**

The pre-wrath view of Marvin Rosenthal in his book, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church* (1990) is the newest of the rapture views and a minority view followed by Robert Van Kampen and Ron Wallace (http://www.biblefragrances.com/about.htm).

**C. Diagram** (Rosenthal, 241)

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**D. Support Cited**

1. The “hour of testing” in Revelation 3:10 from which the church at Philadelphia is to be kept is not the “Great Tribulation” but instead the “Day of the Lord.”

Response: Rosenthal’s chart shows that the church is being “kept from” the very Great Tribulation of which it is a part! In other words, he has the church present during the Great Tribulation yet “kept from” this hour. If by “I will keep you from” he means that the church is “preserved through” this time then his view falls prey to the inaccurate posttribulational misunderstanding of the Greek (thrhvsw ejk) here that has been previously refuted in the pretribulationalism section (pp. 57-58).

Furthermore, it is best to see the Great Tribulation and the judgment aspect of the Day of the Lord as synonymous in Scripture. Both relate to Israel and are times of judgment, while the church is promised deliverance from wrath (Rom. 8:1; Rev. 6:17; cf. 1 Thess. 1:19; 5:9). Also, the Philadelphian time of testing had *already passed* (Rev. 3:10), so this could not be the same as the future “beginning of sorrows” period on Rosenthal’s chart (the first 3 and a half years of the seven year tribulation).

2. Believers will be here in the Great Tribulation and raptured 18 months before the end.

Response: Matthew 24-25 (the Olivet Discourse) refers to a future time of *Israel’s* trouble called the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21). The church is never in view in this passage. Thus the Pre-Wrath view confuses Israel and the church (distinguished on pages 131-32). Also, such a view denies the doctrine of imminency which has been previously demonstrated (pp. 58-59).

3. The seal judgments (Rev. 6) in the Great Tribulation are not God’s wrath, which begins only with the following trumpet judgments introduced by cataclysmic disturbances.

Response: It is difficult to imagine that the execution of 25% of the earth’s population (Rev. 6:8) and the leveling of the earth’s mountains (Rev. 6:14) is not the wrath of God. Even more significant is the fact that these judgments are twice noted as the wrath of the Father and Jesus Christ (Rev. 6:16-17).

For critiques of this view see Gerald B. Stanton, “A Review of *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church*,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 148 (Jan.-March 1991): 90-111; John A. McLean, “Another Look at Rosenthal’s ‘Pre-Wrath Rapture,’” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 148 (Oct.-Dec. 1991): 387-98; Paul S. Karleen, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church: Is It Biblical?* (Langhorne, PA: BF Press, 1991). See these notes, 10f.

**Will the Rapture be “Secret”?**

Some say so, but that depends on what is meant by “secret.” If we mean that no one will notice the effects of the Rapture, this is certainly false. Obviously, the disappearance of millions of Christians will not go unnoticed!

But if we mean that people will not know the *cause* of the Rapture, this seems likely. Paul may have referred to this when he wrote,

*The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness   
(2 Thess. 2:9-12).*

Notice that God Himself sends the delusion. Paul was not clear about what the delusion was, but perhaps it will be the Antichrist’s explanation of what happened at the Rapture (but no one knows for sure). Since Jesus will appear in the clouds at a single point in the air above the earth, even if people *could* see Him there, very few would be able to see Him. This may be in contrast to His Second Coming when “every eye will see Him” (Rev. 1:7). How He could be seen by the whole world is not known, unless it is filmed on CNN! But nothing in Scripture would prohibit the same happening at the Rapture too.

Two issues must be put together here: (1) believers will rise to meet Christ (1 Thess. 4:17), and (2) their bodies will be changed in a moment (1 Cor. 15:51-52). Notice this doesn’t say that Christians will “disappear,” as has been often taught. The speed refers to their transformation, not transportation. We don’t know how fast they will rise to meet Christ; we only know that their mortal *bodies* will become glorified bodies in a flash. For the sake of those who are inside buildings at the moment of the Rapture, I trust that God will give us the immortal bodies first. Otherwise, going through the roof would be very painful in our mortal bodies, followed by reception of the glorified bodies up in the air!

**Contrasting the Rapture Views**

As different as the preceding Rapture views seem, they still all share at least four basic beliefs:

1. All are premillennial

2. All believe the Church escapes God’s wrath

3. All believe in a seven-year eschatological week (cf. Daniel 9:27)

4. All believe in a literal, bodily Second Coming

However, several important distinctions between the Rapture views may be drawn as well:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Pretrib** | **Midtrib** | **Posttrib** | **Partial** | **Pre-Wrath** |
| Time of Christ’s coming in relation to the Tribulation | Before | Mid-point | After | Before, during, & after | 5 1/2 year (66 month) point |
| Stages/phases of the Second Coming | 2 | 2 | 1 | Many | 2 |
| Time interval between the stages | >7 years | <3 1/2 years | momentary | ≤1007 years | 18 months |
| Divisions in the Tribulation Period | 2 | 2 | 1 (?) | Individually based | 3 |
| Rapture Imminent? | affirmed | denied | denied | “affirmed” | denied |
| Rapture Signs? | no | yes | yes | depends | yes |
| Length of Tribulation | 7 years | 3 1/2 years | 7 years | 7 years | 2 years |
| Length of *Great* Tribulation | 7 (or 3 1/2 years) | 3 1/2 years (?) | 7 years (?) | ? | 2 years |
| Length of wrath | 7 years | 3 1/2 years | 7 years | 7 years | 18 months |
| Distinguishes wrath from tribulation | no | no | no | no (?) | yes |
| Rapture after millennium? | no | no | no | yes | no |
| Holy Spirit present in Tribulation? | absent (most) present (some) | present first 3 1/2 years | present 7 years | present (?) | present (?) |
| Believers (Church) endure or escape purging? | all escape 7 years | all endure 3 1/2 and escape 3 1/2 | all endure 7 years | faithful escape ≤7 yrs unfaithful endure ≤7 yrs | all endure 5 1/2 years |
| Key passages cited | Rev. 3:10;  1 Thess. 4:13-18 | Dan. 9:27;  1 Thess. 5:3 | Luke 21:34-36; 2 Thess. 1:6-10 | Matt. 24:41-42; Heb. 9:28;  1 Cor. 15:23 | Rev. 3:10 |
| Affinity to amil/ postmil position | none | none | much | none | none |
| Theological perspective | dispensational premil | “undefined” premil | covenant premil | “undefined” premil | “undefined” premil |
| Advocates | Benware  Feinberg  Hoyt  Lightner  Ludwigson  Pentecost  Ryrie  Thiessen Walvoord  Wood | Archer  Buswell  N. Harrison  W. Harrison | Grudem  Gundry  Ladd  McPherson  Moo  Mounce  Reese  Erickson | Govett  Lang  Witness Lee Panton  Pember  Seiss  Sparks  Waugh | Rosenthal  van Kampen |

**Other Events at the Rapture**

ILL: RAPTURE transformation of the body (story of the hick and the elevator)

**I. The Reception of Resurrected Bodies**

A. The Need for Transformed Bodies

B. Contrasts between Bodies: Unresurrected Resurrected

1. 1 Corinthians 15:35-58

Perishable (v. 42) Imperishable

Dishonor (v. 43) Glory

Weakness (v. 43) Power

Natural (v. 44) Spiritual

Mortal (v. 53) Immortal

Death victorious Death defeated

Prone to sickness Never sick

2. 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Earthly tent Heavenly dwelling

Temporal Eternal

Made by man Made by God

Groaning No groaning

Away from the Lord With the Lord

Not preferred Preferred

3. 1 John 3:2

Not yet been made known Experienced at last!

Not like Christ’s body Like His body

Before seeing Christ After seeing Christ

**II. The Judgment Seat of Christ**

A. The Meaning of “Judgment Seat”

1. “In Grecian games in Athens, the old arena contained a raised platform on which the president or umpire of the arena sat. From here he rewarded all the contestants; and here he rewarded all winners. It was called the *‘bema’* or *‘reward seat.’* It was never used of a judicial bench” (L. Sale-Harrison, *Judgment Seat of Christ*, 8; cited by Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 220).

2. In modern terms the *bema* might be compared to the platform where Olympic athletes are judged to receive their medals. Here the judges evaluate them not to punish those who fail, but rather to reward those who succeed. Graduation ceremonies for us illustrate the same truth.

3. In like manner, the Judgment Seat of Christ is that time following the Rapture in which the Lord examines the work of all believers to reward them according to their deeds done for Christ on earth. “The outcome will either be reward or deprivation of reward” (Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 512; cf. Furnish, *2 Cor*., AB, 305). Thus this is a different judgment than that of Romans 2:5-11; Revelation 20:11-15 (Furnish, 277; cf. p. 160).

a. Note that the issue here is *not* evaluating works *for the sake of salvation* since all who will be judged at this event will have already been saved by grace.

b. “With reference to sin, Scripture teaches that the child of God under grace shall not come into judgment (John 3:18; 5:24; 6:37; Rom. 8:1; 1 Cor. 11:32). . . .But with reference to his daily life and service for God, the Christian must give an account before the judgment seat of Christ” (Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 282).

c. Rewards can and will be lost due to faithlessness in this life (2 John 8). For further study consult Samuel L. Hoyt, “The Negative Aspects of the Christian’s Judgment,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 137 (April-June 1980): 129-30.

B. Key Passages

1. “You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we [believers] will all stand before God’s judgment seat…each one of us will give an account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:10, 12).

a. The specific context concerns how we will account for whether we condemned other believers in matters of personal conscience.

b. The more general idea is that we are now responsible as stewards of our natural and spiritual gifts, health, intellectual capacity, time, money, energy, etc.

2. “…[Believers] must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). Good and bad here refers to value, not morality; good works alone are rewarded (Walvoord, *Prophecy Knowledge Handbook*, 467). This “must be read in association with the concept (v. 9) of the Christian being *acceptable* to Christ at the last judgment” (Furnish, 277, emphasis his).

3. The works are distinguished here under the image of being tested by fire (1 Cor. 3:10-15).

a. Worthy/good works (indestructible “gold, silver, costly stones,” v. 12a) empowered by the Spirit and of godly motivation (i.e., the love of Christ) will survive the scrutiny of Jesus Christ and be rewarded (v. 14).

b. Worthless/bad works (destructible “wood, hay, or straw,” v. 12b) are works done in self-effort or with improper motivation. They will fail to convince Christ of their usefulness and will not be rewarded, but the Christian himself will be saved (v. 15).

4. Other passages also refer to believers giving an account to God for rewards (1 Cor. 9:24-27; Eph. 6:8; cf. Matt. 16:27; Luke 14:14).

C. The time of the *bema* of Christ seems to be immediately after the Rapture (adapted from Pentecost, 220-21; but Matt. 16:27 seems to tie in rewards with the Second Coming):

1. Reward is linked with resurrection (Luke 14:14), a part of the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:16).

2. When the church returns to the earth at the Revelation (Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation) it has “fine linen” to wear, which “stands for the righteous acts of the saints” (Rev. 19:8). Thus at this time rewards have already been distributed.

3. Reward is specifically associated with Christ’s return in other texts (1 Cor. 3:13; 4:5; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 22:12).

4. The 24 elders (Rev. 4:4, 10) “who likely represent believers have their crowns in the scene in heaven at the beginning of the Tribulation” (Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 512).

D. The nature of the reward is multifaceted:

1. Rewards are often depicted as crowns (*stephanos* bestowed upon a conqueror or victor):

a. An *incorruptible crown* is granted to those who master their flesh (1 Cor. 9:25).

b. A *crown of hope or joy* is bestowed upon those who bore fruit in others’ lives for Christ (1 Thess. 2:19). This is sometimes called the soul-winner’s crown.

c. A *crown of life* is provided for believers who patiently endure trials (James 1:12).

d. A *crown of righteousness* is given to those longing for Christ’s return (2 Tim. 4:8).

e. A *crown of glory* is rewarded to spiritual shepherds who willingly feed the flock of God (1 Pet. 5:4).

Note: Crowns worn by the twenty-four elders in heaven (Rev. 4:4) will be laid before the Father (v. 10). Those who believe these elders symbolize the church see this action as that of believers who cast them before the throne never to wear them again.

2. Rewards include responsible positions in the millennial kingdom (Matt. 25:21, 23; 1 Cor. 6:2; cf. Rev. 20:4).

3. Rewards ultimately refer to a privileged place in heaven where “His servants shall serve Him” (Rev. 22:3).

**III. The Marriage and Wedding Feast of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9)**

A. Ancient Jewish Marriage Customs Parallels to Eschatology

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | Contract: The groom’s parents paid the bride’s parents a dowry, which became a legal marriage broken only by divorce. | Salvation: The salvation of believers is bought and they are betrothed to Christ. |
| 2. | Betrothal Period (cf. Matt. 1:18f.): A one-year interval between the contract and the consummation assured the bride’s virginity. | Sanctification: Believers are to prepare for their heavenly home with a righteous lifestyle. |
| 3. | Procession (cf. Matt. 25:1-13): Roughly a year later to prove the bride’s virginity (but the exact time unknown to the bride), the groom and his friends went to the bride’s home at night with torches in the streets. The bride and her maidens would return with him to his father’s home. | Rapture: At the Rapture the Bride of Christ (Church) is taken to the Father’s house (heaven). |
| 4. | Supper (cf. John 2:1-12): This feast often went on for days. | Celebration (not a literal feast): The union of the Church to Christ will be celebrated. |

—Adapted from John Walvoord, *Prophecy Knowledge Handbook*, 617 (see also next five pages)

B. Many dispensationalists have taught contrasts in Revelation 19:7-9…

1. Marriage (Wedding) of the Lamb (v. 7): The figure of the marriage between Christ (the bridegroom) and the *Church* (His bride) is well substantiated in Scripture (John 3:29; Rom. 7:4; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-33; Rev. 19:7-8; 21:1—22:7) as a picture of the Rapture—Christ’s return to earth to take the Church to Himself so that the relationship that was pledged might be consummated *in heaven* with the two becoming one (Pentecost, *Things to Come,* 226).

2. Marriage (Wedding) Feast/Supper of the Lamb (v. 9): This is a parabolic picture of the millennial age *on earth* which always relates to *Israel* rather than the Church (Matt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13; Luke 14:16-24). Israel will be invited to the kingdom age during the tribulation period, “which invitation many will reject and so they will be cast out, and many will accept so they will be received in. Because of the rejection the invitation will likewise go to the Gentiles so that many of them will be included. Israel, at the second advent, will be waiting for the Bridegroom to come from the wedding ceremony and invite them to that supper, at which the Bridegroom will introduce His bride to His friends” (Pentecost, 227-28).

C. However, non-dispensationalists disagree with the previous interpretation:

1. Some do not distinguish between the bride and the guests, claiming that both depict the church (Ladd, 250; Mounce, 341; Hendriksen, 181; Charles, ICC, 2:126-29).

2. Some of these also claim that the wedding feast (v. 9) depicts not Israel on earth in the Millennium but saints in heaven in the eternal state (Hendriksen, 180-81; Mounce, 340; Charles, ICC, 2:126-29).

D. So what can be said for sure about this passage?

1. A distinction seems clear between verses 7 and 9 (*contra* Tanner on notes, 78*l*). Although in both cases *gamos* (ga,moj) is used, the NIV translates the two occurrences differently (“wedding,” v. 7 and “wedding supper,” v. 9) because verse 9 adds the word “supper” (dei/pnon). In fact, even *gamos* itself has both uses (BAGD 151c 1b):

a. Marriage/wedding (Heb. 13:4; Jos. *Ant.* 6.210).

b. Wedding celebration/banquet/hall (Matt. 22:2, 10, 11)

Thus the addition of the word “supper” distinguishes the two events that could have otherwise both referred to the supper alone.

2. Since the time span between NT weddings and wedding suppers was minimal (one happened right after the other), it seems forced to place these events with an intervening seven-year gap (*contra* David J. MacLeod, “Heaven’s Hallelujah Chorus: An Introduction to the Seven ‘Last Things’ (Rev. 19:1-10),” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156 (January-March 1999): 80-81; cf. Pentecost’s view on the preceding page). Besides, the wedding is never noted until here at the end of the Tribulation anyway.

a. This may indicate that the “wedding” is not the Rapture but the Second Coming, though one cannot be dogmatic about this (Tanner, 78*l*-78m).

b. On the other hand, ancient Jewish weddings with their suppers often lasted seven days or more, so the entire Tribulation period could be depicted as the wedding and supper but not noted until the end of this time. In this case the wedding would be the Rapture and the supper the Tribulation.

c. Most likely is that the wedding refers to the church rejoicing in heaven during the Tribulation, followed by the supper in the millennium (see below and next four pages).

**The Marriage and Supper of the Lamb**

**How the Wedding and the Feast Differ (Rev. 19)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Symbols*** | Wedding | Feast |
| ***Verse*** | 7 | 9 |
| ***Tense*** | Aorist (past) | Present |
| ***Involvement*** | Church as Bride | Israel as Guests |
| ***Time Period*** | Tribulation | Millennium |
| ***Place*** | Heaven | Earth |
| ***Characteristics*** | Procession, Wedding | Friends invited to Wedding Feast |
| ***Explanation*** | Bride brought to Father’s house | Bride/church introduced to friends/Israel |
| ***Scripture*** | Rom. 7:1-4; 1 Cor. 6:17;  2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:27 | Isa. 25:6-8; Matt. 8:11; 26:29;  Luke 12:35-37 |

Marriage and the Church Timeline

**The Marriage and Supper of the Lamb**

**How the Wedding and the Feast Differ (Rev. 19)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Symbols*** | **Wedding** | **Feast** |
| ***Verse*** | **7** | **9** |
| ***Tense*** | **Aorist (past)** | **Present** |
| ***Involvement*** | **Church as Bride** | **Israel as Guests** |
| ***Time Period*** | **Tribulation**  **(7 years)** | **Millennium**  **(1000 years)** |
| ***Place*** | **Heaven** | **Earth** |
| ***Characteristics*** | **Procession, Wedding** | **Friends invited to**  **Wedding Feast** |
| ***Explanation*** | **Bride brought to Father’s house** | **Bride/church introduced**  **to friends/Israel** |
| ***Scripture*** | **Rom. 7:1-4;**  **1 Cor. 6:17;**  **2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:27** | **Isa. 25:6-8;**  **Matt. 8:11;**  **Matt. 26:29;**  **Luke 12:35-37** |

Marriage and the Church Timeline Endnotes

Jewish Wedding Customs (1 of 2)

Jewish Wedding Customs (2 of 2)

**Practical Implications of the Rapture**

***How should your belief in Christ’s future return change the way you live now?***

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

Knowing that at the Rapture we’ll see Christians who have died prevents us from hopeless grieving.

Once we are with the Lord we’ll *never* be separated from Him—that’s encouraging (vv. 17-18)!

**1 Corinthians 15:35-49**

We’ll receive a new body at the Rapture so we shouldn’t be absorbed with “body worship” now.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-58**

Christ’s return will show that he defeated Satan—this gives us victory over sin now (vv. 54-57).

Our future hope stabilizes us now (v. 58).

Christ’s sure return motivates us to diligent service since it’s not done in vain (v. 58).

**2 Peter 3:1-9**

The more scoffing about His return we hear, the more encouraging this should be for us (vv. 1-4).

The longer it takes for Christ’s return, the more His patience is demonstrated towards us (vv. 8-9)

**2 Peter 3:10-18**

The destruction of all we can see should motivate us to invest in the things we can’t see (vv. 10-13).

The judgment of the earth should motivate holy living (vv. 11, 14).

Knowing the Day of the Lord is coming will give us the wisdom that protects from false teaching (vv. 15-17).

**The Antichrist**

**I. The Post-Rapture Crisis for Leadership**

A. The need for a world leader after the Rapture cannot be overstated.

1. Someone will need to explain the disappearance of millions of Christians.

2. Communications, transportation, economic, and all other systems will be disrupted.

3. The middle-east problem especially will need to be resolved.

B. Difficult times have always set the stage for a strong man to take control. The world scene after the Rapture will be a perfect environment for the Antichrist to gain power.

**II. Names for the Future Fuhrer**

A. The names are many, describing his multifaceted character and the great emphasis placed upon this man in the Bible.

B. List of the names in scriptural order:

Bloody and Deceitful Man Ps. 5:6

Wicked One Ps. 10:2-4

Man of the Earth Ps. 10:18

Mighty Man Ps. 140:1

Assyrian Isa. 10:5-12

King of Babylon Isa. 14:4

Sun of the Morning Isa. 14:12

Spoiler Isa. 16:4-5; Jer. 6:26

Nail Isa. 22:25

Branch of the Terrible Ones Isa. 25:5

Profane Wicked Prince of Israel Ezek. 21:25-27

Little Horn Dan. 7:8

King of Fierce Countenance Dan. 8:23

Prince that shall Come Dan. 9:26

One who causes Desolation Dan. 9:27

Vile Person Dan. 11:21

Willful King Dan. 11:36

Idol Shepherd Zech. 11:16-17

Abomination of Desolation Matt. 24:15

One Coming in His Own Name John 5:43

Man of Sin 2 Thess. 2:3

Man Doomed to Destruction 2 Thess. 2:3

Lawless One 2 Thess. 2:8

Antichrist 1 John 2:18, 22

Angel of the Bottomless Pit Rev. 9:11

Beast from the Abyss/Sea Rev. 11:7; 13:1

[Scarlet] Beast Rev. 17:3, 8, 12

**III. Summary of the Activity of the Future Fuhrer**

A. Peaceful beginning Rev. 6:1-2

B. Makes 7 year treaty with Jews Dan. 9:27a

C. Heads 10 nation confederacy Dan. 7:20

D. Dominated by world church Rev. 17:3-11

E. Dominates world church Rev. 17:12-16

F. Breaks covenant with Israel Dan. 9:27 (midpoint of the Tribulation)

G. Counterfeits death/resurrection Rev. 13:3a

H. Worshiped worldwide Rev. 13:3b-8, 11-15

I. Sets up image for worship 2 Thess. 2:3-4

J. False prophet promotes mark Rev. 13:16-18

K. Two witnesses slain Rev. 11:7

L. Persecutes Jews & Victorious in Israel Dan. 11:40-43

M. Defeated by Christ Rev. 19:11-19

N. Doom in Lake of Fire Rev. 19:20

**IV. The Length of the Tribulation and Antichrist’s Rule (Dan. 9:24-27)**

A. **Context**: Daniel is in exile in Babylon in 539 BC—only three years from the end of the seventy year captivity. Like all Jews he longs to return to Jerusalem.

B. **Outline**: After Daniel sees the nearness of the restoration to the land and confesses Israel’s sin, Gabriel gives him a vision of seventy "sevens" to delineate the completion of the captivity, the coming of Messiah and events preceding His Second Coming.

1. (9:1-2) In 539 BC during the reign of Darius, Daniel discovers from Jeremiad’s prophecy (Jer. 25:11-12) that the exile was to last seventy years (605-536 BC), which is only three years away.

2. (9:3-19) Seeing the nearness of the restoration to the land, Daniel confesses Israel's sins and acknowledges God's faithful judgment but also requests His favor and mercy to restore the temple in Jerusalem for His name's sake.

a. (9:3-11) Seeing the nearness of the restoration to the land, Daniel confesses that Israel has sinned by disobeying the Law of Moses.

b. (9:12-15) Daniel acknowledges that God has faithfully judged His people by subjugating them to Gentiles as He said He would (cf. Deut. 28:48-57, 64-68).

c. (9:16-19) Daniel requests God's favor and mercy to restore the temple in Jerusalem for His name's sake.

3. (9:20-27) Gabriel brings to Daniel God's message of seventy "sevens" (490 years) concerning the completion of the captivity, the coming of Messiah and events preceding the Second Coming of Christ.

a. (9:20-23) Gabriel appears to Daniel while he confesses and petitions God for the restoration and introduces a vision not only of the end of the captivity, but also of the future for Israel.

b. (9:24-27) The vision for Daniel is God's message of seventy "sevens" (490 years) concerning the completion of the captivity, the coming of Messiah and events preceding the Second Coming of Christ.

1) (9:24) Seventy "sevens," or 490 years after the completion of the captivity, are decreed for Israel to embrace Christ's atonement and experience Kingdom blessings at the Second Coming of Christ.

a) (9:24a-c) Israel will *embrace Christ's atonement on the cross at Christ's Second Coming* at the completion of the 490 years, or seventy "sevens" after the completion of the captivity.

1] (9:24a) Israel's sin of disobedience will be brought to an end at Christ's Second Coming when it embraces Him as Messiah and Savior based on His atoning death on the cross.

2] (9:24b) Israel's sin having previously gone unpunished will be punished in Christ as its Substitute so that the nation's sin will be removed when it repents at Christ's Second Coming.

3] (9:24c) Israel's sin of wickedness will be propitiated, or satisfied, by Christ's blood when the nation embraces Christ as Savior at His Second Coming.

b) (9:24d-f) Israel will *experience the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom* at the completion of the 490 years, or seventy "sevens" after the completion of the captivity.

1] (9:24d) Israel's kingdom will be brought in as a righteous age at the completion of the 490 years, or seventy "sevens."

2] (9:24e) Israel's kingdom will completely fulfill all that God spoke through visions and prophecies concerning His covenant with Israel.

3] (9:24f) Israel's kingdom will be inaugurated with the enthronement of Christ as the Holy Ruler [or will be inaugurated with the dedication of the holy, Millennial temple described in Ezekiel 40—46].

2) (9:25-27) The seventy "sevens" include seven "sevens" (49 years), sixty-two "sevens" (434 years) and one "seven" (7 years), from Artaxerxes' decree to rebuild Jerusalem (444 BC) to the end of the Tribulation.

a) (9:25) Sixty-nine "sevens" (483 years) will transpire between Artaxerxes' decree to rebuild Jerusalem (444 BC) and Jesus Christ's presentation to Israel as Messiah at the Triumphal Entry (AD 33).

1] (9:25a) Seven "sevens" (49 years) after Artaxerxes I's decree to completely rebuild Jerusalem (March 5, 444 BC) the rebuilding will be finished (395 BC).

2] (9:25b) Sixty-two "sevens" (483 years) after 395 BC Christ will be officially presented to Israel as Messiah at the Triumphal Entry (March 30, AD 33).

3] (9:25c) Jerusalem will surely be rebuilt with streets and trench, but only amid much opposition (i.e., during Nehemiah’s time).

b) (9:26) After the sixty-two "sevens" (following March 30, AD 33) Christ the Messiah will die, Titus will destroy Jerusalem, and Israel's sufferings will continue in the Church Age until Christ's Second Coming.

1] (9:26a) After the sixty-two "sevens" (following March 30, AD 33) Christ the Messiah will die and have no Messianic kingdom over Israel due to the nation's rejection, thus inaugurating the Church Age.

2] (9:26b) During this intervening period between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks (between AD 33 and Christ's Second Coming) Titus and the Romans will destroy Jerusalem and the temple (AD 70).

Meaning of “the end will come like a flood” (26c)?

3] (9:26c) Israel's sufferings will stretch throughout the Church Age while the nation is set aside from AD 70 until her freedom from Gentile bondage at Christ's Second Coming.

c) (9:27) At the middle of the last "seven" (7 year Tribulation), Antichrist will break his covenant, and replace temple sacrifices with worship of himself until his doom.

1] (9:27a) At the middle of the final "seven" (7 year Tribulation), the Antichrist, Titus’ antitype (cf. 9:26b), will break his seven year covenant by ending the revived Levitical sacrifices and offerings.

2] (9:27b) The False Prophet will set up an image of Antichrist in the temple and force people to worship it, until the end of the Tribulation when both will be cast into the Lake of Fire after the Second Coming.

C. Dispensationalists insist that a “gap” exists between the 69th and 70th “weeks” which is the present church age when God has set aside Israel during the “times of the Gentiles” until the last “week” for Israel resumes at the Tribulation. This issue is of great importance as it touches upon whether the seventieth week still remains future.

1. All non-dispensational interpreters maintain that the weeks follow consecutively. The posttribulation rapturist is one who asserts the historical fulfillment of Daniel's Seventy Sevens. Rose represents this position:

All the evidence of the New Testament, and of Christian experience agree with the greatest teachers of the Christian church that, the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy has all been fulfilled more than 1900 years ago. This leaves no future seventieth week yet to be fulfilled in "the great tribulation after the rapture.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

He therefore maintains that there is no gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks:

If there were "gaps" and "intermissions" the prophecy would be vague, misleading, and deceptive . . . The "62 weeks" joined immediately unto the "7 weeks," and their combined "69 weeks" reached "UNTO MESSIAH." Beyond His birth, but not to his "triumphal entry"; only "UNTO" His public anointing. There was no "gap" between the "69th, and the 70th weeks." . . . The "one week" of prophetic "seventy weeks" began with John the Baptist; from his first public preaching the kingdom of God, the gospel dispensation commenced. These seven years, added to the 483 years, completes the 490 years . . . so that the whole of the prophecy from the times and corresponding events, has been fulfilled to the very letter.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Mauro also objects to a gap in an extended discussion.[[7]](#footnote-7)

2. Support for the "Gap" Interpretation is actually extensive. Although it is the minority view, at least six lines of evidence suggest a separation between the 69th and 70th weeks.[[8]](#footnote-8)

a. It is impossible that the fulfillment of the six prophecies in Daniel 9:24 are historically fulfilled at Christ's first advent. Has Israel finished sinning? Has the nation experienced atonement for her sins or seen everlasting righteousness? Paul still saw this as future for Israel (Rom. 11:25-27). Has vision and prophecy culminated? Also, has the holy of holies been anointed yet?[[9]](#footnote-9) All of these six prophecies remain unfulfilled at the present time.[[10]](#footnote-10) Furthermore, they pertain not to the church but to Israel.

b. The first word of verse 26, "after," indicates a gap. This occurs after the culmination of the sixty-ninth week at the cutting off of Messiah, or following the Triumphal Entry at Christ's crucifixion. Those of the traditional-historical school see Christ's baptism ending the sixty-nine weeks and His death at the middle of the seventieth week. If this were so the text would have read that the cutting off of Messiah would occur "during" or "in the midst of" the seventieth week as verse 27 indicates regarding the cessation of the sacrifices.

c. While the idea of gaps may seem strange to the 21st century mind, this was not true of the Jewish mindset. For example, Isaiah 61:1-2 records the two advents of Christ in a single context. Christ quoted the portion of this passage relating to His first advent in Luke 4:18-19, thus revealing that a separation of many years appears. Concerning the Jewish mindset Gundry notes, "The possibility of a gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks is established by the well-accepted OT phenomenon of prophetic perspective, in which gaps such as that between the first and second advents were not perceived."[[11]](#footnote-11)

d. The person who confirms the covenant in Daniel 9:27 cannot be Christ.[[12]](#footnote-12) The "He" in this verse looks back at "the prince who is to come" in the previous verse (Titus in AD 70) as its antecedent. Also, as has been already noted previously, if Christ is the confirmer of the covenant, then what covenant did He confirm and then break?

e. As already noted, since Christ's death did not "put an end to sacrifice and offering" (Dan. 9:27), a gap must exist between these two events. The Jews continued the sacrificial system until God stopped their abhorrent practice with Titus' destruction of the temple.

f. Comparisons with parallel prophecies also reveal the existence of a gap. (1) Our Lord declared in Matthew 24:15 that the abomination of desolation will occur *after* His earthly ministry. (2) The wicked person of Daniel 9:27 has striking parallels with the future wicked man described in Daniel 7:25; Revelation 12, 13, 19. (3) The events of the second half of the seventieth week (Dan. 9:27b) correlate with those of the latter half of the future Tribulation period described in Revelation 13:4, 6, 12, 14-15.

3. Therefore, there are sufficient reasons to establish the existence of a separation between the 69th and 70th weeks. Since these weeks are not consecutive it may now be determined what is referred to by the end of the 69 weeks.

D. The end of the 69 weeks is given in Daniel 9:25, which is the most remarkable prophecy of all time. The prophecy was given shortly before 539 BC and predicted two dates. One date was a royal decree nearly 100 years from that time (March 5, 444 BC) and the second date was 483 years later on the *very day* of Christ’s official presentation to Israel at the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (March 30, AD 33)! This is substantiated on the following three charts (please see the next page):

Ludwigson, 49

Hoehner’s and Pentecost’s Daniel 9 charts

**Daniel’s Seventy Weeks**

Clarence Larkin, *Dispensational Truth*, © 1920

**Daniel and Revelation Compared**

Clarence Larkin, *Dispensational Truth*, © 1920

**Summary of Views on Daniel 9:24-27**



**Evaluating Views on Daniel 9:24-27**

(Correlate with page 86b and a more detailed chart in J. Barton Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament*, 250-52)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Historical** | | **Futuristic** | |
|  | **Critical** | **Messianic** | **Symbolic** | **Premillennial** |
| Who’s decree begins the 70 “sevens” (v. 25)? | Jeremiah (Jer. 25:11), referring to 605 BC or 586 BC (better) | Cyrus (538 BC) or Artaxerxes’ 1st decree (457 BC, Ezra) | Cyrus  (538 BC) | Artaxerxes’ 2nd decree  (444 BC, Nehemiah) |
| When do the 70 “sevens” end (v. 27)? | Temple Rededication (164 BC) | Stephen’s death and Paul’s call (AD 33) | Rapture of the Church (no 7 yr. Tribulation) | Christ’s return after the Tribulation |
| Who is the “Anointed One” and when does he “come” (vv. 25-27)? | Cyrus (538 BC) in v. 25 but Joshua the High Priest (457 BC) in v. 26 | Christ at His baptism  (AD 26) | Christ at His baptism  (AD 26) | Christ at His triumphal entry  (AD 33) |
| Who destroys the city and the Temple (v. 26)? | Antiochus Epiphanes desecrates the Temple | Titus destroys Jerusalem and the Temple (AD 70) | Antichrist destroys the visible Church | Titus destroys Jerusalem and the Temple (AD 70) |
| Is there a gap between the 69th and 70th “7”? | No | No | No | Yes |
| Who makes covenant/ ends sacrifice (v. 27)? | Antiochus Epiphanes (170-164 BC) | Christ  (AD 26-33) | Antichrist | Antichrist (as antitype of Titus) |
| What’s the covenant? | (Noncommittal view) | New Covenant | Covenant of terror | Peace with Jews |
| With whom is the covenant confirmed (who are the “many”)? | Jerusalem Jews tired of Hellenistic (Greek) rule | Disciples at the Last Supper (extended to the church) | The Gentile masses who follow the Antichrist | End-time Jews (who are “[Daniel’s] people,” v. 24) |
| What is “the end to sacrifice” (v. 27)? | Offering a pig on the Temple altar | Christ’s death | Antichrist overthrows Church’s worship | Antichrist stops future Tribulation sacrifices |
| Who causes the desolation’s (v. 27b)? How? | Antiochus sets up a pagan emblem on the temple porch | Titus destroys Jerusalem and the Temple (AD 70) | Antichrist’s idols—materialism, goals, paradise w/o God, etc. | Antichrist insists that the Jews worship his image (Rev. 13:14-15) |
| Problems | • Says prophecy is a forgery after the fact  • Inconsistent identity of the Anointed One (vv. 25, 26)  • Antiochus made no covenant with Jews  • Antiochus did not destroy the city or temple (desecrated it only) and Jesus saw this as future (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14)  • The city was *ruined*  in 586, not *rebuilt* as required by v. 25  • 538 to 170 BC is only 369 yrs. (not the required 62 x 7 = 434) —65 years off target  • Accuses Daniel of mathematical errors | • Inconsistent use of the word “seven” (in 538 BC reckoning)  • Christ didn’t make a covenant in AD 26  • Christ’s death didn’t end sacrifices—they continued to AD 70  • See “abomination” as AD 70 but before “week” of AD 26-33  • A 7 yr. period re: Christ does not exist  • Not 7 yrs. between Christ’s death and AD 70, so v. 27 not fulfilled literally  • Rev. 13:5, 14-15 (written AD 95) are future fulfillment  • “He” (v. 27) looks back to Titus as antecedent (v. 26b), not to Christ (v. 26a) | • Why all the specific “sevens” if each is indefinite—not years?  • “City and sanctuary” are allegorized to be the Church  • Daniel’s people (Israel) is addressed, not the church/masses  • Stretches it to call “sacrifice & offering” the Church’s worship  • Overlapping of the 62 “sevens” and 70th “sevens” improbable  • Francisco’s teaching that Jerusalem has not yet been destroyed and that the present age is the last half-week denies history and allegorizes the text | Support:  • The decree of 444 BC is the best date since it included both the city and walls (cf. Neh. 2:3, 5, 8)  • Employs 360-day (lunar) years of the Jewish calendar but still works with the Gregorian and even astronomical calendar  • Deals fairly with a gap “after the 62 sevens” (v. 26)  • Allows a literal fulfillment of vv. 24, 27—neither of which is presently fulfilled  • Considers v. 27 as future in line with Dan. 7:25; Rev. 12, 13, 19 |
| Advocates | Montgomery (ICC), Hartman & DiLella (AB), F. F. Bruce (but he notes future significance too) | E. J. Young, Pusey, J. Barton Payne | Leupold, Keil, McComisky, Francisco, *Review & Expositor* 57 (April 1960): 126-37 | Hoehner, Anderson, Walvoord, Whitcomb, Archer (but he says 457 BC—AD 27 for the 69 “sevens”) |
| Perspective | Liberal  critical | Conservative  amil or premil | Conservative amillennial | Conservative  premillennial |

† Due to varying opinions even within each of the four views, the chart mostly reflects opinions of their first advocate.

Survey of Views on Daniel’s Seventy Weeks Prophecy (Tanner)

**Daniel’s Seventieth Week**

**Times of the Gentiles**

cf. OTS, 548

**The Purposes & Names of the Tribulation**

If God is a God of love, then why must there be a time of great tribulation on the earth?

1. To Judge the Nations: God is a God of justice as well as a God of love. His wrath must be shown to demonstrate Him to be consistent with His balanced character (e.g., Zeph. 1:15; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 11:18; 15:1; 16:1).

### This will be a period when God gives those who killed His people the fruits of their sin (Rev. 6:11; cf. Ps. 2:5; Jer. 25:30-32; Zech. 12:3; 2 Thess. 2:12; Rev. 3:10; 6:15).

1. God has always judged sin and does so at the present, so this period is not out of line with His actions in the past (Rom. 1:18-20).

2. To Discipline Israel: Israel will need a time of difficulty to turn her heart to the Lord in order to fulfill the prophecies of the nation’s restoration in repentance (Deut. 30:1-3; Isa. 1:25; 4:2-4, etc.; cf. p. 119c point D).

3. To Save Israel: God’s mercy will be shown to Israel by saving her after this time of trouble.

* Jer. 30:7 refers to the “time of Jacob’s trouble” that will lead to national salvation.
* Dan. 11:36-45 shows how God will miraculously save Israel from the attacks of Antichrist.

4. To Establish the Millennial Kingdom: The Tribulation will end with the elimination of the kingdoms of this world so they can be replaced with Christ’s kingdom (Dan. 7:17-18; cf. Rev. 17-18 removes Babylon before Rev. 19-20 sets up Christ’s reign).

***The various names for this period of time reveal some of God’s purposes:***

•ª “Day” or “Day of the LORD”—Isa. 30:23-25; 34:1-8; 35:1-10; Joel 2:28-32; 3:1-21; Zeph. 3:8, 16-20; Zech. 14:1-21)

• “Tribulation”—Deut. 4:30; Matt. 24:9, 21, 29; Rev. 7:14

• “Time of Jacob’s trouble”—Jer. 30:7

• “Wrath of God”—Zeph. 1:15; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 11:18; 15:1; 16:1

• “Seven”—Dan. 9:27

**The Tribulation in the Book of Revelation**

**Chart of Revelation**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sovereignty of Christ in Future Victory** | | | | | | | | |
| **Sovereignty**  **in Person** | | | **Sovereignty**  **over Churches** | **Sovereignty**  **in End-Time Events** | | | | |
| **Chapter 1** | | | **Chapters 2—3** | **Chapters 4—22** | | | | |
| **“What you have seen” (1:19a)** | | | **“What is now”**  **(1:19b)** | **“What will take place later”**  **(1:19c)** | | | | |
| **Past** | | | **Present** | **Future** | | | | |
| **Christ Unveiled** | | | **Churches Unveiled** | **Consummation Unveiled** | | | | |
| **God**  **on Earth** | | | **God’s Ambassadors**  **on Earth** | **Hell on Earth to**  **Heaven on Earth** | | | | |
| **The Judge** | | | **The Assignments** | **The Judgments & Rewards** | | | | |
| Subject  1:1-13 | Worship of Trinity  1:4-8 | Glorified Christ  1:9-20 | Seven Churches of Asia:  Ephesus  Smyrna  Pergamum  Thyatira  Sardis  Philadelphia  Laodicea | Tribulation  4:1—19:10 | Second Coming  19:11-21 | Millennium  20 | Eternal State  21:1—22:5 | Closing: Imminency  22:6-21 |
| **Island of Patmos (c. AD 95)** | | | | | | | | | |

**Key Word: Triumph**

**Key Verse: “Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now, and what will take place later” (Rev. 1:19).**

**Summary Statement: God discloses through John the *sovereignty of Jesus Christ* in His ultimate future triumph to encourage believers to *persevere despite internal compromise and external opposition.***

**Application: Does your life show that you’re on the winning team? Do your goals, values, and disposition show that you represent the Victor of the World?**

**Survey of the Book of Revelation**

**Introduction**

**I. Title** The word "revelation" in the Greek title ( jApokavluyi" jIwavnnou` *Apocalypse of John*) also means "disclosure" (BAGD 92), being the noun form of the verb (ajpokaluvptw) meaning to "uncover, reveal" (BAGD 92). This prophecy is designed to unveil the person, power, and program of Jesus Christ (1:1).

#### II. Authorship

A. External Evidence: Nearly all orthodox Christians since the first century have held that the Apostle John wrote Revelation. These include earliest witnesses such as Justin Martyr in Ephesus (*Dialogue* 81; *ca.* AD 130) and Irenaeus in Gaul (*Against Heresies*; *ca.* AD 185). Also citing Johannine authorship were Tertullian, Hippolytus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen (Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 11-14; Guthrie, 934-35).

However, some writers have affirmed that the author was not the Apostle John. Dionysius of Alexandria (*ca.* AD 264) questioned apostolic authorship based upon linguistic, stylistic, and theological differences between Revelation and the Gospel of John (Guthrie, 935-36). Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.39.4) affirmed that the author was a certain John the Elder. Erasmus, Luther, and Zwingli denied Johannine authorship because Revelation teaches a literal 1000-year reign of Christ (Walvoord, *BKC*, 2:925). R. H. Charles also proposed a John the Prophet. One modern scholar even suggests that John the Baptist authored the book (J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: The Anchor Bible*, 28-37).

*Response:* Nearly all early church fathers held to John's authorship. They saw differences between the Apocalypse and Gospel as negligible and also believed in a literal millennium.

B. Internal Evidence: The author simply calls himself John (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8), a servant of Jesus Christ (1:1). The lack of any further qualification indicates that he maintains great authority, and several characteristics of the book suggest that this John is the Apostle John, the brother of James and son of Zebedee (Guthrie, 936-40):

1. He knows the history of the Asiatic churches and is known by them simply as John (chs. 2–3).

2. Most apocalyptic works took the name of an honored ancient man (e.g., Enoch, Ezra), but John prophesies in his own name conscious of divine inspiration (1:1, 11, 19; 10:10; 12:6-9).

3. Both the Synoptics (Mark 3:17) and Revelation (2:9; 3:9; chs. 13—14) depict John as of a stormy disposition as a “son of thunder.”

4. Common ideas (e.g., use of contrast), theology, and terminology (e.g., *logos* in John 1:1; Rev. 19:13) exist between the Gospel of John and Revelation.

**III. Circumstances**

A. Date: The traditional view dates the book about AD 95 during the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian (AD 81-96). John was banished to the small island of Patmos about seventy miles southwest of Ephesus in the Aegean Sea (1:9) and the earliest and weightiest evidence attests to this date in Irenaeus (*Against Heresies* 5.30.3; cf. Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius). Other arguments in favor of this view are the imperial persecutions for refusing Emperor worship (the Beast in 13:4, 15; 14:9-11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4) and the spiritual decline in the churches.

However, dates in the latter part of the reign of Nero (AD 66-68) or during the reign of Vespasian (AD 70-80) have also been proposed, but with little evidence (Guthrie, 958-61). Also, the early church father Papias stated that John was martyred with his brother James in AD 44 (Acts 12:1; Walvoord, *BKC*, 2:925; Guthrie, 945). However, the stronger tradition argues that he lived to a ripe old age at Ephesus, which also better fits the data in the book.

B. Recipients: The immediate destination of the prophecy is the seven churches of the Roman province of Asia (1:4, 11; chs. 2–3), but the reoccurring phrase "hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (plural) indicates that these churches were only representative of a much wider Christian audience. This is supported by the fact that the seven churches were neither the only ones in the province nor the largest, as the small towns of Thyatira and Philadelphia could not compare in civic importance with Troas (Acts 20:7f.), Hierapolis and Colosse (Col. 2:1; 4:13, 16). W. M. Ramsey in *The Letters to the Seven Churches* (1901) supposed that a circular road connected the seven churches in the exact order they appear in chapters 2–3, which remains the best explanation why these churches were chosen as the means to distribute the prophecy to all the churches.

C. Occasion: The end of the first century saw serious compromise by many churches (esp. Ephesus, Laodicea) and severe testing from the Roman government. Therefore, John wrote a message of hope describing the ultimate victory of Christ to counteract compromise from within and to encourage perseverance in the midst of hostility from without. As readers see the final future triumph of Christ over evil they can gain confidence for the present.

**IV. Characteristics**

A. Revelation is the climax of Biblical revelation, bringing to completion the many prophecies of both testaments and providing numerous prophecies of its own. It closes prophecy with a warning that is characteristic of no other book (22:18-19).

B. The second coming of Christ and the seven years preceding it are more graphically described here than in any other book of the Bible.

C. The book contains more symbolic, representative language than any inspired writing.

D. Revelation is the only New Testament book that was written in response to a direct command from the Lord (1:10-11, 19).

E. This prophecy completes our scriptural understanding about Jesus Christ by including more about His glory than even the Gospels!

F. This book contains more allusions to the Old Testament (250-550 allusions) than any New Testament writing, yet has few quotes (1:7 quotes Zech. 12:10; 2:27 quotes Ps. 2:9).

G. Revelation alone provides its own inspired outline within the text itself (1:19):

1. Past: "what you have seen" (1:9-20)

2. Present: "what is now" (chs. 2—3)

3. Future: "what will take place later" (chs. 4—22)

H. Revelation is the only New Testament book that deals primarily with the future.

I. This is the only book in the Bible that promises a special blessing for reading it (1:3).

J. Revelation is the only book written by John that bears his name (1:1, 4, 9).

K. Revelation has more interpretive views than any NT writing (cf. pp. 10a-j). The four major views are (moving from the most radical/non-literal to the most conservative/literal):

1. The **allegorical** (idealist) approach interprets the book as a non-literal, non-historical (timeless) depiction of the triumph of good (God) over evil (Satan). It was most popular during the prominence of the Alexandrian school of theology in the third and fourth centuries but also finds support from modern liberals and evangelicals such as Beale, Hendiksen, and Hughes.

Response: This view ignores the historical context, fails to see that symbols represent real things, has no objective guideline, and contradicts the book's inspired outline in 1:19.

2. The **preterist** view argues that chapters 2–19 are past, being fulfilled in the early history of the church (e.g., during the time of Nero, Domitian, the AD 476 fall of Rome, etc.). Most German scholars, Ellicott, and Peak favor this view. Current advocates include Jay Adams, Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., George P. Holford, Gary DeMar, Jessie E. Mills, Jr., Don Preston, and Ed Stevens (see p. 351b in my NT Survey notes).

Response: When were the terrible judgments of chapters 6–19 already fulfilled? When in history has there been 100-pound hailstones (16:21) or an army of 200 million (9:16)?

3. The **historicist** view says chapters 4–19 occurred between Christ's first and second advents as a symbolic depiction of the church age, which is also depicted in chapters 2–3. Thus the book is seen to depict Western Europe through various Popes, the Reformation, the French Revolution, and leaders such as Charlemagne and Mussolini. This view was advanced by Luther, Ellul, Isaac Newton, and Elliott and now is held by most amillennial or postmillennial advocates.

Response: This view must spiritualize the 1000-year millennium and literal events. This subjective interpretation of symbols has led to much disagreement in this camp.

4. The **futurist** interpretation insists that events in chapters 4–22 are not yet fulfilled but will take place only after the church age. This includes the Tribulation (chs. 4–18) during the last seven years prior to Christ's second coming (ch. 19), after which follows the Millennium and Great White Throne Judgment (ch. 20) and finally the creation of the New Heavens and New Earth (chs. 21–22). It too emphasizes God’s final victory. Advocates include Ladd, Mounce, Pate, Hamstra, Walvoord, Thomas, Johnson, Pentecost, Ryrie, Thomas Ice, and Hal Lindsey.

Response: The futurist perspective best correlates with the nature of the events predicted in the prophecy (i.e., takes them at face value) and this method follows the inspired outline of 1:19. It is the approach employed in the following argument and outline.

**Summary of Interpretations on the Book of Revelation**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **View** | **Millennial View** | Rev. 1–3 | **Rev. 4–19** | **Rev. 20–22** |
| **Idealist**  Beale  Hendriksen  Hughes | Postmillennial (or Amillennial) | Historic Churches | Symbolic of the non-historical conflict between good and evil | Victory of good over evil (Church over the world) |
| **Preterist**  Sweete  Ellicott  DeMar | Apocalyptic | Historic Churches | Symbolic of Events in First Century (Nero, Mt. Vesuvius eruption) | Symbolic of heaven and victory |
| **Historicist**  Luther  Newton  Elliott | Amillennial (or Postmillennial) | Historic Churches | Symbolic of events in the Church Age (fall of Rome, rise of Islam & Catholics, Reformation, etc.) | Present age (amil) or future millennium (postmil), General judgment, heaven |
| **Futurist**  Thomas  Walvoord  Ryrie  Ladd | Premillennial | Historic Churches &/or seven stages of church history | Future Tribulation judgments on apostate church and Antichrist, return of Christ | Future millennium, judgment, heaven |

Adapted from H. Wayne House, *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament, 17*

**Argument**

The Gospel writers provide only a limited picture of Jesus Christ as they depict His deity, life, authority, death, and resurrection almost entirely in veiled form (cf. Phil. 2:5-8). The Book of Revelation removes this veil and clearly demonstrates the sovereignty of Jesus Christ in His future final triumph as Lord of Lords and King of Kings. John records this triumph to encourage believers undergoing external opposition (Roman persecution) and internal compromise (deterioration within the churches) to give them hope.

As already mentioned, Revelation 1:19 provides an inspired outline of the entire prophecy which begins with John's past vision of Christ's sovereignty (1:9-20), continues with a present description of Christ's sovereign authority over the seven churches (chs. 2–3), and concentrates the bulk of the prophecy upon the future triumph of Christ over Satan and evil (chs. 4–22).

**Synthesis**

**Sovereignty of Christ in future victory**

**1 Sovereignty in vision**

1:1-3 Subject

1:4-8 Worship of Trinity

1:9-20 Glorified Christ

**2—3 Sovereignty over churches**

2:1-7 Ephesus (Busy yet Backslidden)

2:8-11 Smyrna (Suffering yet Steadfast)

2:12-17 Pergamum (Continuing yet Compromising)

2:18-29 Thyatira (Involved yet Immoral)

3:1-6 Sardis (Distinguished yet Dead)

3:7-13 Philadelphia (Mistreated yet Missions-Minded)

3:14-22 Laodicea (Luxurious yet Lukewarm)

**4—22 Sovereignty in end-time events**

4:1—19:10 Tribulation

4:1—8:5 First half

4—5 Christ's heavenly position

4 Throne

5 Scroll

6:1—8:5 Seals

6 #1-6

7 (Saved Jews/Gentiles) () = Parenthetical information in which

8:1-5 #7 the chronology is not carried forward

8:6—19:10 Second half

8:6—11:19 Trumpets

8:6—9:21 #1-6

10:1—11:14 (Saved protected/unsaved judged, 2 witnesses)

11:15-19 #7

12—14 (Satan's activity, etc.)

12—13 Satan/agents

14 144,000 triumph

15—16 Bowls #1-7

17:1—19:10 (Babylon)

19:11-21 Second Coming

20 Millennium, Satan's Doom, Great White Throne

21:1—22:5 Eternal State

22:6-21 Conclusion: coming imminent

**Outline**

**Summary Statement for the Book**

**God discloses through John the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, whose ultimate future triumph encourages perseverance among believers struggling with internal compromise and external opposition.**

**I. (Ch. 1) God discloses through John the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, the subject of His prophecy, to encourage believers with Christ's ability to handle internal compromise in the Church and external opposition to the Church.**

A. (1:1-3) John's prologue identifies the subject of the divinely given prophecy as an unveiling of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ and encourages its application by promising blessing upon those who obey it.

1. (1:1-2) The subject of the book, the sovereignty of Jesus Christ shown in the unveiling of future events which will rapidly take place, is transmitted from the Father to Jesus Christ to an angel (Gabriel?) to John to other believers in order to establish the divine inspiration for the prophecy.

2. (1:3) In order to encourage application of the prophecy, those who read, hear, and obey it are promised a special blessing from God since from His perspective the period covered by the book is near.

B. (1:4-8) John addresses seven churches in Asia and worships the triune God, especially Christ as the soon-to-come sovereign Ruler, to exhort his readers to watch for His return.

1. (1:4-6) John addresses seven churches in Asia as his original readers and worships Christ as Ruler of the world and Redemptive Resurrected Revealer of the prophecy to remind them of His sovereign authority over their lives.

2. (1:7) John cites Christ's second coming in fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10 as the main feature of his following prophecy and as a exhortation to look for His coming.

3. (1:8) John quotes God the Father who is Lord of time to demonstrate His ability to bring all the promises of the prophecy to pass.

C. (1:9-20) John relates his Patmos vision of the glorified Jesus Christ to substantiate Christ's ability to handle the Church's internal and external problems and to reveal the threefold outline of the book.

1. (1:9-11) Christ commands the exiled John on Patmos to prophesy to the seven churches of Asia to reveal Christ's sovereignty.

2. (1:12-16) John relates his vision of the glorified Jesus Christ to substantiate Christ's ability to handle the Church's internal and external problems.

3. (1:17-20) In response to the vision John is comforted, instructed to record the outline of the prophecy, and shown Christ's authority over the seven churches as an introduction to the letters to these churches.

a. (1:17-18) John is terrified at the presence of the glorified Christ but Jesus comforts him with His divine attributes.

b. (1:19) Christ commands John to record the threefold inspired outline of His prophecy: the vision which he had just seen (cf. 1:9-20), the present authority of Christ over the churches (cf. chs. 2—3), and the future events before, during, and after Christ's return (cf. chs. 4—22).

c. (1:20) Christ shows His authority over the churches when He reveals that the stars in His hand represent the seven churches and that the lampstands represent their witness for Christ in a spiritually dark world.

**II. (Chs. 2—3) John records seven letters to selected churches in Asia which demonstrate the sovereignty of Jesus Christ as an encouragement to these believers struggling with internal compromise.**

A. (2:1-7) Christ tells John to write the believers in Ephesus to commend their service and perseverance in God's truth and to exhort them to rekindle their former love for Christ (Busy Yet Backsliding: Apostolic Age).

For a discussion of whether the seven churches actually reflect seven ages of church history, see Robert L. Thomas, “The Chronological Interpretation of Revelation 2–3,” *BibSac* 124 (1967): 321-31; James L. Boyer, “Are the Seven Letters of Revelation 2–3 Prophetic?” *Grace Theological Journal* 6:2 (Fall 1985): 267-73.

1. (2:1a) Destination

2. (2:1b) Description of Christ

3. (2:2-3) Commendation

4. (2:4) Rebuke

5. (2:5a) Exhortation

6. (2:5b-6) Warning

7. (2:7) Promise

B. (2:8-11) Christ tells John to write the believers in Smyrna to commend their suffering and poverty from Satanic attack and to exhort them to fearless and faithful suffering (Suffering Yet Steadfast: AD 100-313 when Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire)

1. (2:8a) Destination

2. (2:8b) Description of Christ

3. (2:9) Commendation

4. (absent) Rebuke

5. (2:10a) Exhortation

6. (2:10b) Warning

7. (2:10c-11) Promise

C. (2:12-17) Christ tells John to write the believers in Pergamum to commend their faithfulness despite Satanic attack and to exhort them to reject false teaching in the church (Continuing Yet Compromising: AD 313-Just Before Middle Ages)

1. (2:12a) Destination

2. (2:12b) Description of Christ

3. (2:13) Commendation

4. (2:14-15) Rebuke

5. (2:16a) Exhortation

6. (2:16b) Warning

7. (2:17) Promise

D. (2:18-29) Christ tells John to write the believers in Thyatira to commend the properly motivated, persevering service of some and to exhort the others to repent of immorality (Involved Yet Immoral: Middle Ages)

1. (2:18a) Destination

2. (2:18b) Description of Christ

3. (2:19) Commendation

4. (2:20-21) Rebuke

5. (2:22-23) Warning

6. (2:24-25) Exhortation

7. (2:27-29) Promise

E. (3:1-6) Christ tells John to write the believers in Sardis to commend their reputation for good deeds and to exhort them to rekindle their obedience to what they had been taught (Distinguished Yet Dead: Catholic Church during the Reformation-late 1700's)

1. (3:1a) Destination

2. (3:1b) Description of Christ

3. (3:1c) Commendation

4. (3:1d) Rebuke

5. (3:2-3a) Exhortation

6. (3:3b) Warning

7. (3:4-6) Promise

F. (3:7-13) Christ tells John to write the believers in Philadelphia to commend their endurance in evangelism despite opposition and to encourage them to persevere for reward (Mistreated Yet Missions-Minded: Modern Missionary Era [1795-early 1900's]).

1. (3:7a) Destination

2. (3:7b) Description of Christ

3. (3:8) Commendation

4. (absent) Rebuke

5. (absent) Warning

6. (3:9-11a) Promise

7. (3:11b) Exhortation

8. (3:12-13) Promise

G. (3:14-22) Christ tells John to condemn the believers in Laodicea for their materialistic, selfish lifestyle so that they might repent and embrace Christ's Lordship in self-sacrifice (Luxurious Yet Lukewarm: Modern Materialistic Church).

1. (3:14a) Destination

2. (3:14b) Description of Christ

3. (absent) Commendation

4. (3:15-17) Rebuke

5. (3:18-20) Exhortation

6. (absent) Warning

7. (3:21-22) Promise

**III.(Chs. 4—22) John records future end-time events which demonstrate the sovereignty and final triumph of Jesus Christ as an encouragement to believers struggling with external opposition.**

A. (4:1—19:10) Prophecies of the Tribulation period are carefully detailed with greater emphasis placed upon its second half (the Great Tribulation), which demonstrates the sovereignty of Christ who alone is worthy to judge the world.

1. (4:1—8:5) The first half of the Tribulation is recorded briefly to depict Christ's sovereignty over Antichrist during this peaceful period.

a. (Chs. 4—5) An introduction to the judgments of the Tribulation is given depicting Christ's heavenly position in order to demonstrate the sovereignty of Christ who alone is worthy to judge the world.

1) (Ch. 4) The awesome heavenly throne is described in detail to indicate the greatness of God (and therefore of Christ also) who dwells there.

2) (Ch. 5) The Lamb (Jesus Christ) alone is shown worthy to break the seals and open the scroll, thus demonstrating His sovereignty to judge the world.

b. (6:1—8:5) Christ opens seven seals of judgment to reveal His sovereign authority to judge the world.

1) (6:1-2) Christ opens the first seal (white horse) which allows the Antichrist to conquer the world through his world government and covenant with Israel (cf. Dan. 9:27) to show Christ's sovereignty over him.

Note: Many have identified this horseman as Jesus Christ (Elwell, *ECB*, 1209-10; Hendriksen, 94-96; Hodges, *Bib Sac* [1962]: 324-34) due to similarities with the second advent (Rev. 19:11-16) and the white colour (1:14; 2:17; 3:4, 5, 18). However, white does not always depict what is holy (Matt. 23:27; Acts 23:3) and thus may indicate that the rider only deceptively seeks to *appear* holy (cf. Matt. 24:5; crowns, 12:3; victories, 11:7; 13:7). Also, the only thing common to the riders of 6:2 and 19:11-16 is the white colour. They differ in their purposes (conquest vs. righteous retribution), equipment (bow vs. sword), names (anonymous vs. “Faithful and True”), fellow riders (none vs. armies of heaven), apparel (crown vs. wreath), time (beginning vs. end of the tribulation), and context (association with other evil riders vs. conquering the Antichrist). For details on these points, see Daniel K. K. Wong, “The First Horseman of Revelation 6,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153 (April-June 1996): 212-26.

2) (6:3-4) The second seal (red horse) brings war to depict how Antichrist controls the world as political leader.

3) (6:5-6) The third seal (black horse) allows Antichrist to use famine to control commodity prices to show his global economic control.

4) (6:7-8) The fourth seal (pale horse) affirms that death will come to over one billion people by war, famine, plague, or roaming wild beasts.

5) (6:9-11) The fifth seal depicts God's reassurance of martyrs in heaven that He alone is sovereign and they should trust in His plan.

6) (6:12-17) The sixth seal reveals that men will fear a glimpse of Sovereign God more than an earthquake leveling mountains and the opening of the sky!

7) (7:1-17) A parenthesis between the sixth and seventh seals provides hope that God will be merciful even in judgment by saving believing Jews and Gentiles from every nation.

a) (7:1-8) The sealing of 144,000 Jews composed of 12,000 from each tribe is described to show God's mercy even during the Tribulation.

b) (7:9-17) The salvation of Gentiles from every nation indicates God's merciful fulfillment of the Great Commission during the Tribulation.

8) (8:1-5) The seventh seal has no specific judgment connected with it as it introduces the trumpet judgments in response to the prayer for vindication by the Tribulation martyrs (6:10).

2. (8:6—19:10) The second half of the Tribulation (the Great Tribulation) is recorded in trumpet and bowl judgments with supplementary information to demonstrate Christ's sovereignty over the entire earth, its religions, and its political powers.

a. (8:6—11:19) Angels sound seven trumpets of judgment to reveal Christ's sovereign authority to judge the world.

1) (8:6-7) The first trumpet burns up one third of the earth's vegetation by hail and fire.

2) (8:8-9) The second trumpet destroys one third of the sea creatures and ships by a huge fiery object which turns one third of the salt water seas into blood.

3) (8:10-11) The third trumpet kills many people through the pollution of one third of the fresh water caused by the falling of Wormwood, a blazing star.

4) (8:12) The fourth trumpet causes partial darkness from the striking of a third of the sun, moon, and stars.

5) (8:13) An eagle warns of the seriousness of the last three trumpet blasts by calling them woes as they affect man directly (in contrast to the first four trumpets which destroy man's resources).

6) (9:1-12) The fifth trumpet (woe #1) releases terrible, supernatural locust-like creatures to torment only non-Christians for five months.

7) (9:13-21) The sixth trumpet (woe #2) releases terrible, supernatural horse-and-rider creatures from the Euphrates which slay one third of earth, yet the people still living cling to idols rather than repent.

8) (10:1—11:14) A parenthesis between the sixth and seventh trumpets affirms that Tribulation believers will have God's protection while unbelievers receive His wrath.

a) (Ch. 10) An angel reveals to John undisclosed judgments and has him eat a little scroll to signify the sweetness of God's Word to believers protected from judgment and its bitterness to unbelievers experiencing His wrath.

b) (11:1-14) Two witnesses will prophesy and destroy their enemies for three and one half years, be martyred and resurrected before their enemies, then 7,000 enemies will die in an earthquake.

9) (11:15-19) The seventh trumpet (woe #3) has no specific judgment connected with it as it introduces the seven bowl judgments.

b. (Chs. 12—14) A parenthesis between the trumpet and bowl judgments provides additional information about Satan's activity and previews the final judgments to assure believers of their triumph and of the unbelievers' judgment.

1) (Chs. 12—13) A supplement on Satan and his activity to thwart God in the Tribulation gives insight into Israel's persecution and how believers at that time should respond.

a) (Ch. 12) The activity of Satan himself provides insight into Israel's persecution as he unsuccessfully seeks to destroy Israel and Christ.

1] (12:1-2) Israel, in the sign of a pregnant woman, travails to bring Jesus Christ into the world as a man.

2] (12:3-4) Satan and his demons, in the sign of a dragon with stars, unsuccessfully seek to destroy the infant Jesus.

3] (12:5-6) Jesus escapes Satan in His ascension to await His Millennial rule while Israel is protected during the last three and one half years of the Tribulation.

4] (12:7-21) Satan is cast from heaven where he accuses the saints and unsuccessfully seeks to destroy Israel in the Great Tribulation.

b) (Ch. 13) The activity of Satan's agents (the Antichrist and False Prophet) is given to enable readers of the Tribulation Period to identify these men and respond properly.

1] (13:1-10) Antichrist, represented by the beast out of the sea, gains a worldwide following by unbelievers through Satanic power and persecutes Christians.

2] (13:11-18) The False Prophet, represented by the beast out of the earth, glorifies the Antichrist and persecutes Christians who lack the mark of the Antichrist.

2) (Chs. 14) The triumph of the 144,000 and the judgment of Antichrist and his system are previewed to prepare for the judgments at the end of the Tribulation in chapters 15-17.

a) (14:1-5) The triumph of the 144,000 Jews who escape martyrdom in the Tribulation anticipates Christ's triumph at His Second Coming.

b) (14:6-13) Three angels shout warnings to fear God by rejecting the mark of Antichrist since his system is doomed to encourage believers still living to wait patiently and faithfully for Christ's return.

c) (14:14-20) The final judgment of unbelievers by Christ, with the assistance of three angels, is previewed through the figure of grapes trodden in a wine press.

c. (Chs. 15—16) Angels prepare and pour out seven bowls of judgment to reveal Christ's sovereign authority to judge the world just before His Return.

1) (Ch. 15) The preparation for the bowl judgments of chapter 16 is provided to further heighten the reader's expectation for the climactic bowl judgments which immediately precede Christ's Return.

2) (Ch. 16) Angels pour out seven bowls of judgment to reveal Christ's sovereign authority to judge the world just before His Return.

a) (16:1-2) The first bowl afflicts ugly, painful sores upon Antichrist's followers.

b) (16:3) The second bowl kills all salt water marine life by turning seas to blood.

c) (16:4-7) The third bowl kills all fresh water marine life by turning all rivers and springs into blood.

d) (16:8-9) The fourth bowl burns unrepentant people with the sun’s intense fire.

e) (16:10-11) The fifth bowl plunges the Antichrist's kingdom into darkness while the sores and burns continue, but they still refuse to repent.

f) (16:12-16) The sixth bowl dries up the Euphrates for Oriental armies to fight other nations at Armageddon, but Satan will seek to gather them to fight Christ.

g) (16:17-21) The seventh bowl produces both an earthquake which levels mountains and islands, and one hundred pound hailstones.

d. (17:1—19:10) The fall of the religious and commercial world system and the responses of remorse on earth and rejoicing in heaven is cited to encourage readers that it will be removed before Christ establishes His own kingdom.

1) (17:1—18:8) The fall of the religious and commercial world system is detailed to encourage readers that it will be removed before Christ establishes His own kingdom.

a) (Ch. 17) The fall of the world’s religious system (the Great Harlot, Babylon the Great), comes after Antichrist is worshiped in the middle of the Tribulation.

1] (17:1-6) The fall of the religious world order is symbolized by a prostitute on a beast with seven heads and ten horns who adulterates with false doctrine and is named the Great Harlot, Babylon the Great.

2] (17:7-18) The symbols represent the apostate world church and a ten nation confederacy headed by Antichrist, who replaces this church with self-worship in the middle of the Tribulation (cf. Dan. 9:27).

b) (18:1-8) The fall of the world’s commercial system demonstrates Christ's superiority over this system and the need for it to be removed before He sets up His kingdom.

2) (18:9—19:10) Remorse on earth for Babylon's fall contrasts with rejoicing in heaven that readers may see the fall from God's view and rejoice at the soon coming of Christ.

a) (18:9-24) The earth mourns over Babylon’s fall because its businessmen can longer profit from the system's commercial enterprises.

b) (19:1-10) Heaven rejoices over the Babylon’s fall and the completed church celebrates her union with Christ in anticipation of His imminent Second Coming to set up a righteous kingdom.

1] (19:1-6) Heaven rejoices over Babylon’s fall because the destruction of the evil city allows Christ to replace it with a righteous kingdom.

2] (19:7-10) The church's final stage of being united with Christ, symbolized by the marriage feast of the Lamb with His bride, is celebrated in anticipation of the imminent Second Coming of Christ.

B. (19:11-21) The Second Coming of Christ is recorded to encourage believers undergoing external opposition that Christ will be Ultimate Victor over their persecuting enemies.

1. (19:11-16) Christ returns to the earth accompanied by angels and saints in great power to right the wrongs committed by the Antichrist and False Prophet and show Himself the Sovereign King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

2. (19:17-21) Christ proves Himself Ultimate Victor by defeating the Antichrist, False Prophet, and their armies at the Battle of Armageddon to encourage believers undergoing external opposition by persecuting enemies.

C. (Ch. 20) Prophecies concerning the time of the Millennium are recorded to demonstrate Christ's sovereignty as Ultimate Victor over the earth, Satan, and death itself.

1. (20:1-6) The Millennium will bring to fulfillment many of the prophecies of Scripture with Satan bound and believers reigning with Christ on earth 1,000 years.

a. (20:1-3) Satan is bound the entire length of the Millennium to prevent him from deceiving the nations for 1,000 years since Christ will be ruling.

b. (20:4-6) Christians, including believing Israel, will reign with Christ on earth for 1000 years in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant and other promises about the kingdom of God.

2. (20:7-10) Satan's final torment in the Lake of Burning Sulfur after his defeat by Christ at the Battle with Gog and Magog shows Christ's victory over His long-time enemy, the devil.

3. (20:11-15) The Great White Throne Judgment of unbelievers shows God's just vengeance upon all who opposed Him and His victory over the last enemy, death itself.

D. (21:1—22:5) Prophecies of the Eternal State are recorded to show the wonderful future of those who are victors with Christ because of His victory over the forces of evil.

1. (21:1) The New Heaven and Earth without continents separating men by sea is created since the first heaven and earth had passed away.

2. (21:2-8) The conditions in the New Jerusalem describe the absence of all unpleasant circumstances experienced on earth as man again has complete fellowship with God.

3. (21:9—22:5) The New Jerusalem is described as a city in the shape of a cube 1500 miles each way with walls made of jewels and twelve gates, each made from a single pearl, lit by the presence of God, with the tree of life on the banks of the river of life.

E. (22:6-21) The conclusion to the prophecy reminds the readers that Jesus Christ’s coming is imminent in order that they might be ready to meet Him unashamedly.

Chronology of Revelation

Revelation Timeline (Rev. 4:1–20:6)

The Letters to the Seven ChurchesChronology of the Seventieth WeekJudgments of the Seventieth WeekTheories of Literary Structures of RevelationContent and Correlation of the Judgments of Seals, Trumpets, and Bowls

Outline of End-Time Events Predicted in the BibleOutline of End-Time Events Predicted in the Bible (continued)

**Three Views on Revelation 11**

Based on a handout by Robert L. Thomas at the Evangelical Theological Society meetings in Boston, November 1999

Various hermeneutical approaches to the witnesses of Revelation 11 yield widely different evangelical interpretations. The following quotes and their page numbers come from Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text,* New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, and Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1999); ETS paper by Grant Osborne, 1999 (author of *The Hermeneutical Spiral*); and Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation: An Exegetical Commentary,* 2 vols. (Chicago: Moody, 1992, 1995).

#### Revelation 11:1-3 (NIV)

1I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, "Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the worshipers there. 2But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months. 3And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Term or Expression** | **Beale**  ***Symbolic*** | **Osborne**  ***Symbolic-Literal*** | **Thomas**  ***Literal*** |
| 1  “measure”  (11:1) | “the infallible promise of God’s future presence”; “the protection of God’s eschatological community” (559); “until the parousia” (566) | “preservation of the saints spiritually in the coming great persecution” (5; cf. 7); “a prophetic anticipation of the final victory of the church” (8) | “a mark of God’s favor” (80-81) |
| 2  “the temple (*naon*)”  (11:1) | “the temple of the church” (561); “Christians” (562); “the whole covenant community” (562); “the community of believers undergoing persecution yet protected by God” (566) | heavenly temple depicting “the church, primarily the saints of this final period but secondarily the church of all ages” (6; cf. 7 n. 4) | “a future temple in Jerusalem during the period just before Christ returns” (81-82) |
| 3  “the altar”  (11:1) | “the suffering covenant community” (563) | the [heavenly] altar of incense” (6) | “the brazen altar of sacrifice in the court outside the sanctuary” (82) |
| 4  “the worshipers”  (11:1) | “believers worshiping together in the temple community” (564) | “individual believers” (7) | “a future godly remnant in Israel” (82) |
| 5  “in it” (11:1) | in the temple or the altar (571) | “in the church” or “at the altar” (7) | “in the rebuilt temple” (82) |
| 6  “the court that is outside the temple (*naou*)” (11:2) | “God’s true people,” including Gentiles (560) | “the saints who are persecuted” (8) | “the wicked without God” (83) |
| 7  “cast outside” or "given to" (NIV)  (11:2) | “not protected from various forms of earthly harm (physical, economic, social, etc.)” (569) | not protected from Gentiles/nations (8); God delivers his followers into the hands of sinners (9) | “exclusion from God’s favor” (83) |
| 8  “the Gentiles” (11:2) | “the Gentiles and Jews” (569) | “the church handed over to the Gentiles/nations for a time” (9) | “a group [of non-Jews] in rebellion against God who will oppress the Jewish remnant” (83-84) |
| 9  “they will trample on” (11:2) | persecution of the church from Christ’s resurrection until His first coming (567) | “the saints will suffer incredibly” in a physical sense (10) | “future defilement and domination of Jerusalem” (86) |
| 10  “the holy city” (11:2) | “the initial form of the heavenly city, part of which is identified with believers living on earth” (568) | “the people of God” (9) | “the literal city of Jerusalem on earth” (84) |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 11  “forty-two months”  (11:2) | “figurative for the eschatological period of tribulation” (565); “attack on the community of faith throughout the church age” (566) | “the ‘great tribulation’ at the end of history” (1, 12) | “the last half of Daniel’s seventieth week” (85) |
| 12  “the two witnesses”  (11:3) | the church; “the whole community of faith” (573) | “two major eschatological figures… as a symbol for the witnessing church” (14, 16) | two future prophets, probably Moses and Elijah (87-89) |
| 13  “the great city” (11:8) | “Babylon” = “Rome” = “the ungodly world” (591-592) | Jerusalem and Rome’ secondarily, all cities that oppose God (27) | Jerusalem (93-94) |
| 14  the resurrection and ascension of the two witnesses (11:11-12) | “divine legitimization of a prophetic call” (599) | “A proleptic anticipation of the ‘rapture’ of the church” (35) | the resurrection of the two witnesses (97) |

##### **Summaries** (this strings the above descriptions into interpretive sentences of Revelation 11:1-3, 8, 11-12)

## Beale (Symbolic)

1I was given a reed symbolizing the infallible promise of God’s future presence and was told, “Go and protect God’s eschatological community (which is the temple of the church) until the parousia and protect the suffering covenant community and count the believers worshiping together in the temple community. 2But exclude God’s true people, including Gentiles; do not protect this suffering covenant community of Gentiles and Jews because they are not protected from various forms of earthly harm (physical, economic, social, etc.). They will attack and persecute the whole community of faith throughout the church age which is the initial form of the heavenly city, part of which is identified with believers living on earth for the eschatological period of tribulation. 3And I will give power to the church, and this whole community of faith will prophesy for the eschatological period of tribulation… [but after being killed] 8their bodies will lie in the street of Babylon or Rome which means the ungodly world [then they will receive] 11-12divine legitimization of a prophetic call.

## Osborne (Symbolic-Literal)

1I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, “Go and preserve the saints spiritually in the coming great persecution (but secondarily the church of all ages) in anticipation of their final victory and measure (preserve?) the [heavenly] altar of incense, and count the individual believers in the church or at the altar. 2But exclude the saints who are persecuted… because they have not been protected from Gentiles/nations as God delivers his followers into the hands of sinners for a time. The saints will suffer incredibly in a physical sense in the people of God for the ‘great tribulation’ at the end of history. 3And I will give power to my witnessing church, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth… [but after being killed] 8their bodies will lie in the street of Jerusalem and Rome which secondarily refer to all cities that oppose God [then they will receive] 11-12a proleptic anticipation of the ‘rapture’ of the church.

## Thomas (Literal)

1I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, “Go and measure as a mark of God’s favor the future temple in Jerusalem during the period just before Christ returns and the brazen altar of sacrifice in the court outside the sanctuary, and count the future godly remnant in Israel in the rebuilt temple. 2But do not measure as a mark of God's favor the wicked without God… because they have been excluded from God’s favor [and are] a group [of non-Jews] in rebellion against God who will oppress the Jewish remnant. They will trample on Jerusalem for the last half of Daniel’s seventieth week. 3And I will give power to my two future prophets (probably Moses and Elijah), and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth… [but after being killed] 8their bodies will lie in the street of Jerusalem [then three and a half days later will] 11-12be resurrected.

Chronological Order of Tribulation (Hoehner) **The Tribulation in Ezekiel, Matthew, and Zechariah**

**I. Introduction**

A. While the Book of Revelation gives the most complete and best chronological picture of the Great Tribulation Period, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and the Synoptic Gospel writers (particularly Matthew) also provide important insights into this era.

B. Besides Revelation and the three texts noted in this section, consult additional passages for the fullest picture of this Tribulation time (e.g., Dan. 11:36–12:13; Joel 2; 2 Thess. 2).

**II. Ezekiel 36–39**

A. The context is during Judah’s exile in Babylon, awaiting the time when the nation would be restored to their homeland in Israel and God’s glory would once again inhabit the temple.

B. (Chs. 33–39) Ezekiel prophesies blessings for Judah in a new life through Ezekiel's reappointment, the replacement of false shepherds, judgment on Israel's enemies, and a restoration to the land that the nation's renewal may prepare for the return of God's glory.

1. (Ch. 33) Ezekiel is reappointed as a watchman who warned the people of impending disaster to explain the reasons for God's judgment, emphasizing national restoration in preparation for the return of the glory of God.

2. (Ch. 34) A new life will be restored to Judah by replacing the false, self-serving shepherds with the Lord as the true, selfless Shepherd who will guide the nation after the glory has returned.

3. (Ch. 35) A new life will be restored to Judah through judgment upon Israel's enemies, represented by Edom (who opposed Israel and showed arrogance against God) in order that Israel not be opposed by her neighbors.

4. (Chs. 36–37) A new life will be restored to Judah through national blessing, cleansing, and restoration to the land so that God's holy character and sovereignty might be shown.

a. (Ch. 36) Judah will be restored to national blessing, cleansing and restoration to the land in order that God's holy character might be shown.

b. (37:1-14) Judah, a "dead nation," will be restored to life once again in the land to show forth God's sovereignty. (This saw partial fulfillment in 1948!)

c. (37:15-28) Judah and Israel will no longer be two nations but united under David's rule as a covenant keeping people to witness of God's holiness to other nations.

5. (Chs. 38–39) An attack against Israel by the area of Magog and her allies, comprising an alliance of northern Arab armies, will be turned back by God during the Tribulation Period to insure Israel's safety and to demonstrate God's sovereignty (cf. p. 145).

a. (38:1-16) The area of Gog and her allies, comprising an alliance of northern Arab armies, will unite to attack Israel with such great strength that these enemies will look unconquerable which will serve to demonstrate God's power.

b. (38:17–39:29) God will turn these enemies back by setbacks in nature, destruction, and fire during the Tribulation to insure Israel's safety and to show His sovereignty.

\* Most dispensationalists identify Magog as Russia, but most Bible atlases equate this area with modern-day Turkey (e.g., Beitzel, 76, 78). J. Paul Tanner, “Daniel’s ‘King of the North’: Do We Owe Russia an Apology?” *JETS* 35 (September 1992): 315-28 believes a confederation of northern Arab nations is in view. He says this battle will occur after the Tribulation (J. Paul Tanner, “Rethinking Ezekiel’s Invasion of Gog,” *JETS* 39 [March 1996]: 29-46).

**III. Matthew 24–25 (The Olivet Discourse)**

Although the Olivet Discourse is mentioned in Mark 13 and Luke 21 as well as Matthew's gospel, the following outline follows Matthew's as his account is the most complete of the three. The entire discourse relates to Israel as the church is not in view.

24:1-3 Questions: The disciples remark about the magnificent temple built by Herod, but Christ prophesies of its soon destruction. They ask two questions: when will the temple be destroyed, and what will be the sign of Christ's return (which ushers in the Millennium).

24:4–25:46 Answers: In Luke's account Jesus answers the first question by prophesying Titus' destruction of the temple in AD 70. Matthew only records Jesus' answer to the second question which concerns Israel's future time period prophesied as Daniel's 70th week.

24:4-26 Tribulation: Persecution and judgment will befall Israel.

24:4-8 First half: The beginning will have wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes, false christs, etc. (cf. Rev. 6). However, this is only the beginning of the "birth pangs."

24:9-14 Second half: As the judgments intensify the nation will wonder when the Messiah will return. Several will declare that He has come in certain places, but they will all be false.

24:15-26 Climactic sign: The rise of Antichrist, who will desecrate the temple and demand worship after breaking his covenant with Israel, is the ultimate sign of the Tribulation.

24:27-30 Second advent: When Christ returns there will be no question that He came (in contrast to the false christs). His coming is described as lightning in the sky. Also, "every eye will see Him" (Rev. 1:7).

24:31 Regathering of Israel: Angels will regather Jews (“elect”) worldwide to judge the nation and lead Israel into the Millennium.

24:32-51 Parenthetical exhortations:

24:32-44 Fig tree (watchfulness/preparedness): Using the figure of a fig tree, Christ declares that the nation should pay attention to the signs of the times as it does to the signs of the approaching harvest of figs. Otherwise, His coming will be so sudden that men and women will be taken away into judgment without warning.

24:45-51 Faithful servant (faithfulness): Jesus warns Israel to be prepared for His return through the illustration of two servants: the faithful servant who was ready for his master’s return and the unfaithful servant who lived irresponsibly.

25:1-30 Judgment of Israel: Israel will experience judgment at the close of the Tribulation Period.

25:31-46 Judgment of Gentiles: Using the figure of separating sheep from goats, Jesus notes that Gentiles will be judged based upon their response to persecuted Jews (“my brothers” and “the least of these”) to determine whether they enter the Millennium. Those who mistreat Israel will be unbelievers who will experience the judgment of the Gentiles.

See the following summarizes the article by Bruce A. Ware, “Is the Church in View in Matthew 24–25?” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 138 (April-June 1981): 158-72. (He says “no”—only Israel.)

**Is the Church in View in Matthew 24–25?**

Jesus addresses the disciples in Matthew 24–25, but are they representative of Israel or the church? In other words, does this chapter relate to Israel or the church? The following discussion of this question summarizes Bruce A. Ware, “Is the Church in View in Matthew 24–25?” *Bibliotheca Sacra* (April-June 1981): 158-72. Ware’s article argues against Robert Gundry, *The Church and the Tribulation*, which claims that Matthew refers to the church.

a. Some “Jewish elements” here could possibly relate either to *Jewish* saints who trust in Christ during the tribulation or to the *church* in the tribulation. These “Jewish elements” include:

(1) Persecution (24:9) by Jewish synagogue leaders (Mark 13:9; Luke 21:12) does elsewhere refer to synagogue persecution of Christians (John 16:2); however, this would more likely refer to persecution of Jewish tribulation saints who leave the synagogue to trust in Christ as Messiah than it would to Gentiles in the church.

(2) The message of the “gospel of the kingdom” (24:14) is used only two other times in Scripture, both of which concern Jesus preaching to Jews (Matt. 4:23; 9:35). While this could refer to Christians preaching, this is not required.

(3) “Pray that your flight will not take place…on the Sabbath” (24:20) could refer either to Jews or Christians since in Israel both are prohibited from Sabbath travel due to rabbinic restrictions.

b. The above is inconclusive, but other conclusive reasons show Israel is in view (not the church):

(1) The context argues for Israel. Matthew had previously described Israel’s rejection of Christ as Messiah that resulted in God rejecting Israel (21:43). It makes sense best to see this discourse as further revelation concerning God’s response to the nation which rejected him. In fact, the preceding chapter 23 shows how Christ spoke serious words to Israel’s leaders. This concluded with his lament over Jerusalem in verses 37-39, and even the temple itself is addressed in 24:2. All this puts the immediate context into a Jewish framework.

(2) Up to this point in Matthew 24:1 the disciples had no instruction on the rapture of the church. Christ first mentioned this two days later on the night before his death in John 14:1-3. In fact, Christ had explicitly taught them only two things about the church before this time: that he would build his church (16:18) and the right approach for dealing with sin in the church (18:15-18). So what would be on their minds most would not be the rapture of the church, but what would happen to Israel after the destruction of the temple.

(3) The “abomination that causes desolation” (24:15) is strictly a Jewish element as it relates back to Daniel 9:27. Daniel’s prophecy relates to Israel and a seven year covenant the Antichrist will make with the nation but break at the half-way point.

(4) The “false prophets” who mislead many (24:11, 24; Mark 13:22) elsewhere designates Jewish false prophets (Matt. 7:15; Luke 6:26; Acts 13:6; 2 Pet. 2:1 contrasts Israel’s false prophets with the church’s false teachers). Only in 1 John 4:1 can it most likely refer to Gentile false prophets, though not exclusively. Also, the singular form is used of “the false prophet” who will assist the beast (Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10). Thus, the plural usage almost always refers to Jewish false prophets.

(5) The “false Christs”(lit. “Messiahs”) and those claiming to be “the Christ” (24:5, 23-24) must also relate to Israel. A Christian is in no danger of following a false Christ since he already follows the true one. In contrast, “Israel is in danger of following false Christs because she has not yet followed the true Christ” (Ware, 169). Also, unbelieving Gentiles are not looking for the Messiah anyway.

Therefore, Matthew’s account of the tribulation refers to Israel and not to the church. This doesn’t *prove* that the Rapture will be pretribulational just because Christians are not mentioned here (arguments from silence are always weak), but the passage does support the pretrib position.

**IV. Zechariah 12–14**

A. The context of Zechariah’s prophecies is post-exilic Israel, still awaiting the kingdom.

B. Zechariah 12–14 declares that Jerusalem's redemption at the Second Advent will occur when the Messiah is worshiped and enthroned as King following the destruction of Gentile oppressors so that holiness may characterize the age.

1. (Chs. 12–13) Israel will be redeemed spiritually following the nation's physical deliverance from Gentile powers at the Second Advent.

a. (12:1-9) Israel will experience physical redemption from the LORD when other nations seek to lay siege to Jerusalem.

b. (12:10–13:9) Israel will experience spiritual redemption from the LORD when Jews realize they have been rejecting the Messiah and turn to Him for cleansing at the Second Advent.

1) (12:10a) There will be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit after the Gentile nations are destroyed.

2) (12:10b-14) The nation will mourn clan by clan over its murder of Jesus and rejection of Christ for many centuries.

3) (13:1-6) Israel will experience cleansing from sin.

4) (13:7-9) An excursus on the nation’s rejecting Christ as True Shepherd and the resultant judgment by the Romans at His first Advent reminds the people that they will undergo God’s discipline for cleansing at His Second Advent.

2. (Ch. 14) After the destruction of Gentile oppressors, the Messiah will be worshiped and enthroned as King over the long-awaited messianic kingdom so that holiness may characterize the age.

a. (14:1-5) Jerusalem will be delivered by the LORD Himself from Gentile oppressors at the Second Advent and His coming will split the Mount of Olives.

b. (14:6-11) Messiah's kingdom will be set up in Jerusalem in an amazing set of circumstances.

c. (14:12-15) Israel's enemies will be destroyed.

d. (14:16-19) Messiah will be worshiped annually at the Feast of Tabernacles.

e. (14:20-21) Holiness will characterize Jerusalem and Judah during the messianic kingdom.

**What is the Babylon of Revelation 17–18?**

*An Evaluation of Various Views*

See separate 15-page file in outline form

**Premillennial Catholicism?**

**The Day of the LORD**

**I. Usage**

A. The “day of the LORD” concept appears in every prophetical writing in the Old Testament, although not always by that same term.

B. The judgment aspect receives detailed treatment in Zephaniah, Joel, Revelation 6—19. Some believe that the “Lord’s day” of Revelation 1:10 also refers to this period (cf. 2 Thess. 2:2-3).

**II. Definition**

A. The day of the LORD is “the time of Yahweh’s final intervention in history when He will judge the wicked, deliver the righteous, and establish His kingdom” (Hobart Freeman, *An Introduction to the OT Prophets*, 146).

1. *Judgment*

a. Primarily it refers to a destruction of Israel’s enemies (Zeph. 2—3; Amos 1:3—2:3; Joel 3; Zech. 12—14; Isa. 13:6, 9; 14:28-32; 17:1ff.; 20:1-6; 31:1-5; Jer. 46:10; Ezek. 30:3ff.).Freeman, 146-47

b. However, it also includes punishment of the rebellious and disobedient in the nation of Israel (Amos 5:18-20).

c. The Great Tribulation of Revelation 6—19 finds so many parallels with descriptions by the OT prophets that the two judgments must certainly be the same period.

d. Ultimately the day of the LORD will end in a destruction of the world (2 Pet. 3:10).

2. *Deliverance*

a. Israel’s salvation from Gentile oppressors will occur through God who preserves and delivers a remnant of Israel (Joel 2:32; Zech. 14; Zeph. 3:8-20; Isa. 2, 11; 65-66; Amos 9:11-15; Ezek. 20:33-44, etc.).

b. This salvation is to enable Israel to enter into the kingdom in which God will fulfill all His promises to Abraham (cf. class notes, 336-37).

c. The deliverance includes many blessings (Deut. 30:3-9) which also apply to Gentiles (Zeph. 3:9).

d. Final salvation after judgment will be in the new heaven and earth (2 Pet. 3:11-13).

3. Diagram

*Judgment + Salvation = Day of the LORD*

Great Tribulation + Christ’s Return/ = Day of the LORD

Millennium

B. The day of the LORD also had a nearer aspect to the prophets, depicting an imminent, impending disaster—generally through the Assyrians or Babylonians. Sometimes even both the near and far aspects appear together in a dual sense. God did not clearly reveal whether a near or far perspective was to be understood so as to encourage repentance.

C. For further study see Greg A. King, “The Day of the LORD in Zephaniah,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152 (January-March 1995): 16-32.

**The Six Thousand Year Theory**

*Excerpted from my 1990 Dallas Seminary ThD Dissertation, “The Eschatological Significance of the Sabbath,” 259-66*

The "Kingdom Sabbath" in Extra-biblical Literature

The final viewpoint on Sabbatical typology perceives the kingdom as its antitype. As the following discussion demonstrates, this perspective finds support from the earliest times and has had the most advocates. The first part of the present chapter has demonstrated how the prophetic literature indicates a reinstitution of the Sabbath in the Millennium; now it remains to show how Jewish and Christian literature indicates that the Sabbath typifies this entire period as well.

Herein is the oldest typological meaning to the Sabbath, finding support from the preexilic times when thought in Israel shifted to the future Messianic age, as is seen in the writings of the preexilic prophets.[[13]](#footnote-13) Along with their search for the ideal Davidic king,[[14]](#footnote-14) the people characterized the kingdom age as "an extended or prolonged Sabbath day."[[15]](#footnote-15) From such a depiction it is evident that Israel did not view the Sabbath as a day laden with unbearable rules, but rather a day which should be made festive. Isaiah notes that in the kingdom age "the house of Israel will possess the nations" (Isa. 14:2)—a time in which Isaiah promises Israel, "[you will have] rest (מוּחַ) from your pain and turmoil and harsh service in which you have been enslaved" (Isa. 14:3). This Jewish eschatological framework saw time in only two dimensions: "this (present) time" and "the time to come."[[16]](#footnote-16) As such the prophets and later extra-biblical writings do not clearly distinguish between the Millennium and the eternal state which is delineated in the progress of revelation (cf. Rev. 20–22).

In addition to the prophetical writings, the millennial significance of the Sabbath also appears in the intertestamental era. The book of *Jubilees* in the second century BC[[17]](#footnote-17) notes,

And at the end of the nineteenth jubilee in the seventh week, in the sixth year, Adam died. . . . And he lacked seventy years from one thousand years, for a thousand years are like one day in the testimony of heaven and therefore it was written concerning the tree of knowledge, 'In the day you eat from it you will die.' Therefore he did not complete the years of this day because he died in it.[[18]](#footnote-18)

This passage indicates that "already before the Christian era 1,000 years had become to be regarded as one world-day."[[19]](#footnote-19) This time of Sabbath rest for Israel was seen in *Jubilees* as an age when Israel will confidently rest since Satan will be bound.[[20]](#footnote-20) An additional exhortation a century or so later shows this "day" to be typological of the coming kingdom age. This appears in the first century AD[[21]](#footnote-21) writing, *Life of Adam and Eve*, where the archangel Michael says to Seth regarding Eve's death, "Man of God, do not prolong mourning your dead more than six days, because the seventh day is a sign of the resurrection, the rest of the coming age; and on the seventh day the Lord rested from all his works."[[22]](#footnote-22) In this age Israel will be free from laborious work.[[23]](#footnote-23)

The rabbinic writings[[24]](#footnote-24) declared the same kingdom motif for the Sabbath: "As sleep foreshadows death and dreams [foreshadow] prophecy, so does the sabbath represent the life of the age to come."[[25]](#footnote-25) Palestinian Judaism saw the Sabbath as a type of the rest which the righteous will enjoy in the age to come, as noted by Tamid 7.4, "On the Sabbath they sang *A Psalm: a Song for the Sabbath Day* [Ps. 92]: a Psalm, a song for the time that is to come, for the day that shall be all Sabbath and rest in the life everlasting."[[26]](#footnote-26) Another source speaks of a millennial Sabbath from the analogy of the sabbatical year: "Just as the seventh year is one year of release in seven, so is the world: one thousand years out of seven shall be fallow."[[27]](#footnote-27) Still again, rabbinic sources describe this Sabbath rest by identifying Psalm 92 as a psalm recited by Adam

of the day which will be all Sabbath, when there will be neither eating nor drinking nor worldly affairs, but the righteous will sit with crowns on their heads enjoying the brilliance of the Divine Presence, as it is stated, *And they beheld God, and did eat and drink* [Exod. 24:11], like the ministering angels.[[28]](#footnote-28)

Many other rabbinic writings also indicate the Sabbath as typifying the kingdom,[[29]](#footnote-29) and others indicate this Jewish eschatological thousand year scenario.[[30]](#footnote-30)

It should also be noted that while the overwhelming majority of passages relate the end time Sabbath as a paradise restored for a Millennium, two other contradictory Jewish scenarios exist. One persuasion depicts the eschatological Sabbath as a time in which the earth is uninhabited between the days of Messiah and the new age,[[31]](#footnote-31) and another perceives the "age to come" as eternal.[[32]](#footnote-32) However, the quantity of evidence for these other two reckonings cannot compare with that of the millennial view and thus cannot be considered normative.

The millennial time scheme presented by Jews was later adopted by Christians, who interpreted the Sabbath as symbolizing the thousand-year earthly kingdom and Sunday as symbolic of the eternal state.[[33]](#footnote-33) The concept found repetition in the early[[34]](#footnote-34) *Epistle of Barnabas.* This text teaches that the six days of creation each represent one thousand years (based upon Psalm 90:4).[[35]](#footnote-35) These six thousand years are followed by "the Sabbath" which commences "when His Son shall come," and this period lasts another Millennium. Then the eighth day follows as "the beginning of another world."[[36]](#footnote-36) Herein is a clear reference to the Sabbath as typical of the Millennium and the Lord's Day as typical of the eternal state. The view is expressed through the following diagram:[[37]](#footnote-37)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Days: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Events: --the past-- | --the present-- | --the Millennium-- | --eternity--

Types: Sabbath Sunday

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This millennial depiction was widely held among many other early Christian writers. Augustine wrote, "Therefore, the eighth day signifies the new life at the end of the world; the seventh day, the future rest of the saints on this earth."[[38]](#footnote-38) Tertullian's view was similarly stated:

But we do confess that a kingdom is promised to us upon the earth, although before heaven, only in another state of existence; inasmuch as it will be after the resurrection for a thousand years in the divinely-built city of Jerusalem. . . . After its thousand years are over, within which period is completed the resurrection of the saints . . . there will ensue the destruction of the world and the conflagration of all things at the judgment.[[39]](#footnote-39)

Likewise, Hippolytus notes,

And 6,000 years must needs be accomplished, in order that the Sabbath may come, the rest, the holy day "on which God rested from all His works." For the Sabbath is the type and emblem of the future kingdom of the saints, when they "shall reign with Christ," when He comes from heaven, as John says in his Apocalypse: for "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years."[[40]](#footnote-40)

Other writers taught similar views.[[41]](#footnote-41) Since the concept of the Sabbath typifying a millennial kingdom pervades the Jewish literature centuries before Christ, stretches into the first century, and finds expression in the post-apostolic Christian and rabbinic literature, it would not be surprising to find this orientation within the pages of the New Testament itself. Such is the case in some New Testament passages as the following discussion affirms. [NT evidence then cited.]

Addendum: Critique of the Six Thousand-Year Theory

1. It assumes that “a day with the Lord is as a thousand years” (Ps. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8) indicates that *human history will last that long*, which is not taught in either text.

2. If a literal view of both the six days of creation and the genealogies of Genesis 5 & 10 are assumed, creation would have occurred in 4143 BC (see my OT Survey notes, 84-90). After adding 6000 years to this date one gets a date of AD 1856 (accounting for only one year between 1 BC and AD 1). This means that we are over 100 years after the supposed date of Christ’s return.

3. Since no one knows the date of Christ’s return, we will not be able to figure out if it is 6000 years after creation anyway.

4. The most we can argue from the fact that this was a widespread theory is that both Jews and Christians saw the weekly Sabbath as a type of a literal, 1000-year kingdom era. It is another evidence that both Jews and Christians around the time of Christ had a premillennial perspective on the coming of the Messiah.

**The Eschatological Significance of the Sabbath**

A Summary of the ThD dissertation by Richard James Griffith, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1990

**The Kingdom**

I. **Biblical Usage**: Confusion over the “Kingdom” has resulted partly because Scripture uses the term in a variety of ways concerning the *time* in which it is operative:

A. Timeless: The OT and NT both refer to God’s sovereign rule over the world in *all* ages.

1. God the Father is called “King” (1 Tim. 1:17) and the “King of kings and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15; cf. “King of the ages” in Rev. 15:3).

a. This title is often thought to refer only to Christ, but Jesus is not called the “King of kings and Lord of lords” during this present church age but only at His victory (Rev. 17:14; 19:16) and judgment (Matt. 25:34, 40) prior to the kingdom age.

b. However, Jesus was called the “king of the Jews” while He was on earth (Matt. 2:2; 21:5; 27:11). His enemies clearly understood this as a title that He claimed for Himself (Matt. 2:3; 27:29, 37, 42). Israel’s rejection of Him as king prohibited Him from reigning over Israel (and all nations) at the present time. For this reason Satan is called “the god of this present age” (2 Cor. 4:4).

2. Many psalms seem to depict God as the sovereign king in every age.

a. Psalms which are often classified as Enthronement (Kingship) Psalms include 47, 93, 96, 97, 98, 99 (Leupold Sabourin, *The Psalms: Their Origin and Meaning,* 117, 443). Sometimes added to this list are Psalms 81 and 95 (Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship,* 106). However, some see these psalms not as depicting the Father but as prophetic of Christ when He receives his earthly kingdom.

b. These psalms all have a salutation of the LORD’s kingship, such as “the LORD reigns” (47:8; 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 98:6; 99:1) or references to God as king (47:2).

c. Even verses in non-enthronement psalms indicate God’s universal rule (Ps. 103:19).

B. Present & Spiritual: The “kingdom of God” is operative in the present age in a spiritual sense:[[42]](#footnote-42)

1. Believers are transferred from Satan’s dominion over to “the kingdom of the Son” (Col. 1:13; cf. Rev. 1:6).

2. Christ noted that “he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is (not ‘will be’) greater than John the Baptist” (Matt. 11:11).

3. He claimed that “from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing…” (Matt. 11:12).

4. Jesus said to the Pharisees, “The tax collectors and prostitutes are entering (present tense) the kingdom ahead of you” (Matt. 21:31b).

5. Christ accused the Pharisees of preventing people from entering (present tense) the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 23:13). To the same group He warned that the kingdom of God would be taken away and given to others, indicating that in some sense it is a present reality (Matt. 23:43).

6. Jesus’ exorcisms meant “the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Matt. 12:28; Luke 11:20).

7. The kingdom of God relates to both salvation (Mark 10:24-27) and eternal life (v. 30).

8. The kingdom begins with believers (Matt. 13:40-43) but ends with a rebellion (Rev. 20:7-10).

9. “The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 14:17). This does not argue *against* any physical aspects to the kingdom such as food consumption; rather, it argues that the spiritual dimension of the kingdom is more prominent and important than the physical.

Note: But didn’t Jesus say “the kingdom of God is *within* you” (Luke 17:21)? This translation of ἐστιν as “inside” is common (KJV, NIV; cf. Matt. 23:26) but unjustified. Surely Jesus would not have said the kingdom was in *the Pharisees*, the ones to whom he said this (v. 20). The alternate meaning “among you” (NASB) is a better translation. “Nowhere else is the kingdom regarded as something internal… Jesus speaks of men entering the kingdom, not of the kingdom entering men… Jesus is speaking of the presence of the kingdom of God among men, possibly as within their grasp if they will only take hold of it” (Marshall, *Luke*, NIGTC, 655).

C. Future & Political: Other times the “kingdom of God” refers to the future millennial age:

1. Old Testament Political Usage

a. The kingdom mentioned in the OT is mostly used in the political sense (except those references concerning God’s sovereign rule above).

b. For details, see the class notes concerning the Davidic Covenant (pp. 22-23).

2. New Testament Political Usage: While amillennialists believe the following verses refer to heaven (which they understand as immediately following the return of Christ), these texts are better understood as earthly and political. Some of the following verses could be taken either way, but the reader will note that many cannot refer to heaven.

a. The kingdom will follow after Christ’s return and judgment (2 Tim. 4:1).

b. It will be powerful and glorious (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43).

c. Christ spoke in a parable of His return to return to heaven to receive his Kingship from the Father for the coming kingdom (Luke 19:12-15).

d. James and John, prompted by their mother, requested places of honor next to Jesus in His (political) kingdom (Matt. 20:20-21). Christ answered that such places of rule *would* be available, but that God alone would designate who would rule with Him in these places.

e. After His return, Jesus will sit on his earthly throne but in heavenly glory (Matt. 25:31).

f. The result of the judgment of the “sheep and goats” after Christ’s return is whether they will enter the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34).

g. The exhortation, “Thy kingdom come” (Matt. 6:10) obviously indicates a future kingdom reality; otherwise Christ would not have commanded us to pray for it.

h. The kingdom is symbolically referred to as a coming banquet (Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:28, 29).

i. While at the Last Supper (Matt. 26:29; Luke 22:18) on the cross (Mark 14:25) Christ claimed He would not drink again until He did so in the kingdom of God.

j. Joseph of Arimathea viewed the kingdom as future since he “was waiting for the kingdom of God” (Mark 15:43).

k. During the Tribulation era it will be able to be said that “the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15). Since the former worldly kingdom is political, it follows that Christ’s kingdom which replaces it also includes a political dimension (cf. Dan. 2:44-45; 7:13-14).

l. Following His resurrection the disciples thought the kingdom was still political in nature, for they asked if He would then restore it to Israel (Acts 1:6). Jesus said the time had not yet come. He did not say that they should have had a spiritual view of the kingdom.

m. The millennial kingdom was the focus of the preaching of John and Jesus:

(1) John the Baptizer announced, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 3:2), which was repeated by Jesus (4:17).

(2) Though John used a new qualifying phrase (“of heaven”), his listeners must have understood that the kingdom preached by the OT prophets was about to deliver Israel from the Romans. In other words, John preached that the millennium was about to begin. It *could* begin because the King was in their midst.

(3) However, there was one requirement of the nation—repentance. While some say repentance was a new element (e.g., Barbieri, “Matthew,” *BKC*, 2:24), I think this was *not* new since the OT prophets often noted that the nation must be a believing nation for the kingdom to begin (Deut. 30:1-10; Jer. 31:34; cf. John 3:3-5; Rom. 11:26-27).

(4) The nation rejected the Messiah, which was also a rejection of the kingdom. After Jesus saw their rejection he explained that the kingdom would not come at that time in its political form, but only in its spiritual, “mystery” form. He taught this in the parables of the kingdom, noting that at present the kingdom is small and insignificant, but in the future it would be glorious (Matt. 13).

II. **Theological Usage**: The various biblical uses of the “Kingdom” above have resulted in varying theological views on the subject:

A. Realized Eschatology (C. H. Dodd) advocates that the kingdom of God was completely fulfilled in Jesus’ mission on the earth, so it is entirely past.

B. Consistent Eschatology (Albert Schweitzer) teaches the opposite—that the kingdom of God is entirely future with no present or past elements.

C. The Kingdom of God is the Church either in its visible and outward organization (Roman Catholic) or invisibly as the body of genuine believers (Reformers).

D. The Kingdom of God is Purely Spiritual

E. The Kingdom of God is a Social and Political Kingdom (postmillennialists) which is brought into being through the Church’s work and influence on society.

F. The Already…Not Yet perspective (most scholars today) views the kingdom as present and future, physical and spiritual, earthly and heavenly, visible and invisible. It recognizes some aspects of the kingdom in the present age, but only in a partial form as history awaits the final kingdom to come. Some groups which teach the “already/not yet” view include:

1. Amillennial

2. Dispensational

3. Non-Dispensational Premillennial

4. Progressive Dispensational

**The Kingdom Diagrammed**

**Spiritual**

**Kingdom**

(saved

people)

**Living**

**Beings**

**Universal Kingdom**

(everything inside and outside the circle)

**All People**

(saved and unsaved all in the box)

**Theocratic Kingdom**

**(OT Saints under law via Israel)**

**Saints prior to Moses**

**Unsaved Before Christ**

**Kingdom of Darkness**

**(shaded area of all ages with Unsaved People and Demons)**

**Church**

**Present Unbelievers**

**Angels**

**Millennial Believers**

**Millennial Unbelievers**

**Second Death (Hell)**

**Eternal**

**Life (Heaven)**

**Mystery Form of the Kingdom**

**Millennial**

**Kingdom**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Aspect of the Kingdom*** | ***Description*** | ***Scripture*** |
|  |  |  |
| *Universal Kingdom* | All creation of every age | Ps. 145:13; 1 Chron. 29:12 |
| *Spiritual Kingdom* | All saved of every age (white above) | Heb. 12:22-24; Col. 1:13b |
| *Kingdom of Darkness* | All unsaved of every age (dark above) | Col. 1:13a |
| *Unsaved Before Christ* | Unbelievers prior to Christ’s death | Gal. 3:21-22 |
| *Saints Before Moses* | Those with faith in God (e.g., Noah) | Gen. 6:9; 15:6 (Abraham) |
| *Theocratic Kingdom* | God’s rule over Israel as mediators | Exod. 19:6 |
| *Mystery Form* | Present saved & unsaved | Matt. 13:24-30, 47-50 |
| *Church* | Saved between Pentecost & Rapture | Matt. 13:38 |
| *Present Unbelievers* | Unbelievers in Church Age | 2 Cor. 2:15 |
| *Millennium* | All people of Millennium | Isa. 65:20 |
| *Millennial Unbelievers* | Unsaved of Millennium | Rev. 20:7-10 |
| *Millennial Believers* | Saved of the Millennium | Zech. 8:23 |
| *Second Death* | Unbelievers in Hell | Rev. 20:14 |
| *Eternal Kingdom* | Spiritual Kingdom in new creation | Dan. 2:44; Rev. 21–22 |

**The Kingdom in Isaiah**

Christians often talk about Jesus being king. It is especially discussed about Him being *born* king at Christmas. But this raises two important questions:

1. What kind of kingdom does Jesus bring as king? Many (esp. amillennialists) say that this is only a spiritual kingdom with no earthly or physical aspects, but others (esp. premillennialists) note many dimensions of the kingdom: spiritual, physical, political, etc.

2. What kind of kingdom did both John (Matt. 3:2) and Jesus (Matt. 4:17) mean when they preached, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near"? Like the OT prophets, they said that Jews needed to turn from sin to enter the kingdom (Deut. 30:1-2). Had the nation repented, then this fulfillment would have occurred (Deut. 30:3-10). One should assume that this kingdom was the same kingdom that the OT prophets preached. Otherwise, Jesus and John would have misled the people.

Since Israel rejected this kingdom, Christ will not rule over it until the nation believes (see verses below in the “Spiritual” section). So after Israel finally believes in the future and Christ returns to establish his kingdom on earth (Rev. 19), what will this new period look like? Revelation 20:1-6 reveals the length of this era as 1000 years when saints will rule (cf. Rev. 5:10) and Satan will be bound from deceiving the nations (cf. Rev. 20:1-3). However, Isaiah gives the best *total* picture of what the kingdom will be like with more information than any other book in Scripture. This is the correct background one should know to understand Matthew’s concept of the kingdom.

**I. Political**

A. Jerusalem

1. Capital of the earth (2:2b)

2. A safe refuge for people (14:32; 25:4; 26:1-4; 32:18; 33:20-24; 35:9; 60:18; 62:8-9; 66:12)

3. City of glory without unbelievers (33:24b; 35:8-10; 52:1-3, 6)

4. Accessible (11:15-16; 33:21; 35:8; 60:15)

B. Israel’s Political Blessings

1. Enemies judged by Messiah (2:12-21; 24:21-23; 29:20-21; 45:14; 61:2; 66:24)

2. Exalted above the Gentiles (2:3; 14:1-2; 18:7; 49:22-23; 60:5, 14-17; 61:5-9; 62:1-4)

3. Serves as a nation of witnesses for God (44:8, 21)

C. Messiah’s Rule

1. His Second Advent precedes the kingdom (60:2; 61:11)

2. Extent of his rule

a. Rules on David’s throne as Davidic covenant fulfilled (4:2; 9:6-7; 16:5a)

b. Rules as King over the world (9:6-7; 11:3-5; 16:5; 24:21-23; 40:10)

c. Rules as King from Jerusalem (2:3; 24:23b; 33:17-22)

3. Nature of his rule

a. Rules gloriously (4:2; 24:23; 35:2; 40:5; 60:1, 2)

b. Rules wisely (11:2)

c. Rules meekly (42:3)

d. Rules righteously (32:1)

e. Rules nations with justice (9:7; 11:5; 16:5b; 32:1; 42:1, 4)

f. Rule unquestioned (11:4; 25:1-5; 29:17-21; 30:30-33; 42:13; 49:24-26; 66:14-19)

g. Rule in kingdom merges with eternal state (9:7; 33:20)

D. Other Rulers

1. Elders or rulers serve with Messiah in Jerusalem (24:23b; 32:1)

2. Judges serving as counselors (1:26)

3. Positions of responsibility given as rewards (40:10)

E. Worldwide peace rather than war (2:4; 9:4-7; 32:17-18; 55:12; 54:13; 60:18)

**II. Physical**

A. Earth and heavens renewed (65:17; 66:22)

1. Sun and moon

a. Light from both diminished in the Tribulation (13:10)

b. Sun still rises (41:25; 45:6; 59:19)

c. Moonshine equals the sun, which itself is seven times brighter (30:26)

d. Yet the sun and moon less intense and not harmful (24:23a; 49:10)

e. Both sun and moon finally eradicated in the eternal state (60:19-20)

2. Land of Israel

a. Borders enlarged (26:15; 33:17; 54:2-3; 61:7) from Wadi to Euphrates (27:12)

b. Land rebuilt after destruction (32:16-18; 49:8, 19; 61:4-5)

c. Much rainfall and water in the desert (30:23-25; 35:1-2, 6-7; 41:17-18; 49:10b)

d. Broad rivers flowing from the temple (33:20-21)

e. Animals blessed with much food (30:23)

f. Crops abundant (27:6; 35:1-2, 6-7) with the Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 8:19-22 curse on the earth removed (11:6-9; 35:9; 65:25)

g. Verdant trees replace thornbushes and briers (55:13)

h. Mountain trees in previous desert wastelands (41:19)

i. Israel beautiful & wealthy from her wealth (60:5; 61:6; 62:3; 66:10-12)

j. Glorified (60:1-9)

3. Jerusalem

a. Topographical changes with temple mount at city’s high point (2:2)

b. Cloud of smoke and pillar of fire protects Jerusalem (4:5-6)

c. Temple mount holy (11:9; 27:13; 56:7; 57:13; 65:25; 66:20)

B. Humans living in unique circumstances

1. Some Israelites living in glorified bodies after tribulation (26:19-20)

2. Babies still born to those in mortal bodies (44:3; 61:9; 65:20, 23)

3. Longevity of life where immaturity is rare but death is still existent (65:20)

4. Food for people plentiful (30:23; 62:8-9; 65:21-22)

5. Protection from harm with wild animals tamed (11:6-9; 35:9; 41:8-14; 65:25)

6. Work existent but always protective (62:8-9; 65:21-23)

7. Blind, deaf, lame, and mute all healed (29:17-19; 35:5-6)

8. Illness in Jerusalem eradicated (33:24; 65:23)

9. Death eventually destroyed in Jerusalem (25:7)

**III. Emotional**

A. Strength replaces fear (35:3-4; 41:10, 13-14)

B. Joy and gladness replace weeping, sorrow and sighing (9:1-4; 12:3, 6; 25:8-9; 30:29; 35:10; 42:10-11; 45:25; 52:8-9; 55:12; 60:15; 61:3, 7; 65:18-19; 66:10-11, 14)

C. Israel’s sentiment

1. The name “Israel” replaced with the new names Hephzibah (Heb. “my delight is in her”) and Beulah (Heb. “married”; 62:2)

2. Israel no longer feeling shame (25:8; 29:22)

3. Israel the praise of the earth (43:4; 62:7, 10) due to unique “marriage” to the LORD (54:1, 4-7; 62:5 NIV margin)

4. Israel singing (14:7; 30:29; 42:10-11; 52:9)

**IV. Intellectual**

A. Knowledge fills the earth based on the fear of the Lord (2:3; 11:9; 33:6)

B. Knowledge of God’s work seen in mountain trees flourishing in the desert (41:19)

C People taught by the Lord himself (49:10; 54:13)

D. Teachers succeed in providing direction (30:20-21)

E. People listen, understand, and articulate God’s values (32:3-4)

**V. Spiritual**

A. Satan bound (14:15)

B. Gentiles (Church)

1. Converted (16:5; 18:7; 49:6; 55:5; 60:3)

2. Disciplined for sin (19:19-22)

C. Jerusalem

1. Righteousness and holiness in the city (1:26-27; 4:3-4; 11:4-5; 35:8-9; 42:1-4; 52:1; 60:21; 61:3b) and desert (32:16)

2. Justice in the city (29:18-24; 65:21-23) and desert (32:16)

D. Israel’s spiritual restoration

1. Israel cleansed by God’s judgment before the kingdom (1:25; 4:2-4; 29:1-4; 30:26b; 31:6-7)

2. Israel reunited and regathered to the land (11:10-13, 15-16; 43:1, 5; 49:6; 61:4; 65:8-9)

3. Israel victorious over enemies (2:12-21; 11:14; 24:21-23; 41:11-14; 45:14; 61:2; 66:14b)

4. Israel free from oppression (14:3-6; 42:6-7; 49:8-9)

5. Israel believing in Messiah (2:5; 10:20-22; 25:8-9; 26:2; 29:23; 40:9; 45:17, 25; 52:3, 6-7, 9-11; 54:7-10; 62:12)

6. Israel forgiven, redeemed and righteous (1:25-27; 2:3; 4:3-4; 33:24; 44:22-24; 45:25; 48:17; 63:16)

7. Israel blessed and rewarded by Christ (19:25; 40:10; 62:11; 61:8)

8. Israel comforted by Christ (12:1-2; 40:1-2, 11; 49:12; 51:3; 65:18-19; 66:11-13)

9. Israel filled/empowered by Holy Spirit as never before (32:15; 44:3; 59:21)

10. Israel’s covenants fulfilled (42:6; 49:8; 54:10; 61:8)

a. Abrahamic (19:25; 41:8-10)

b. Davidic (9:7; 11:1-2; 55:3)

c. Land (11:11-16; 65:9)

d. New (32:15; 44:3; 49:6; 59:21; 66:22)

E. Millennial worship

1. Israel worshipping the true God (12:1-6; 25:9–26:19; 56:7)

2. Jerusalem as capital of nations’ (Gentile) worship (2:2-4; 11:12; 27:13; 30:29; 44:22-24)

3. Whole earth knows God—at least initially (11:9b)

4. Temple worship (56:5)

5. Priests and Levites serving the Lord (61:6; 66:21)

6. Animal sacrifices (56:7; 66:20-23)

7. Monthly New Moon celebrations (66:23)

8. Reinstitution of the Sabbath (56:4; 66:23)

F. Millennium absorbed into eternity

1. Kingdom age ends though salvation does not (51:6, 8)

2. Prosperity forever as a sign of God’s blessing (55:13)

3. Temple eunuchs blessed forever (56:5)

4. Both sun and moon finally eradicated in the eternal state (60:19-20)

5. Divine covenant continues on to be fulfilled in eternity (55:3; 61:8)

**Concluding Applications**

* Since we will rule the world, we better start showing discernment now (1 Cor. 6:1-3)
* Since this world must last 1000 more years (Rev. 20:1-6), we should take good care of it.
* Work for Christ now before the 1000-year Sabbath comes with its restful service (Heb. 4:9-11).

**Kingdom Timelines**

Top: J. Dwight Pentecost, *Thy Kingdom Come* (Wheaton: Victor, 1990), 323;

Bottom: Paul Benware, *Understanding End Times Prophecy* (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 145

**Stages of the Kingdom of God**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Past | Present | Future |
| **Time Period** | Eternity Past  to John | Jesus’ Ministry  to Tribulation | Second Advent/Millennium to Eternity |
| **Ruler** | God the Father  (Adam as vice-regent gave his authority to Satan) | God the Father  (some say Jesus in Heaven) | Christ on Earth (1000 years; cf. Psalm 2) then Heaven |
| **Mediators** | Moses, Davidic Kings, Priests, Israel (Exod. 19:6) | Christ (1 John 2:1) | Israel (Zech. 8:20-23) |
| **Participants** | Israel  (with proselyte Gentiles such as Rahab, Ruth, etc.) | Church  (Gal. 3:26—saved Jews now are part of the Church) | Entire Earth,  including Israel & Church  (Heb. 12:28; 2 Pet. 1:11) |
| **Type** | Political & Spiritual | Spiritual  “Mystery Phase” (Matt. 13) | Political & Spiritual |
| **Realm** | Earth | Earth  (some say heaven as well) | Earth (1000 years) to  New Heavens & New Earth (eternity) |
| **Entrance Requirement** | Faith in God (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:4, 9) shown in Identification with Israel | Faith in Christ (John 3:16) | *Glorified Saints:* Members of the Universal Church  *Mortals from Tribulation:* Faith in Christ shown in Treatment of Israel (Matt. 25:40) |
| **Emphasis** | Law (Exod. 19-40) | Grace (Eph. 3:2-13) | Both Law & Grace   1. Law with Christ ruling with rod of iron (Ps. 2:9) 2. Grace with entrance based on faith |
| **Governments** | *Innocence* (Eden, pre-fall)  *Various Human* (post-fall)  *Theocracy* (Moses to  Samuel)  *Monarchy* (Saul to  Zedekiah)  *Foreign Rule* (Intertestamental era) | No government rules now with divine authority over any other, though believers are commanded to be subject to whichever government is over them (Rom. 13) | *Monarchy*  (Christ Ruling as King) |
| **Covenants Activated** | Abrahamic (Gen. 12:1-3) & Mosaic (Exod. 19) | New (2 Cor. 3–4)  Mosaic Abolished (Rom. 7) | Davidic (Amos 9:11-15) & Land (Deut. 30:1-10) |

**The Parables of Matthew 13**

*Adapted from Mark L. Bailey, Dallas Theological Seminary (cf. his 8-part series in 1998-1999 Bibliotheca Sacra)*

Only after the Jewish leaders attributed Christ’s power to Satan (Matt. 12) did He begin to hide truth from them in parables (13:3, 10-11). The Matthew 13 parables show that, due to Israel’s rejecting the King, the kingdom would not come then in its political form. Why not? There was one unfulfilled requirement of the nation—repentance. The OT often noted that the nation must be a believing nation for the kingdom to begin (Deut. 30:1-10; Jer. 31:34; cf. John 3:3-5; Rom. 11:26-27). Thus Jesus began to explain how the kingdom would first come in a form unforeseen (“mystery,” vv. 17, 25) by the OT (i.e., spiritually before physically).

Parables by the Sea (outside the house to the multitudes)

**1.** The Soils (13:3-9, 18-23) Planting

*Issue*: Why have Israel and the leaders rejected the Messiah?

*Main Idea*: Productivity is determined by receptivity, which is a heart issue.

**2.** The Tares (13:24-30, 36-43) Planting

*Issue*: What accounts for the false religiosity in the world?

*Main Idea*: Satan’s counterfeit kingdom will not be fully revealed until the judgment.

**3.** The Mustard Seed (13:31-32) Growth

*Issue*: Will this Interadvent kingdom survive?

*Main Idea*: Though starting small, the new program will grow to world-wide dimensions.

**4.** The Leavening Process (13:33) Growth

*Issue*: How will this new kingdom grow?

*Main Idea*: The kingdom will grow from an internal dynamic (Holy Spirit), not from external organisation (Judaism).

Parables in the House (inside the house to the disciples)

**1.** The Hid Treasure (13:44) Value

*Issue*: How valuable should this new-found program of God be to us?

*Main Idea*: God’s kingdom is so valuable a man should give up everything to be part of it.

**2.** The Pearl Merchant (13:45-46) Value

*Issue*: How valuable is this kingdom to Christ?

*Main Idea*: The kingdom was established though Christ’s total self-sacrifice.

**3.** The Dragnet (13:47-50) Responsibilities

*Issue*: How wide should the invitation to the kingdom be made?

*Main Idea*: Evangelism should be done without discrimination.

**4.** The Householder (13:52) Responsibilities

*Issue*: What are the responsibilities of disciples in the kingdom?

*Main Idea*: Edification/teaching should include both the Old and the New truths about the kingdom program of God. (One key new truth is the church age composed of Jews and Gentiles without discrimination—a truth not taught in the OT; Eph. 3:3-6, 9 vs. Zech. 8:23.)

**The Millennium**

I. Introduction

**A. Definitions**

1. "Millennium" means "a period of a thousand years" (Funk & Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary). The English word is derived from the Latin *mille*, "thousand" and *annus*, "year."

2. The word "Millennium," although not mentioned in the Bible, is attached to the thousand-year reign of Christ found six times in Revelation 20 (vv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). According to premillennialists it refers to the 1,000 year earthly reign of Christ in fulfillment of the Abrahamic (Gen. 12), Land (Deut. 30), Davidic (2 Sam. 7), and New (Jer. 31) Covenants.

3. The Millennium is also called “Your kingdom come” (Matt. 6:10) and “the kingdom of God (Luke 19:11), the kingdom of Christ (Rev. 11:15), the regeneration (Matt. 19:28), the times of refreshing (Acts 3:19), and the world to come (Heb. 2:5)" (Ryrie, *Synopsis*, 1953). The “Sabbath rest” (Heb. 4:9) also likely refers to the Millennium.

**B. Major Questions Addressed in the Millennial Views**

1. The millennial question generally concerns when Christ will come in relation to this millennium. Will He return *before* or *after* the millennium?

2. Also, “the millennial question asks what kind of Millennium there will be. That there will be a Millennium is a fact clearly taught in Revelation 20:1-6, but *what kind* of Millennium that will be is and has been strongly debated through the years” (Ryrie, *Rapture*, 10, emphasis mine).

**C. Basic Comparisons Between the Millennial Views**

The two issues above are contrasted on the following chart (cf. p. 27):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **View** | **Time**  ***When* is the Millennium?**  ***Before/after* Christ’s Return?**  ***How long* is it?** | **Nature**  ***What kind* of Millennium?** |
| 1. | Amillennialism | • Between 1st & 2nd advents  • Before the Second Coming  • Indefinite length | • Spiritual kingdom of Christ  • The present age itself |
| 2. | Postmillennialism | • No Specific Beginning Point  • Before the Second Coming  • Indefinite length (but a very  few say it is a *literal* 1000  years, such as Boettner &  Chilton) | • Literal rule of the Church on  earth without Christ present  • Similar to the present age  (sin, marriage, birth & death  present but greatly reduced) |
| 3. | Premillennialism | • Future  • After the Second Coming  • Literal 1000 years | • Literal rule of Christ on earth  • Similar to postmil except  Jewish elements, topographical  changes, etc. |

**D. Millennial Advocates by Century**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Premillennialists** | **Amillennialists** | **Postmillennialists** |
| 1[[43]](#footnote-43) | *Epistle of Barnabas* (70-100 or 117-138), *The Didache* (before 99), Clement of Rome (wrote 90-100), *The Shepherd of Hermas* (96 or 140-150), Ignatius (died 98/117), Papias (60-140) |  |  |
| 2 | Polycarp (70-160), Justin Martyr (100-165), Melito of Sardis, Theophilis of Antioch (115-181), Apollinaris of Hierapolis (175), Irenaeus (120-202) |  |  |
| 3 | Clement of Alexandria (wrote 193-220), Hippolytus (died 236), Tertullian (150-225), Julius Africanus (died 240), Cyprian (200-258), Nepos (wrote 230-250), Coracion (230-280), Commodian (200-275) | Alexandrian School (allegorizing, spiritualization): Clement of Alexandria (wrote 193-220), Origen (185-254), Dionysius (190-265) |  |
| 4 | Victorinus of Pettau (died 304), Methodius (died 311), Lactantius (240-320), Hilary (300-367), Apollinarius of Laodicea (310-390), Jerome (340-420), Ambrosiaster (wrote 366-384), Augustine (354-430)—later turned amillennial | Caius (Gaius-early 300s), African Donatist (heretical) Tyconius, Augustine (354-430)—previously premillennial | NOTE: Both amillennialists and postmillennialists claim Augustine taught their views. A nonliteral view of the millennium prevailed from the 4th to the 16th centuries. |
| 5 | Theodoret (390-457) | See “NOTE” at right | See “NOTE” above |
| 6 | Cassiodorus (477-570), Gregory the Great (546-604) | See “NOTE” at right | See “NOTE” above |
| 7 | Isidore of Seville (died 636) | See “NOTE” at right | English Divines[[44]](#footnote-44) |
| 8 | Andrew of Crete (660-740), John of Damascus (700-754) | See “NOTE” at right | See “NOTE” above |
| 9-15 | Mystic Sects (9th century)? | See “NOTE” at right | Joachim of Flores (1130-1202) |
| 16 | Anabaptists (beginning 1520)—but some postmillennial, Hugo Grotius (1583-1643) | M. Luther (1483-1546), Melanchthon (1497-1560), J. Calvin (1509-1564) | Some Anabaptists (others premil.), Jän Matthys (1534), Thomas Brightman (1562-1607) |
| 17 | Lutherans Philip Spener (1634-1705), Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669), John Albrecht Bengel (1687-1751); Calvinist Johann Heinrich Alsted (1627), Anglican Joseph Mede (1586-1638), John Edwards (1639-1716), Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), Pierre Poiret (1646-1719) | Matthew Henry (died 1714) | English Congregationalists,  Daniel Whitby (1638-1726) |
| 18 | Isaac Watts (1674-1748), John Davenport, Samuel Sewell, Timothy Dwight, Samuel Increase, Cotton Mather |  | Jonathan Edwards (1739) |
| 19 | Dispensational: Edward Irving (1792-1834), John Nelson Darby (1800-1882), C. H. Mackintosh, William Kelly, F. W. Grant, Henry Moorhouse, James Hall Brooks, W. E. Blackstone, Sir Robert Anderson, William E. Blackstone, I. M. Haldeman, D. L. Moody (1837-1899)  Nondispensational: Henry Alford, Nathaniel West, H. Guinness, S. Kellogg, Franz Delitzsch | Carl Friedrich Keil | Charles Finney (mid 1800s),  David Brown (1867),  Charles Hodge (1871),  W. G. T. Shedd (1888) |
| 20 | Dispensational: G. Campbell Morgan, H. A. Ironside, C. I. Scofield (1843-1921), Lewis Sperry Chafer (1871-1952), Alva J. McClain, George N. H. Peters, Arno C. & Frank Gaebelein, Leon Wood, Eric Sauer, Rene Pache, Herman Hoyt; Charles, John, & Paul Feinberg; John F. Walvoord, J. Dwight Pentecost, Charles Ryrie, Robert Saucy, Earl Radmacher, Darrell Bock, Craig A. Blaising, Paul P. Enns  Nondispensational: G. E. Ladd, Gleason Archer, J. Barton Payne, Robert Mounce, D. A. Carson, Alexander Reese, Douglas Moo, Millard J. Erickson, Walter Kaiser, Wayne Grudem | *Oswald T. Allis*, *Louis Berkhof*, *G. C. Berkouwer*, *William E. Cox*, Theodore Graebner, William J. Grier, Floyd E. Hamilton, *William Hendriksen*, *Anthony Hoekema*, Jesse Wilson Hodges, *Archibald Hughes*, R. Bradley Jones, Abraham Kuyper, *H. C. Leupold*, *Philip Mauro*, *Leon Morris*, George L. Murray, Albertus Pieters, *Henry Barclay Swete*, Stephen Travis, Geerhardus Vos, Michael Wilcock, Martin J. Wyngaarden, Bruce Waltke (started dispensational)  \* names in *italics* are most influential | Classical (generally older):  Augustus H. Strong (1907),  James H. Snowden (1919),  B. B. Warfield (1929),  Roderick Campbell (1954),  Loraine Boettner (1957),  J. Marcellus Kik (1974),  Jefferson John Davis (1986)  Theonomy (new):  Greg Bahnsen (1977),  David Chilton,  Gary DeMar,  Gary North,  Rousas J. Rushdoony |

**Dispensational Features in the Patristic Period**

Larry Crutchfield (1 of 2)

**Dispensational Features in the Patristic Period**

Larry Crutchfield (2 of 2)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (1 of 11)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (2 of 11)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (3 of 11)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (4 of 11)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (5 of 11)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (6 of 11)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (7 of 11)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (8 of 11)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (9 of 11)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (10 of 11)

**Millennialism Through the Centuries**

Dr. J. Paul Tanner, Singapore Bible College (11 of 11)

**E. Chart of the Four Major Millennial Views**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Categories*** | **Amillennialism** | **Postmillennialism** | **Covenant Premillennialism** | **Dispensational Premillennialism** |
| *Millennium & Christ’s reign* | Present spiritual (not literal) rule of Christ between 1st and 2nd advents of Christ | Future earthly time of peace ushered in by the Church preaching the gospel (span unknown) | Present rule of Christ in heaven and future rule of Christ on earth (possibly 1000 years) | Primarily future rule of Christ on earth for 1000 years, but some present aspects too |
| *Israel and the Church* | Church is the new Israel with no distinctions | Church is the new Israel with no distinctions | Church is the new Israel with some distinctions | Church is not the new Israel though some continuities remain |
| *Future for Israel* | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| *Tribulation* | Experienced in present age or precedes Christ’s return | Experienced in present age but will diminish as millennium arrives | The Church will experience some or all of the 7-year period | Church will escape the entire 7-year period via the rapture |
| *Second Coming* | Single event; no distinction between rapture and revelation; leads into eternal state | Single event; no distinction between rapture and revelation; leads into eternal state | Single event (posttrib) or three and year separation (midtrib); leads into millennium | Two-phase event: rapture and revelation 7 yrs. later (pretrib); leads into millennium |
| *Resurrection* | General resurrection of believers and unbelievers at Christ’s second coming | General resurrection of believers and unbelievers at Christ’s second coming | Two resurrections:  1. Believers raised  before the Millennium 2. Unbelievers raised after the Millennium | Three resurrections:  1. Church at rapture  2. OT/tribulation saints after Tribulation  3. Unbelievers after Millennium |
| *Judgments* | General judgment at Christ’s second coming | General judgment at Christ’s second coming | Two Judgments:  1. Second Coming  2. End of Millennium | Three Judgments:  1. Believers at rapture  2. OT & Tribulation saints+Jews+Gentiles after Tribulation  3. Satan/demons and unbelievers after Millennium |
| *Hermeneutics* | Spiritualizing is OK | Spiritualizing is OK | Spiritualizing and literal view both used | Literal view consistently used |
| *144,000 (Rev. 7)* | Church | Church | Church | Jews |
| *Ezekiel 40–48* | Church or Solomon’s or Zerubbabel’s or Herod’s or eternal or ideal temple | | | Millennial temple |
| *Optimism* | Middle | Most optimistic | Pessimistic & realistic | Pessimistic & realistic |
| *Popularity* | Most popular (mostly via Catholicism) | Least popular (due partly to world wars) | Growing in popularity | Second-most popular (most popular among evangelicals) |
| *Adherents* | Carl Friedrich Keil  Louis Berkhof  O. T. Allis  Sam Hamstra  G. C. Berkouwer  Anthony Hoekema | Charles Hodge  B. B. Warfield  W. G. T. Shedd  Augustus H. Strong  Loraine Boettner | George E. Ladd  Alexander Reese  Millard J. Erickson  Robert Mounce  Wayne Grudem | Lewis Sperry Chafer  J. Dwight Pentecost  Charles Ryrie  John F. Walvoord  Herman Hoyt  Darrell Bock |
| *Associations* | Catholics & Anglicans  Lutherans  Reformed perspective  European schools  Liberal seminaries  Westminster Seminary | Liberation Theology  Theonomists | Fuller Seminary  Signs & Wonders  TEDS  Wheaton College | Dallas Seminary  Talbot Seminary  Western Seminary  Grace Seminary  Moody Bible Institute  Most evangelicals |

II. Premillennialism

**A. Meaning**

1. "The premillennial view interprets Scripture as teaching that the second coming of Christ will occur first and be followed by a thousand year reign of Christ on the earth before the eternal state of the new heaven and the new earth is brought in. It is called premillennial because the coming of Christ is before the millennial kingdom" (Chafer/Walvoord, *Major Bible Themes*, 352).

2. Premillennialism is distinct from dispensationalism in that not all premillennialists are indeed dispensationalists (cf. pp. 129-32). Some who believe that the Second Coming will precede the Millennium (i.e., are premillennialists) do *not* believe that Israel and the Church are distinct in God's program (which is a tenant of dispensationalism). George Eldon Ladd, a member of this (smaller) group, has attached the title "historic premillennialist" to premillennialists who teach that the Church is Israel. Personally, I feel the terms “nondispensational premillennialist” or “covenant premillennialist” are more accurate as it remains to be demonstrated that Ladd represents the older, more “historic” viewpoint on premillennialism. The following evaluation, however, will concern itself primarily with dispensational premillennialism.

**B. Advocates**

1. Premillennialism was the dominant eschatological interpretation of the first three centuries of the Christian era, though it was not designated by this title until the 1800s. Several ancients noted distinguishing economies (dispensations) in the program of God: Justin Martyr (AD 110-165), Irenaeus (AD 130-200), and Clement of Alexandria (AD 150-220). Even Augustine (AD 354-430), while pioneering the amillennial system, also distinguished between the “former dispensation” when sacrifices were offered and the present age when they are unsuitable (Enns, 514). For an excellent study consult the two-part article by Larry V. Crutchfield, “Rudiments of Dispensationalism in the Anti-Nicene Period [AD 100-325],” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 144 (July-September 1987): 254-76; 144 (October-December 1987): 377-401 (cf. notes, 121a-b).

2. From Augustine (when amillennialism became prominent during Constantine’s reign) throughout the Middle Ages premillennialism still continued among some groups of believers, though a minor view. At the Reformation both Protestants and Catholics persecuted premillennial Anabaptists. Later Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588-1638) revived the view in an academic form in the modern world. Following him were dispensationalists such as Pierre Poiret (1646-1719), John Edwards (1637-1716), and Isaac Watts (1674-1748), who wrote premillennial hymns (e.g., “Jesus Shall Reign”).

3. Dispensationalism waned at the height of postmillennialism during the eighteenth century age of the Enlightenment. However, since the nineteenth century (especially through the teachings and writings of John Nelson Darby, 1800-1882) premillennialism has gained momentum and is the most common millennial view today (cf. p. 149).

4. Modern advocates of dispensational premillennialism include: Lewis Sperry Chafer, Charles L. Feinberg, Arno C. Gaebelein, I. M. Haldeman, Herman A. Hoyt, H. A. Ironside, Hal Lindsey, Alva J. McClain, J. Dwight Pentecost, George N. H. Peters, Charles C. Ryrie, Erich Sauer, C. I. Scofield, Paul Lee Tan, Thomas Ice, Randall Price, and John F. Walvoord. Progressive dispensationalists include Darrell Bock, Craig Blaising, C. Marvin Pate, Bruce Ware, and Robert Saucy.

5. Within dispensationalism there exist several different perspectives on the kingdom. Some see no kingdom in view in the present age (e.g., Toussaint) whereas most see some kingdom aspects present. Views on the kingdom are surveyed well by Ludwigson, 69-83. The chart on the next page demonstrates some of the development within this system of theology:

Representative Disp. Schemes (Enns, 518)

C. Diagram



**D. Support Cited**

1. The best hermeneutical approach to the Scriptures is a normal, literal, historical, grammatical interpretation.

a. As mentioned earlier, this does not exclude the use of figures. "The literal meaning of the figurative expression is the proper or natural meaning as understood by students of language. Whenever a figure is used, its literal meaning is precisely that meaning determined by grammatical studies of figures. Hence, figurative interpretation does not pertain to the spiritual or mystical sense of Scripture, but to the literal sense" (Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, 141 incorrect).

b. Radmacher also adds that "literalism is not the same as letterism… we realize upon our reading the statement of Jesus, 'I am the door,' that he is not a 2'8" x 6'8" birch door, but he is that which the figure literally signifies, namely, a way of entrance and, more specifically in the context, the way of entrance into eternal life. The literal meaning is the intention of the metaphor" (Earl Radmacher, “The Current Status of Dispensationalism and Its Eschatology,” in *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology*, eds. K. Kantzer & S. Gundry [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], 167-168).

2. The Second Coming of Christ will precede the Millennium (Rev. 19 precedes Rev. 20).

a. Revelation 1:19 gives an overview of the book of Revelation when the angel commanded John to write "the things which you have seen" (Rev. 1), "the things which are" (Rev. 2–3), and "the things which shall take place after these things" (Rev. 4–22). In this third section of the book the Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 19:11-21) precedes the Millennium (Rev. 20:1-6) in chronological order.

b. Since Christ will be physically present during the kingdom age (Isa. 11:3-4) ruling at Jerusalem (Isa. 24:23; Mic. 4:7; 5:2b), He must return *before* this age can begin. Acts 1:6-11 notes that the kingdom will not be restored to Israel until He returns.

3. The Millennium will be a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on earth (Rev. 20:1-6).

a. Revelation 20:2-7 states six times that Christ's kingdom will last 1000 years.

b. "Those who lived next to the Apostles, and the whole Church for 300 years, understood [the 1000 years] in the plain literal sense; and it is a strange sight in these days to see expositors who are among the first in reverence of antiquity, complacently casting aside [what nearly all the ancient Bible expositors taught]" (Henry Alford, *The Greek New Testament*, 4:372).

c. Although Christ's reign is eternal (Luke 1:30-33; 1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 11:15), His earthly theocratic rule is limited to 1000 years according to Revelation 20:1-6.

d. The Millennium is separated by resurrections before and after, so there must be a time period to divide the two (not a general resurrection as amillennialists claim).

4. There exists a future period of time which describes neither the present age nor the eternal state. This age fits the characteristics of the age of Messiah’s rule and is noted in detail in the following texts (cf. see also Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1127-1131):

a. Isaiah 11:6-9 notes a time when ferocious animals are tame towards one another (e.g., “wolf will live with the lamb”) and with children (e.g., “child put his hand into the viper’s nest”). Should we take this literally? And when is this?

1) *Symbolic:* Some say this portrays peace between believers (John Calvin, *Isaiah*, 1:101). But this ignores the plain reading of the text. If the animals are believers, then who are the children? And which church has complete peace?

2) *Literal:* Most admit that the text does refer to the animal kingdom.

a) Present: Some amillennialists say it’s possible today. “When righteousness, faithfulness and the knowledge of Yahweh control the palace, such a scene is possible” (John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33,* WBC, 175). But how do even godly kings tame animals today? And where has this ever happened?

b) Never to be Fulfilled: Modern rationalists teach claim that Isaiah has a beautiful dream wish here (cited by Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, 7:285). Yet this view is of little help either to Isaiah or us—and the text says that it will be fulfilled in association with Messiah’s rule (note the repeated “will…”).

c) Future: Most agree that this scene has not happened yet. But when?

1] Eternal State: Many see this fulfilled in the new heavens and new earth (e.g., Leupold, *Exposition of Isaiah*, 1:222; Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 1–12*, OTL, 161). However, the new earth will have no death (Rev. 21:4) but Isaiah 11:10-16 says “in that day” Israel will be restored to her promised boundaries by plundering the surrounding nations. “The LORD will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant… of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt,” etc. (v. 11). While some say the first time was at the Exodus (*NIV Study Bible*, 1027), this restored the entire nation (not just a remnant). The first time He restored a remnant was in 538 BC but this will happen again at Christ’s return to restore descendants of those dispersed in AD 70.

2] Millennial State: I agree with those who see Isaiah depicting a future, earthly scene (e.g., Delitzsch, 7:285; Ronald Clements, *Isaiah 1–39*, NCBC, 122; W. E. Vine, *Isaiah*, 49-50). “The earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord” then and peace will be “on all my holy mountain” (v. 9), which is Jerusalem.

b. Isaiah 65:20 notes that those who die at 100 will be considered young. Leupold (3:366) claims this will happen in the new heavens and new earth, but Scripture is clear that death will be done away with at this time (Rev. 21:4).

c. Psalm 72 has more depictions of life under the millennial state than any psalm.

d. Zechariah 14:5-17 records that following Messiah’s return, the nations will go up to Jerusalem for worship year after year. This cannot fit into an amillennial scheme where believers would be: (1) in heaven immediately following Christ’s return, or (2) on a renewed earth without the sun, night, or time (Rev. 21:22-25).

5. The Church Age: Premillennialism best fits the NT data about the present age. Israel rejected Christ’s kingdom offer and has been temporarily rejected by the Lord. This present era is called the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24) while the gospel is preached to the world before Israel repents at Christ’s return (cf. p. 127). Paul notes that the Church was unforeseen in the OT (Eph. 3:5-6; Rom. 16:25; Col. 1:24-27) and Israel’s kingdom promises have not been abandoned but postponed (Rom. 11:25-26).

a. Kingdom Offer: Christ qualified to offer Israel a literal kingdom after their repentance.

(1) *Jesus qualifies to offer the kingdom.* The NT gives evidence that Jesus Christ is the long awaited Messiah who qualifies for the Davidic throne both legally (Matt. 1:1-17) and physically (Luke 3:23-33). He qualifies as Messiah also in His advent (Matt. 1-2) that includes the fulfillment of prophecy in His virgin birth (Isa. 7:14; cf. Matt. 1:23) in the town of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; cf. Matt. 2:1-10). His Messiahship also is seen His approvals by John (Matt. 3:1ff.), the Father (Matt. 3:14ff.), and the Spirit in His victory over temptation by Satan (Matt. 4:1ff.), as well as in His authority over men (Matt. 4:15ff.), His Sermon (Matt. 5–7), and His authentications through miracles and authority to demand discipleship expected from subjects of the King (Matt. 8:1–11:1).

2) *Jesus offers a literal kingdom.*  Amillennialists claim that Christ offered a spiritual (not literal/physical) kingdom, but this cannot be supported. John preached repentance for kingdom entrance (Matt. 3:2), and Christ proclaimed the same message (Matt. 4:17). The people understood them as speaking of a literal, earthly kingdom, since no other type of kingdom had been discussed in the OT. The disciples also understood this kingdom to be literal because Jesus said they would sit on thrones with Him (Matt. 19:28), and when they argued over which thrones they would have, the Lord never rebuked them for a wrong view of the kingdom (Matt. 20:23). Even after the resurrection they saw the kingdom as earthly, but Christ corrected only their misconception about the *timing* of the kingdom—not its nature (Acts 1:6-8; 3:21).

(3) *The requisite for kingdom entrance was repentance*. The Land Covenant would be unfulfilled until Israel repented (Deut. 30:1-10). John and Christ preached the same, offering the kingdom by repentance (Matt. 3:2; 4:17) and turning to Jesus (John 3:3-5). Christ’s Sermon on the Mount explained what a repentant heart and life looked like for his hearers to enter the kingdom (Matt. 5–7). Therefore, when Christ came to Israel He was offering Himself and also the kingdom to the nation (cf. Luke 17:21).

(4) *Christ offered the kingdom officially at His Triumphal Entry.* Arrival in Jerusalem on a donkey fulfilled Zechariah 9:9, which declared that the king would be presented in this manner. The offer was clear, and He even timed it exactly by concluding the 69th week on the very day of the His entry into Jerusalem (cf. Dan. 9:25-26; cf. p. 85).

b. Israel's Response: The nation rejected the kingdom and the Messiah.

(1) *Initial response.* At first Israel received Jesus in His early Perean, Samaritan, and Galilean ministries. John drew great crowds that eventually started following Christ in Judea. Then Christ's ministry to a Samaritan woman saw the entire town believe (John 4). While Nazareth rejected Him, other Galilean cities were very receptive.

(2) *Leadership response.*  However, the tide soon turned as the leadership challenged Christ's authority as Messiah. Their blinded eyes and jealousy over His popularity prevented them from belief even based on His miracles. The climactic point of the leadership rejection was when they blasphemed the Holy Spirit by attributing His divine power to Satanic origin (Matt. 12).

(3) *Christ's response.*  After rejection by the leadership, Christ began preaching in parables, in particular, the parables of the mysteries of the kingdom (Matt. 13). These parables hid truth from the unbelieving and revealed truth to the believers—the formerly unrevealed truth of the Interadvent Age, which includes the church. Christ also responded by withdrawing several times when the opposition may have led to a premature death not in accordance with God's timing. He also ministered extensively to the Gentiles in light of the nation's rejection. Notice that Jesus initially said the Gospel was to be offered only to Jews (Matt. 10:5-7) but after the nation had demonstrated preliminary rejection He offered kingdom privileges (e.g., healing) to Gentiles as well (Matt. 15:23, 28). See Hoyt’s discussion in Clouse, 85-88.

(4) *Ultimate rejection.* At Christ's presentation of Himself as the nation's King at the Triumphal Entry, the pilgrims outside Jerusalem shouted "Hosanna!" However, the people of Jerusalem did not accept Him as Messiah. For this reason Christ lamented over the city by using the imagery of a hen that wanted to warm her chickens but was spurned (Matt. 23:37-39). The nation’s ultimate rejection followed only a few days later in its release of a murderer while murdering the very Messiah who offered the kingdom. The national rejection was so determined that allegiance was given to the pagan, ruthless Caesar instead of to its real King.

c. Christ’s Response: After the nation rejected the kingdom and Christ as Messiah, the kingdom offer was again given by Peter (Acts 3:19-20; cf. Stanley D. Toussaint, “The Contingency of the Coming of the Kingdom,” in *Integrity of Heart, Skillfulness of Hands,* eds. Dyer & Zuck [Baker, 1994], 230). The offer continues today but will not be accepted until Israel will repent at Christ’s Second Coming (Zech. 12:10). Until this time Gentiles will rule over Israel (“Times of the Gentiles,” p. 127) and Gentiles are being offered opportunity to enter the kingdom by the church spreading the gospel throughout the world (Matt. 24:14). Paul points out in Romans 9–11 that God’s rejection of Israel is only temporary (since Israel’s golden age or millennium is yet future) and partial (since individual Jews may still trust Christ as Messiah though the nation continues to reject Him). Therefore, Israel's rejection of the kingdom allows the full measure of the Gentiles to come into His family until the nation will believe in the future.

d. Our Response: The parable of the minas asks, “The King has gone away for now, but will He return to find us faithful to use what He has left us?” (Luke 19:11-27).

6. Rule by the saints is not in heaven now as the amillennialists claim. Scripture confirms that “they will reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:10) which shows both the time (future) and place (earth). That the rule is future is noted in other texts as well (Luke 19:17, 19; 1 Cor. 6:3; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 20:4-6 is after a resurrection).

7. The chronological order of events in the Millennium is summarized on the “Outline of End-Time Events Predicted in the Bible” (pp. 105-6) and needs no repetition here. Please consult this outline for a detailed description of millennial life.

8. The premillennial view is the best explanation of how the Abrahamic Covenant and its related covenants will be fulfilled (cf. pp. 20-25). All four biblical covenants will be fulfilled in the kingdom:

Max Ander’s “The Abrahamic Covenant and Its Fulfillment” Chart

9. As previously noted, premillennialists fall into two major groups: dispensationalist and “historic” (covenant or nondispensational). The following notes key arguments of the covenant school and responds to each of them (but see also the following page):

a. The church is spiritual Israel. Ladd says that Paul “applies prophecies to the church which in their Old Testament setting belong to literal Israel; he calls the church sons, the seeds of Abraham. He calls believers the true circumcision. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Paul sees the church as spiritual Israel” (*The Meaning of the Millennium*, 25).

Response: Ladd correctly identifies this issue of the distinction between Israel and the church as the major point of difference between historic and dispensational premillennialism (*ibid.*, 19). To this the following can be pointed out:

(1) Illustration and fulfillment are not the same thing. Hoyt (*ibid.*, 42-43) responds to Ladd’s claim: “In passage after passage Ladd insists that the New Testament is interpreting the Old when the New Testament is simply applying a *principle* found in the Old Testament (Hos. 11:1 with Mt. 2:15; Hos. 1:10; 2:23 with Rom. 9:24-26). Rushing to the conclusion that these references identify the church and Israel as the same body of the saved is wholly gratuitous. Even though ‘the New Testament applies the Old Testament prophecies to the New Testament church’ (p. 23), it does not do so in the sense of *identifying* the church as spiritual Israel. It makes such application merely for the purpose of explaining something that is true of both” (emphasis mine). In other words, a typological interpretation does not establish identity between the type and the antitype because similarity is not the same as identity. For example, sacrifices in Leviticus were a type of Christ in Hebrews—but the type and antitype are not identified as one and the same.

(2) Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, 389-90 notes in regard to the distinction between Israel and the church, “The term *Israel* always refers to the physical posterity of Jacob; nowhere does it refer to the church. Although nondispensationalists frequently refer to the church as the ‘new Israel,’ there is no biblical warrant for doing so. Many passages indicate that Israel was still regarded as a distinct entity after the birth of the church (Rom. 9:6; 1 Cor. 10:32). Israel was given unconditional promises (covenants) in the Old Testament that must be fulfilled with Israel in the millennial kingdom. The church, on the other hand, is a distinct New Testament entity born at Pentecost (1 Cor. 12:13) and not existing in the Old Testament, nor prophesied in the Old Testament (Eph. 3:9). It exists from Pentecost (Acts 2) until the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Herein lies the reason for belief in the pretribulational rapture: the purpose of the Tribulation is to judge unbelieving Gentiles and to discipline disobedient Israel (Jer. 30:7); the church does not have purpose or place in the Tribulation” (emphasis his).

b. The dispensational conception of millennial sacrifices contradicts Hebrews 8:8-13. Ladd claims that Hebrews 8 refutes dispensationalism because it “affirms that the new covenant in Christ has displaced the Old Testament cult which is therefore doomed to pass away” (*ibid.*, 26-27).

Response: The Old Testament passages on millennial sacrifices (particularly Ezekiel 40—48 in the millennial temple) have often been seen by dispensationalists as memorial sacrifices looking back to the death of Christ. Whether this is the right view or not is not the point. The issue is how one approaches these nine chapters describing a literal temple with boundaries and many other specifics. No temple has even remotely resembled Ezekiel’s, which means that his must be a future temple. This issue is very complicated and is addressed later in these notes (pp. 133-41).

**Covenant and Dispensational Theology Contrasted**

Robert C. Walton, *Chronological And Background Charts of Church History*, 65

See also Stephen R. Spencer, “Reformed Theology, Covenant Theology, and Dispensationalism,”

in *Integrity of Heart, Skillfulness of Hands,* eds. Dyer & Zuck (Baker, 1994), 238-54

**We Believe in Dispensationalism (DTS)**

**We Believe in Dispensationalism (DTS, 2 of 4)**

**We Believe in Dispensationalism (DTS, 3 of 4)**

**We Believe in Dispensationalism (DTS, 4 of 4)**

**Israel & the Church: Continuity & Discontinuity**

One issue over which a lot of scholarly ink flows is the extent to which Israel relates to the Church. Some (especially amillennialists, postmillennialists, and covenant premillennialists) argue that the Church is the “new Israel” with complete continuity between the two entities. Thus, the Church is seen to have simply replaced Israel and assumed her promises and covenants.

The opposite view is classical and revised dispensationalism which holds a discontinuity model. In this scheme there are two separate peoples of God: Israel and the Church. The only overlap is believers today participating in some aspects of the Abrahamic and New Covenants (cf. pp. 20-25).

I have held both views in the past, but recently have adopted a third model with some elements of progressive dispensationalism. This newer system (since 1987) emphasizes both continuity and discontinuity yet still holds the dispensational distinctive that the Church is *not* the “new Israel.” Rather, it is a continuation of God’s covenant plan begun with Israel and continuing with a believing remnant of Israel today, along with Gentile believers who have been grafted into the Abrahamic Covenant (see Romans 9–11; Galatians 3). Here are some points of difference and contact between these two entities:

**Discontinuity**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Israel** | **Church** |
| Identity | Physical seed of Abraham (Gal. 6:12-16) | Spiritual seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:7, 29) |
| Land Covenant | Still outstanding (Deut. 30:1-10) but partly fulfilled since 1948 (Ezek. 37:1-7) | No land promise (Land Covenant) can be claimed by present believers |
| Law | Required to obey the law (Exod. 19—20) | Freedom from the law (Rom. 7; Gal. 3) |
| Duration | Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3) to eternity (Jer. 31:35-37) | Pentecost (Acts 2) to Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18) or even later (?) |
| Wrath | Experienced in Tribulation (Jer. 30:7) | Free from wrath (1 Thess. 5:9; Rev. 3:10) |
| Faith | Shown in offering sacrifices | Shown in trusting Christ’s sacrifice |
| Priesthood | *Has* one: a special class by heredity | *Is* one: all are priests (1 Pet. 2:5) |
| Activity | Set aside between 69th & 70th “Weeks” (Dan. 9:24-27)—a part of the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24) | Between 69th & 70th “Weeks” the church is a mystery unforeseen in the OT (Eph. 3:1-9; Col. 1:26) |
| Qualification | Ethnic—descendants of Abraham or Gentile proselytes who became Jews through circumcision as blessing is through Israel (1 Kings 8:41-43; Isa. 2:2-3; 19:19-25; 49:6; 51:4; 56:6-8; Zech. 14:16-19) | Nonethnic—“Neither Jew nor Gentile” (Gal. 3:28) means a combination of Jews and Gentiles without need to become Jewish proselytes (Acts 15; Eph. 3:3, 6) |

**Continuity**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Israel** | **Church** |
| Abrahamic Covenant | Origin in Abraham as the father of the nation (Gen. 12:1-3) | Believers today are grafted into this same covenant (Rom. 11:17-21; cf. Gal. 3:29) |
| Davidic Covenant | Promise of a literal temple (2 Sam. 7:13) fulfilled by Solomon (1 Kings) | Functions now as a spiritual temple  (Eph. 2:19-22) |
| New Covenant | Promised forgiveness of sins, indwelling Spirit, new heart, reunification of Israel and Judah, and knowledge of God throughout the earth (Jer. 31:31-34) | The first three aspects (forgiveness of sins, indwelling Spirit, new heart) true today in a progressive fulfillment of the covenant (Luke 22:20) |
| Law | Required to obey the Mosaic law (Exod. 19—20) | Required to obey the “law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2) or “law that gives freedom” (James 1:25; 2:12) |
| Salvation by | God’s grace through faith (Gen. 15:6) | God’s grace through faith (Rom. 4:3) |
| Basis of Salvation | Sacrificial lamb  (Gen. 22:8; Exod. 12:21; Lev. 3:7) | Sacrificial Lamb  (John 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7; Rev. 5–7; 21:27) |
| Spirit | Filling on leaders (Judg. 13:10; Num. 27:18; 1 Sam. 10:10) | Indwelling of all believers (Rom. 8:9) |
| Prophets | Provided revelation of God’s word (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:18-22) | Foundation of the church (Eph. 2:20) |
| Election | Based on grace (Mal. 1:2) | Based on grace (Eph. 1:4-6, 11) |
| Disobedience | Lead to God’s discipline (Deut. 28:15-68) | Leads to God’s discipline (1 Cor. 11:30) |
| Leadership | Elders (Exod. 3:16, 18; 4:29, 31;12:21; Num. 11:16-17; Josh. 24:31; 1 Sam. 15:30; 2 Sam. 17:4, 15; 1 Kings 21:8, 11 and many other texts) | Elders (Acts 11:30; 14:23-24; 15:1-6; 16:4; 20:17-38; 21:17-26; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:14; 5:17-25; Tit. 1:5-9; Jas. 5:14; 1 Pet. 5:1-5; Heb. 13:17) |
| Witness | “light for the Gentiles” (Isa. 49:3-6)  “kingdom of priests” (Exod. 19:6)  “holy nation” (Exod. 19:6) | “light of the world” (Matt. 5:14-16)  “holy…royal priesthood” (1 Pet. 2:5, 9)  “holy nation” (1 Pet. 5:9) |

**Gentile Engrafting**

Adapted from Romans 11 notes of John D. Grassmick, Romans 206, Dallas Seminary, 1985, p. 48

In Romans 11:17-27 Paul clarifies the present relationship of both Jews and Gentiles to the Abrahamic Covenant by using an illustration of two olive trees.

This covenant is a place of both opportunity and privilege: first given to Israel (cultivated olive tree) but after the unbelief of individual Jews (branches cut off) also extended to Gentiles (wild olive tree) in the church (branches grafted into the cultivated olive tree).

Paul’s purpose here is twofold:

1. To warn Gentiles against pride in light of God’s discipline of Israel for unbelief (11:17, 21-22)

2. To give an argument for the restoration of Israel (11:22-27)

Graphically, the Gentile engrafting looks like this:

**Parts of the Tree**

***Branches*** (11:17-21):

a Natural: Ethnic Israel, descendants of Abraham (9:4-5)

1) *Those remaining in or grafted in* = believing Jews who exercise the faith of Abraham (11:23-24)

2) *Those cut off* (11:19-21)= unbelieving Jews who do not exercise the faith of Abraham (hardened, 11:7b)

b Wild: Gentile humanity as a whole

1) *Those grafted in* = believing Gentiles (11:17b, 22)

2) *Those cut off* = unbelieving Gentiles (11:21b)

***Trunk*** (11:24): place of spiritual blessing and responsibility in relationship to the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:3b; Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:8)

***Nourishing Sap of the Root*** (11:17b): opportunity due to God’s grace of a relationship to Abraham as his spiritual descendants (place of privilege)

***Root*** (11:16-18): Abraham & the patriarchs

**Cultivated Olive Tree**

(Abrahamic Covenant)

**Wild Olive Tree**

(All Gentiles)

**Israel & the Church in Romans 9–11**

The key passage in Scripture that clarifies the relationship between Israel and the church is Romans 9–11. The next two pages are taken from my New Testament Survey class notes to show how God’s dealings with these two entities show His righteousness:

**V. (Chs. 9—11) God's righteousness *vindicated* in His election of Israel, who rejected Christ for works and is now partially and temporarily rejected, provides Gentile salvation to warn the Gentiles of pride and shows God’s faithfulness to His covenant nation Israel.**

A. (9:1-29) God's righteousness is revealed in His sovereign past choice of Israel so that Israel’s failure is not due to God’s unfaithfulness.

1. (9:1-5) Paul grieves that Israel has rejected Christ even though God elected Israel to receive the privileges of adoption, glory, covenants, law, temple worship, promises, and ancestry to Christ.

2. (9:6-18) God’s choice of Israel is illustrated with three Old Testament examples of election to affirm that His sovereign choice by grace is not something new and that Israel’s failure is not due to God’s unfaithfulness.

a. (9:6-9) Isaac’s election over Ishmael showed that being physical descendants of Abraham is insufficient for salvation since one must participate in God’s promise by faith to truly be part of Israel’s blessings.

God can choose one person over another to be a child of promise?

b. (9:10-13) Jacob’s election over Esau showed that God can choose the younger son for blessing rather than the older to serve His sovereign purpose apart from human tradition or merit.

c. (9:14-18) Pharaoh’s hardening by God’s choice demonstrated that God can elect to show mercy on whoever He wishes and harden whom He wishes.

3. (9:19-29) God proves that He is not unjust in electing some for salvation by showing mercy even in judgment through saving Gentiles and preserving a believing Jewish remnant.

\*In addition to Israel being called God’s people in Hosea 1:10; 2:23, here in Romans 9:25-26 the Hosea texts are applied to the Church also as God’s people; yet this still does not annul God’s promise to the nation. See W. Edward Glenny, “The ‘People of God’ in Romans 9:25-26,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152 (January-March 1995): 42-59.

B. (9:30–10:21) God's righteousness is revealed in Israel’s present trust in her own works and rejection of His offer of righteousness through faith in Christ even though this message has been preached throughout the world to Gentiles (shows man’s responsibility).

1. (9:30–10:4) Israel misses out on God’s righteousness because Jews unsuccessfully seek salvation by works while Gentiles successfully find salvation by faith in Christ.

2. (10:5-15) God's offer of salvation by faith in Christ (rather than 100% obedience to the law) is still offered to Israel and all men.

3. (10:16-21) Israel did not reject many opportunities to accept righteousness by faith because of lack of hearing or understanding the gospel of Christ, but because of the nation’s obstinate disobedience in fulfillment of OT prophecies.

C. (Ch. 11) God's righteousness will be revealed in Israel’s future since He rejected her only partially (a remnant is being saved) and temporarily (until she believes at Christ’s return) in faithfulness to His covenant, providing Gentile salvation of which they should not be proud.

1. (11:1-10) God has not rejected His people whom he foreknew (11:2a) because a remnant is now being saved.

2. (11:11-24) The present rejection of Israel is not irreversible but has the greater purpose of enabling Gentile engrafting into the Abrahamic covenant promises for salvation to provoke Israel to accept it and be restored as His future channel of blessing to the world.

\*See the study on page 131b on the wild and cultivated trees.

3. (11:25-32) God has not permanently rejected His people as future salvation will come to Israel as a whole when the nation repents after all elect Gentiles have repented at the return of Christ to Jerusalem (11:26).

4. (11:33-36) God is due all glory and praise for incomparable wisdom and knowledge.

**Summary of Romans 9—11**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **9:1-29** | **9:30–10:21** | **11:1-36** |
| Israel’s past | Israel’s present | Israel’s future |
| God elected Israel | Israel rejects God | God will reject Israel only partially and temporarily |
| Israel’s failure is not due  to God’s unfaithfulness | Israel’s failure is due to rejecting her Messiah | Israel’s failure will be neither total in scope nor final |
| A Jewish remnant has been  preserved by God | But this Jewish remnant  resists Him now | Yet this remnant will grow into an entire believing nation |
| Gentiles have also become elect of God in Christ | Gentiles are now becoming saved by faith in Christ | Gentiles should not be proud over blessings that Jews reject |
| Divine side | Human side | Divine results |
| God’s election | Man’s responsibility | God’s mercy |
| Human unbelief cannot eradicate God’s promises because they are based on the principle of sovereign election | However, God’s election in sovereign grace to fulfill His Word does not irradicate human responsibility for unbelief | Ultimately, God’s election will be justified in the salvation of the Jewish nation alive when Christ returns |

**More Contrasts Between Israel and the Church**

See Enns, 389-90, 522; Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 399

The early church fathers almost unanimously taught that Christ will return to rule over Israel in a literal 1000-year millennium (Rev. 20:1-6; cf. Eschatology notes, 121-121b). However, since the 4th century AD many have taught that there is no future for national Israel due to its rejection of Christ so that Israel’s promises have been transferred to the church as “the new Israel.” Can such a teaching be found in Scripture? I believe it cannot for many reasons:

1. Israel and the Church have several differences in Scripture (see the chart on page 131).

2. Throughout Scripture the term “Israel” always refers to physical descendants of Jacob—it never refers to the church. To claim that it does is to argue from silence.

3. Luke contrasts natural (ethnic) Israel and Gentiles *after* the church is established (Acts 3:12; 4:8, 10; 5:21, 31, 35; 21:19).

4. Paul distinguishes Israel from the church, showing that the church is not Israel. If they were the same, his distinctions would be meaningless.

God has not rejected Israel to replace the nation with the church

Rom. 11:1 I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew.

Some Jews are in the church, a separate group from Israel

Rom. 9:6 … For not all who descended from Israel [the nation] are Israel.

At present, Israel is mostly unsaved (and thus distinct from the saved Church)

Rom. 9:30-31 What then shall we say? That the Gentiles [believers in the Church], who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it.

God is not finished with Israel

Rom. 11:11 Again I ask: Did they [Israel] stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious.

Israel’s hardening is both partial and temporary as the future nation will be saved

Rom. 11:25-27 I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

‘The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.

And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.’

Israel is spoken of as separate from the Church

1 Cor. 10:32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God.

Israel and the Church are separate but fellow-heirs of God’s promises

Eph. 3:6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

5. John notes that 144,000 Jews from all twelve tribes (Rev. 7:1-8) will witness for Christ in the future (Rev. 14:1-5). This group is distinct from believing Gentiles (Rev. 7:9).

6. Matthew repeatedly acknowledged a future for Israel in Christ’s promise that the nation will finally believe in Him (Matt. 1:21; 2:6; 19:28; 23:39). Jewish evangelism will continue until He returns (10:23)

7. Early Church Fathers before AD 325 believed in the 6000-year theory (cf. Eschatology, 112-15), dispensations, a premillennial return of Christ, and imminency (cf. Eschatology, p. 121a Crutchfield right column). Therefore, dispensational features were noted very early in the church.

**Responses to Dispensational Problem Passages**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Passages Some Use to Equate Israel & the Church | Dispensational Responses |
| The church is the “seed of Abraham” (Gal. 3:7; 4:31), which in the OT refers only to Israel. So isn’t the church the “new Israel”? | The church is the *spiritual* seed of Abraham, but this doesn’t mean it replaces the physical seed so that Israel is done away with permanently (cf. Rom. 11:1-2, 11, 15, 25; see preceding page). |
| “Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation. Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:15-16 NIV) but “… mercy be upon them, and [Gr. *kai*] upon the Israel of God” (NASB). | Paul doesn’t say that all who follow the rule (i.e., Christians) are the “true Israel.” He had just attacked the Jewish legalists, so it makes better sense that he announced blessing on Jews who had forsaken legalism to truly follow Christ. Also, “and” is the more natural rendering of *kai.* |
| The church is called the “true circumcision” (Phil. 3:3). | The comparison is not between the church and Israel but between the church and legalistic Jews. |
| Jesus told Pilate His kingdom “is not of this world” but “from another place” (John 18:36). | Christ did not comment on the *place* of His kingdom. He said the *source* of His kingdom was heaven. He did not say that this kingdom could not eventually be established on earth. |
| “Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, ‘The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, “Here it is,” or “There it is,” because the kingdom of God is within you’” (Luke 17:20-21). Isn’t this amillennialism? | The “within you” (NIV) cannot refer to a spiritual rather than literal kingdom. Christ spoke this to unbelieving Pharisees who rejected Him as Messiah, so the kingdom was not *within them!* A better translation is “the kingdom of God is *in your midst*” (the King stood right before them). “All they needed to do was acknowledge that He is indeed the Messiah who could bring in the kingdom—and then the kingdom would come” (Martin, “Luke,” *Bible Knowledge Com.*, 2:249). |
| Amos 9:11-12 says that the Davidic Covenant will be fulfilled, and James quoted this prophecy to say that the rebuilt house of David is the church which was used to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 15:15-18). | James did not say that Amos was *fulfilled* in the church, but only that Gentile inclusion (“the remnant of men”) agreed with the OT prophets. Also, the “return” (Acts 15:16) is used of a literal return (cf. Acts 5:22) which precedes the fulfillment of Amos’ prophecy. This means Christ’s return will precede the re-establishment of David’s throne. Christ’s present ministry at the Father’s right hand (Rom. 8:34) is not elsewhere in the NT associated with the Davidic throne—only when He returns will He occupy this throne (Matt. 19:28; Toussaint, “Acts,” *BKC*, 2:394). |
| Jer. 31:31-34 refers to Israel’s new covenant, which the NT applies to the church (Heb. 8), thus equating Israel with the church. | Not all of Jeremiah’s prophecy applies today (e.g., everyone does not know the Lord), so this is only partially fulfilled (cf. pp. 23-25). |

**Three Stages of Dispensationalism**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Classical** | Revised | **Progressive** |
| Other Names | Essentialist  (by Progressives) | Normative  (by Ryrie) | Nondispensational  (by some classical/revised) |
| Dates | 1830-1952 | 1952-present | 1987-present |
| Scholars | Darby, Scofield, Ironside, Chafer | McClain, Walvoord, Pentecost, Ryrie, Thomas | Bock, Blaising, Saucy,  Pate, Ware |
| Dispensations | 7 | 4 or more | 3 or more |
| Schools | Dallas (until 1952)  Philadelphia College of Bible | Dallas (1952-present)  Talbot, Western,  Moody, Grace | Dallas  Talbot |
| Covenants | Davidic future  Two New Covenants | Davidic future  One New Covenant\* | Davidic present  One New Covenant |
| Continuity | Sharp discontinuity | More continuity | Even more continuity |
| Peoples | Two separate programs:  Israel—earthly  Church—heavenly | Converging programs:  earthly/heavenly distinctions minimal | One people: church continues program with Israel until Israel believes |
| Believers in Daniel’s 70th Week | Tribulation saints  who are not  part of the church | Tribulation saints  who are not  part of the church | Tribulation saints  who are  part of the church |
| Church Age | Parenthesis in God’s program with Israel | Parenthesis in God’s program with Israel | Not a parenthesis but a progressive outworking of God’s program |
| Postponement Theory | Upheld belief that the kingdom was postponed due to Israel’s rejection | Believed by many but de-emphasized | Not taught due to progressive fulfillment of the kingdom |
| Kingdom | Totally future | Mostly future (majority) or totally future (some) | Present now though fullest dimensions are future |
| Spirit during Tribulation | Absent and not indwelling | Present but some say not indwelling | Present and  indwelling |
| Sermon on  the Mount | Millennial  principles | Present ethics while anticipating kingdom | Present ethics while anticipating kingdom? |
|  |  |  |  |

\* Ryrie teaches that there is no New Covenant in effect today. In his view, the covenant is not inaugurated now but only paid for: “In other words, clearly our Lord paid for sins that will be forgiven when the new covenant is in force” (*Dispensationalism*, Chicago: Moody, 1995, p. 172). This is a minority view among revised dispensationalists; most acknowledge that the church now participates in some aspects of the New Covenant. For a brief, more representative response of a revised dispensationalist to progressives, see John Witmer’s review of *Dispensationalism, Israel, and the Church*, eds. Blaising & Bock (Zondervan, 1992) in *BibSac* 150 (April-June 1994): 237-40.

What do all these views have in common? All believe in a literal 1000-year reign of Christ in which Israel plays a major part (i.e., ethnic Israel has a future). All also are evangelical (cf. p. 31 “Areas of Agreement”).

**Ezekiel’s Temple/Topography & Sacrifices**

Richard James Griffith, “The Eschatological Significance of the Sabbath,” ThD dissertation, Dallas Seminary, 1990, pp. 235-66

**The Temple/Topography**

The particular temple and time period mentioned here [Ezek. 46:1] have long perplexed scholars. A proper understanding must address both the nature of the temple and the time of its institution (along with the Sabbath). This verse falls within the much debated section of Ezekiel's book (chaps. 40—48) which describes a new temple (chaps. 40—43), a new order of worship (chaps. 44—46), and new boundaries for Israel in Palestine (chaps. 47—48). Ezekiel wrote his prophecy while in exile in Babylon. The Solomonic temple had been destroyed decades earlier and all hope of a national restoration was lost. Nevertheless, God gave him from an eschatological perspective detailed dimensions of a temple not elsewhere described in Scripture. Included with the temple restoration is also a restoration of the national life, animal sacrifices, and priesthood. These chapters have so puzzled commentators that some deny Ezekiel's authorship[[45]](#footnote-45) and many are ambiguous as to the time and nature of the prophecy's fulfillment.[[46]](#footnote-46) However, among those who have proclaimed a position, at least seven different views of these chapters have been proposed.

One suggestion is that this is Solomon's temple,[[47]](#footnote-47) but this view has several flaws. First, the dimensions of these two temples are different. While Solomon's temple was fairly small (90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high),[[48]](#footnote-48) Ezekiel's temple measures much larger (175 feet long and 87.5 feet wide).[[49]](#footnote-49) "The square of the temple in 42:20 is six times as large as the circuit of the wall enclosing the old temple, and, in fact, is larger than the former city itself."[[50]](#footnote-50) Second, if this description depicted the former temple, it must be asked what hope Ezekiel could offer his oppressed brethren by reminding them of the glory of Solomon's temple which at that time lay in ruins. Third, the Books of Kings and Chronicles already provide detailed descriptions of Solomon's temple, so another record would be unnecessary. For these reasons it is evident that Ezekiel's temple is not the same as Solomon's.

A second interpretation supposes that the temple in view here is the post-exilic temple built under Zerubbabel.[[51]](#footnote-51) A plan of Zerubbabel's temple is not provided anywhere in Scripture which makes an exact size comparison of the two impossible. However, since the post-exilic temple failed in comparison to the Solomonic (Hag. 2:3),[[52]](#footnote-52) and the Solomonic failed in comparison to Ezekiel's temple,[[53]](#footnote-53) it follows that the temple of Ezekiel is greater than the post-exilic structure. Therefore, Ezekiel's temple is so large that it cannot be one and the same with that built by Zerubbabel. One searches the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah in vain to find even an attempt on the part of the remnant to follow Ezekiel's plan. Another problem with the post-exilic view is that Ezekiel's temple sits upon a very high mountain (40:2)[[54]](#footnote-54) in contrast to the post-exilic temple, which was built in Jerusalem. A third difference between the two temples relates to those whom they benefited. Whereas Zerubbabel's temple was for the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, this temple serves all twelve tribes (chaps. 47—48) and aliens as well (47:22-23). Fourth, God promised to dwell in this temple perpetually with the nation never defiling his name (43:7), which obviously did not occur with Zerubbabel's temple as it was defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes IV and eventually removed by Rome. Further, never does the prophecy indicate a conditional aspect to its fulfillment. Fifth, the dimensions of the mysterious sanctuary area (750 feet by 750 feet)[[55]](#footnote-55) exceed those of the temple mount (525 feet by 660 feet).[[56]](#footnote-56) Finally, the filling of the temple by the Spirit also mitigates against this Zerubbabel view. This return of the glory of God is prophesied in Ezekiel 43:1-5 but never is the filling mentioned in conjunction with the dedication of the post-exilic temple under Zerubbabel (Ezra 6:13-18). It is inconceivable that Ezra could neglect to record such a happening if it had occurred.

A third temple view is actually a modified version of the preceding perspective. This view perceives the temple as an ideal one[[57]](#footnote-57) (especially apocalyptic in nature),[[58]](#footnote-58) some scholars believing it was planned for the post-exilic community but never built.[[59]](#footnote-59) The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* expresses it thus: "According to [this view] the temple vision would have been literally fulfilled if the people had been faithful to their trust, but because they failed, the prophecy could not be fulfilled in its original intent."[[60]](#footnote-60) The main objection to this view is whether God would provide such a detailed prophetic description if it was never to be fulfilled. Surely He would not invest full nine chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy in vain.[[61]](#footnote-61) Again, God's promise to dwell in this temple perpetually (43:7) indicates that an actual, not ideal, temple must be in view.

A fourth historic temple that could possibly be in view is that built by Herod and completed just prior to Jerusalem's fall in AD 70.[[62]](#footnote-62) However, this view has the same problems as the two above, namely, the dimensions do not match. Further, the sacrificial procedure of Ezekiel 43—46 was not followed during the Herodian era.

All four preceding views (Solomonic, post-exilic, ideal, Herodian) lack the necessary characteristics of the mysterious temple and do not match the worship procedure of chapters 43—46. Recognizing such, a fifth perspective has been proposed, favored especially by amillenarians. This view considers Ezekiel 40—48 as a symbolic description of the church rather than a literal temple.[[63]](#footnote-63) Greenhill represents such a view, for he soundly refutes the notion that Ezekiel's and Zerubbabel's temples are the same by comparing the locations and measurements of the temples; however, he then surprisingly states, "The vision, therefore, points out the introduction of a better hope, viz. the church of Christ under the gospel."[[64]](#footnote-64) If this is true, one must wonder how all the specific designations here can be matched with the blessings of the church in the present age. Such a view must spiritualize descriptions which appear to be very physical and literal.[[65]](#footnote-65) The chapters include measurements, topographical descriptions, etc.; therefore, it is not surprising that those who deny the normal sense of these terms also do not believe in a literal kingdom. Finally, Gray notes that those who hold to this symbolic church perspective differ widely in their explanations and thus cannot explain the symbolism of which they speak.[[66]](#footnote-66) This inconsistency and subjectivity is shown in the fact that adherents of this view "interpret Ezekiel's earlier, now-fulfilled prophecies literally, yet interpret his yet unfulfilled prophecies symbolically."[[67]](#footnote-67) There is no reason to abandon the normal grammatical-historical hermeneutic when approaching Ezekiel's prophecy.

A sixth view interprets the passage literally but sees the eternal state in view.[[68]](#footnote-68) Allis champions this perspective which distinguishes between the kingdom and the Millennium, seeing the "Millennium" as a limited period (the church age) which precedes an endless "kingdom" (the eternal state). He asserts that the passages studied thus far in Isaiah and Ezekiel both apply to this latter period.[[69]](#footnote-69) This view which sees eternity in Ezekiel's prophecy cannot be accepted because of the existence of the temple itself, which is not part of the new heavens and new earth (cf. Rev. 21:22). Other dissimilarities between the temple of this prophecy and the eternal state are evident:

The city's [sic: cities'] dimensions are different (Ezek. 48:30-35; Rev. 21:15-17). The waters that flow toward the east have different sources: the temple in Ezekiel (43:7; 47:1-5) and God's throne in the Revelation (22:1, 3) . . . . The tribal allotments of Ezekiel include the sea as the western boundary (47:15-20), whereas in the Revelation John declares that the sea no longer exists (Rev. 21:1).[[70]](#footnote-70)

All of the above views fail to take into account the unique character of these chapters. In contrast, Jewish[[71]](#footnote-71) and premillennial[[72]](#footnote-72) scholarship recognizes that the most natural reading of this section indicates that it refers to a literal, future temple in the kingdom period. Allis considers the problems associated with the millennial view to be so insurmountable that he calls Ezekiel 40—48 "the Achilles' heel of the Dispensational system of interpretation."[[73]](#footnote-73) Nevertheless, several lines of evidence suggest this to be the best view.

The first merit of the millennial view is that it fits the argument of Ezekiel's prophecy. The book follows a threefold design: the impending judgment upon Judah by Babylon (chaps. 1—24), followed by the judgment upon the nations (chaps. 25—32), and concluding with God's unconditional restoration of the nation (chaps. 33—48). This last section first promises Israel a *new life* through restoration to the land and national cleansing (chaps. 33—39). This restoration of Israel includes God's defeat of Gog and her allies (chaps. 38—39), which premillenarians place during the seven year Tribulation Period preceding the Millennium. This premillennial chronology follows Ezekiel's precisely, as he details events in the Tribulation first (chaps. 38—39), followed by the millennial order (chaps. 40—48). It would be strange and misleading for Ezekiel to depict Israel's restoration as a people possessing His Spirit in 39:29 (the verse preceding chapters 40—48), then to suddenly revert back to some historical period in the remaining nine chapters. These chapters, the climax of the prophecy, aptly describe Israel's climax as a nation in her final restoration.[[74]](#footnote-74)

The millennial interpretation is also favorable because it does not abandon the normal grammatical-historical hermeneutic. None of the measurements of the temple need be spiritualized or reconciled with previous temples whose descriptions do not match. The canonical text can stand on its own when one interprets these nine chapters as depicting a future kingdom period.

A related support for the millennial age is Ezekiel's description of the topographical changes characteristic of the kingdom age. Such changes are prophesied about elsewhere in the prophets. For example, Zechariah prophesied that at the return of Messiah the Mount of Olives will undergo a radical change:

Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south (Zech. 14:3-4).

It is obvious that Zechariah's prophecy has not yet been fulfilled.[[75]](#footnote-75) "According to this prophecy God is to rearrange the land so that the millennial temple will fit into it."[[76]](#footnote-76) Ezekiel verifies this as the temple area alone encompasses a three by eight mile area (45:3).[[77]](#footnote-77) Such a catastrophic realignment in geography is necessary not only for the enormous temple and the "very high mountain" upon which it sits (40:2; 43:12),[[78]](#footnote-78) but also for the new city.[[79]](#footnote-79) The new boundaries of this city will comprise a square with each side measuring 6,750 feet,[[80]](#footnote-80) which is much larger than the Jerusalem of Ezekiel's day. This city also has a river without tributaries flowing from the temple to the east with trees bearing fruit monthly for healing (45:1f., 12)—obviously a depiction which has yet to occur in the land.[[81]](#footnote-81) Further, while the size of Palestine as a whole will not change, the inheritances for each tribe will be equal (47:14)[[82]](#footnote-82) and include portions for the priests and Levites (45:1-5), which never was the case under Joshua (Josh. 13—19). All of these topographical changes point to a time period which has not yet occurred.[[83]](#footnote-83)

Furthermore, the exilic prophet Ezekiel is not the only prophet who mentions a millennial temple. Other citations are provided by the pre-exilic prophets Isaiah (2:3; 60:13) and Joel (3:18), as well as the post-exilic prophet Haggai (2:7, 9). Although not an inspired source, 1 Enoch 90:26b-29 also indicates that the "ancient house" would be replaced with a new temple at the end of the age.[[84]](#footnote-84) Many other rabbinic references convey the same idea of a restored earthly temple.[[85]](#footnote-85) Such references show that the idea of a temple in Israel's kingdom age was not unique to Ezekiel but stretched throughout the pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic periods even up to New Testament times.[[86]](#footnote-86)

Finally, the absence of many features associated with the Law of Moses is consistent with a temple which is chronologically subsequent to Israel's other temples.[[87]](#footnote-87) The account lacks a high priest[[88]](#footnote-88) and only Levitical priests descending from Zadok serve in the temple.[[89]](#footnote-89) Also missing are the Urim and Thummim,[[90]](#footnote-90) anointing of the temple, ark with its mercy seat and tablets of commandments,[[91]](#footnote-91) lampstands,[[92]](#footnote-92) a distinction between the holy place and most holy place (i.e., no veil), and the lavers or brazen sea.[[93]](#footnote-93) Feasts which are not celebrated include Firstfruits, Pentecost (Weeks), Trumpets, and the Day of Atonement.[[94]](#footnote-94) While these omissions do not prove Ezekiel's is a millennial temple, the lack of many features of the Mosaic dispensation hints that an age other than under the Mosaic law is in view.

**The Sacrifices**

The most commonly voiced objection to the millennial interpretation of Ezekiel 40—48 concerns the reinstitution of the sacrifices (40:38-43; 43:13-27), especially the sin offerings (40:39; 43:19, 21-22, 25).[[95]](#footnote-95) The claim is that such animal sacrifices would constitute a retrogression or return to weak and beggarly elements.[[96]](#footnote-96) However, such is not the case.[[97]](#footnote-97) The Millennium, rather than being a retrogression, will be an advancement as it will complete the many prophetic promises which God made to Israel (Ezek. 37:15-28). This era will see the culmination of the many promises in all of Israel's covenants: Abrahamic (37:26; cf. Gen. 12:1-3), Land (37:21-22; cf. Deut. 30:1-10), Davidic (37:24-25; cf. 2 Sam. 7:14-16), and New Covenants (37:15-21; cf. Jer. 31:31-34). Moreover, even the *Mosaic Covenant* will be fulfilled at Israel's restoration, shown in Ezekiel's repetition of the covenant formula "I will be their God, and they will be my people" (37:27).[[98]](#footnote-98)

One must not take the prophecy of Ezekiel in isolation, for millennial sacrifices are affirmed elsewhere in the prophetic writings. Isaiah notes that God will accept burnt offerings from both Israelites (Isa. 60:7; 66:20) and foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD (Isa. 56:6-7). Zechariah's last statement in his prophecy affirms the presence of millennial sacrifices in the temple (Zech. 14:21).[[99]](#footnote-99) While Ezekiel's description provides the fullest explanation of these sacrifices, other prophets besides Ezekiel obviously had no problem with their reinstitution at the national restoration after Messiah's coming.

Another objection, on the basis of the Book of Hebrews, is that the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin and that Christ's one sacrifice is sufficient (Heb. 10:4, 14).[[100]](#footnote-100) This is not a concern in relation to millennial sacrifices for several reasons.

First, the context in Hebrews relates to the believer's possible return to the Jewish sacrificial system during the age of grace. Sacrifices in this present age in which the church is prominent should not be confused with sacrifices in the future Millennium when Israel is restored as nation.[[101]](#footnote-101) The writer of Hebrews deals not with atonement in a future age but only with atonement in the present dispensation.

Second, the point of Hebrews is that animal sacrifices never took away human sin anyway. The offerings under the Mosaic system were designed for a people who had already entered into a relationship with God under the Abrahamic Covenant. Specifically, the sin and guilt offerings under the law functioned to restore one's *fellowship* with God, not to establish one's *relationship* with Him in a way analogous to confession of sin in the present age (e.g., 1 John 1:9). Old Testament Israelites were saved by grace through faith just as believers in the present age (Rom. 4:3, 9). The point of the Hebrews passage is that Old Testament sacrifices were inadequate in that they could not provide permanent cleansing and found their efficacy only in the Ultimate Sacrifice to which they pointed.[[102]](#footnote-102) However, while some do not view Old Testament sacrifices as efficacious,[[103]](#footnote-103) this view is difficult to reconcile with the indications in the Old Testament that the worshipper actually was forgiven when he offered his sacrifice according to the law (Lev. 1:4; 4:26-31; 16:20-22).[[104]](#footnote-104) Nevertheless, under the Mosaic dispensation all Israelites functioned under the theocracy even if they were not related to God spiritually. This will be the case even to a greater degree in the Millennium when Christ rules the theocracy. For this reason it is best to see the millennial sacrifices as restoring Israelites to the covenant community in the theocratic state.[[105]](#footnote-105)

A third reply may be made as to how millennial sacrifices do not stand in contradiction with the atonement of Christ. New Testament saints freely took part in temple worship (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:42) without seeing a contradiction with faith in Christ, and Paul even offered a sacrifice in good conscience (Acts 21:26), perhaps because he viewed it as memorial to the death of Christ. As Mosaic sacrifices prior to the cross looked to Christ's finished work of redemption, so millennial sacrifices after the cross could possibly look back upon this completed work.[[106]](#footnote-106) Further, as the Lord's Supper commemorates Christ's death in the present, so millennial sacrifices may accomplish this same memorial function in the future.[[107]](#footnote-107) As such these sacrifices would replace the Lord's Supper as vivid object lessons of Christ's supreme sacrifice on Calvary.[[108]](#footnote-108) Admittedly, nothing in the passage indicates that Ezekiel saw these sacrifices as memorial and this view alone does not explain the expiatory nature of the sacrifices, so it does not marshal as much evidence as does the theocratic view; however, the memorial and theocratic perspectives are not mutually exclusive.

Therefore, one need not be perplexed about the existence of millennial sacrifices when viewed in light of their proper purpose. They form a part of the height of Israel's history as a nation (not a return to "beggarly elements"), they are taught by other prophets, they are inappropriate in the present age but not in the future, and they serve both theocratic and commemorative functions as they look back to the finished work of Christ at Calvary.

The preceding discussion on Ezekiel 40—48 has been quite involved. However, it has been necessary to provide the proper millennial context which is vital to understanding the nature of the Sabbath mentioned in Ezekiel 46:1. The evidence indicates that the Sabbath will indeed be reinstituted during this time. Alexander elaborates on the legitimacy of this millennial Sabbath observance:

The Sabbath and the observance of the new moon would [will] be part of the worship ritual during the Millennium. It may seem incongruous that the Sabbath, the sign of the Mosaic covenant (cf. Exod. 31:13, 16-17), would be observed in the millennial kingdom when it is not observed in the church age under the new covenant. Is this a retrogression in God's purposes? Not if it is understood that all God's covenants would be fulfilled and operating in the messianic kingdom (cf. 37:15-28) . . . . The Mosaic covenant showed Israel how to live a holy life in a relationship with God, and that type of life is still valid under the new covenant (cf. Jer. 31:33-34; Rom. 8:4). Therefore, for the Mosaic covenant and the new covenant to be fulfilled side by side is not incongruous . . . .[[109]](#footnote-109)

This reinstitution of the Sabbath along with the sacrifices may seem problematic to some Bible interpreters.[[110]](#footnote-110) However, one should not be troubled about the reinstitution of the Sabbath during the Millennium if the predominantly Jewish nature of this period is remembered.[[111]](#footnote-111) As the Sabbath was the sign of the Mosaic covenant, so it will be elevated again to prominence when Israel is restored to the Lord in the millennial kingdom.

The millennial era is characterized by many other features of the Mosaic system, including some of the great feasts celebrated under the law (46:9, 11). Ezekiel specifically mentions two of these appointed feasts: Passover (45:21a) and Unleavened Bread (45:21b, 25).[[112]](#footnote-112) The millennial prophecy of Zechariah adds the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths as a third feast (Zech. 14:16-19). Since these three feasts will be operative in the kingdom, this should not evoke surprise that the Sabbath also will be in effect at this unique time. These changes function as part of the Jewish nature of this era.

Additional Bibliography (updated Feb 98) Do a search for Laney, Carl to find the source on p. 142

**Key OT Passages about the Land**

David Larsen, *Israel, Gentiles and the Church*, 26 (adapted in Jeremiah texts)

Perhaps more than with any religious group (including Christians), the heart of Judaism lies in the land of its forefathers. The land and the people are inseparable to Jews, for they experienced God’s very presence indwelling the temple in Jerusalem for centuries (966-586 BC). This emphasis on the land of Canaan is repeated numerous times in the Old Testament:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Genesis | 12:7; 13:14-17; 15:7-21; 17:1-8; 24:7; 28:13-15 | Jeremiah | 12:14-17; 16:14-15, 18; 18:16; 23:5-8; 30:18-21; 31:10-14, 21-40; 32:37-41; 33:10-13 |
| Exodus | 12:25; 13:5, 11; 32:13; 33:1 | Ezekiel | 11:17-21; 17:22-24; 34:11-31; 37:1-14 |
| Numbers | 11:12; 14:15-16, 23; 32:8 | Hosea | 13:9–14:9 |
| Deuteronomy | 1:8; 6:10; 9:28; 12:20; 19:8; 27:3 | Micah | 2:12 |
| Joshua | 23:5 | Zephaniah | 2:19-20 |
| Isaiah | 5:25-26; 11:11-12; 66:19-20 | Zechariah | 12:10-11 |

Which books have the greatest emphasis on the land?

Why do you think this is so?

**Who is the Prince in Ezekiel 40–48?**

When do Ezekiel’s final nine chapters (Ezek. 40–48) take place? This section depicts a sacrificial system, temple in Jerusalem, and division of land up to the Mediterranean Sea that has never been seen in Israel’s *past* history. Yet in the *future* eternal state there will be no temple (Rev. 21:22), no sea (Rev. 21:1), and no Jerusalem with its traditional boundaries since believers will live in the new Jerusalem that is 2200 kilometers square (Rev. 20:16). Further, Ezekiel 40–48 certainly does not describe the *present* era. Therefore, they must depict a period yet future but before the eternal state. Since the kingdom era spoken by the prophets (cf. Eschatology, 119a-cc) fits this era of the Messiah’s rule from Jerusalem (cf. Isa. 2:2-4), this period is the likely time in view.

But if Christ rules then, who then is this prince noted fifteen times in these chapters?

# The Prince cannot be Christ.

## He provides sin offerings for himself (45:22). Thus he is a human in a mortal body rather than the glorified body that Jesus has that can disappear and reappear (Luke 24:31, 39).

## Priests offer burnt offerings and fellowship offerings for the prince (46:2). While Joseph and Mary did this for the infant Jesus, it would seem strange for others to present sacrifices for Christ after He has sacrificed himself for man.

## The prince has sons (46:16-18). Thus, by implication, he must also have a wife. This obviously omits Christ from consideration since He never married.

## Since Jesus is the King, it is unlikely that he would be called the prince as well.

# The Prince is a Human Serving under Christ.

## *Objection*: It is unlikely that Ezekiel would speak more of the prince than of the Messiah (each of these objections from Raymond Ludwigson, *A Survey of Bible Prophecy*, 54).

*Response*: Even though Christ is not noted at all in these nine chapters, the rest of the prophetic writings clearly show his kingdom rule. Why would Ezekiel have to maintain the same ratio as the other prophets? Besides, elsewhere Ezekiel notes that Israel’s king will be “David,” likely a term for Messiah (37:22, 24).

## *Objection*: A prince would be reigning on David’s throne that is reserved for Christ.

*Response*: None of the verses say that the prince will rule. Each relates to the prince’s religious functions (44:3; 45:16-17; 45:22; 46:2-18) or land (45:7; 48:21-22).

## *Objection*: It is unlikely that a mortal man would rule over the twelve tribes that Jesus promised to the twelve apostles (Matt. 19:28).

*Response*: The text shows the prince involved in temple worship rather than in ruling.

## *Objection*: God would not vest millennial worship (or rule) in a person able to sin.

*Response*: Why not? Worship leaders have always been morally capable of sin. The prince in his human state will better relate to the others also in mortal bodies since he will need to offer sacrifices just as they do (45:22).

**Conclusion**: While some difficulties yet remain, it seems that the millennial prince indeed is a mortal man who will perform religious functions in Jerusalem.

**Ezekiel’s Prophecies of Restoration**

Adapted from a doctoral research paper by Rev. Michael Shen, Dallas Theological Seminary

Throughout the Book of Ezekiel God promises that He will continue to be faithful to His despairing and rebellious people in exile because of His unconditional covenant to give Israel the land of Palestine (cf. Gen. 12:1-3; 15:17-21; Deut. 30:1-10). This restoration is depicted in Ezekiel 37:1-14 more than any other section of the prophecy, but several key elements of the restoration appear throughout the book in many chapters:

Chapter Land Cleansing Spirit New David Permanent New Whole Recognition

Restored from Sin Given Covenant Ruling Restoration Heart House Formula

11 x x x x

16 x x x x x

17 x x

20 x x x x x

28 x x x

34 x x x x x x

36 x x x x x x x

37:1-14 x x x x

37:15-28 x x x x x x x

39 x x x x

The above chart makes clear that no passage contains all the elements of the restoration, but put together all the texts paint a picture of a glorious future. The three aspects which appear consistently are the promise of the land, the promise that the whole house of Israel (both Israel and Judah) will inherit the land, and the recognition formula in which God promises that the restoration will demonstrate that “I am the LORD.” Indeed, even in our generation (1948) we have seen a partial physical (or national) restoration of Israel to the land (37:1-8, 11-13). However, the full (spiritual) restoration of the nation will not occur until Israel trusts in Jesus Christ as Messiah at Christ’s return (37:9-10, 14-28).

Paste in at page 141:

Schmitt, John W., and Laney, J. Carl. *Messiah’s Coming Temple: Ezekiel’s Prophetic Vision of the Future Temple.*  Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1997. 160 pp. US$10.00 pb.

The most accurate and detailed description of the millennial worship center so far, based on biblical research and interviews with leading Jewish leaders and rabbis in the US and Israel. Includes numerous photographs of a 3-D model of the millennial temple and its furnishings. Schmitt directs the Messianic Temple Ministries and Laney teaches biblical literature at Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon.

Ezekiel’s Millennial Temple

**Solomon’s & Ezekiel’s Temples Contrasted**

The diagram of Solomon’s temple above is not completely to scale in its length or courtyard sizes. However, the two diagrams on this page are roughly to the same scale to show differences between Solomon’s and Ezekiel’s temples. In fact, the temple proper is about one third the size of Ezekiel’s (the *length* of Solomon’s temple equals the *width* of Ezekiel’s). Since Ezekiel gave exact measurements, we should assume that these are to be taken literally. Doing so reveals that this temple has never been built but will be constructed in the last days.

***Some Contrasts***

**Solomon** **Ezekiel**

Dimensions

Temple Height 45 feet (15 meters) Not given

Temple Length 90 feet (30 meters) 175 feet (58 meters)

Temple Width 30 feet (10 meters) 87.5 feet (29 meters)

Inner Courtyard 150 x 400 feet 175 x 427.5 feet

Furniture 22 articles, Urim & Thummim No articles, no Urim & Thummim

Veil Separates holy & most holy place No veil

Lavers & brazen sea Present Absent

Priesthood Aaronic, Levitical, & high priest No high priest, only Zadok descendants

Location Temple mount A “very high mountain” (40:2; 43:12)

City Small (irregular City of David) Huge (a square with 6750 foot sides)

River None Flows through city without tributaries!

**Mosaic vs. Millennial Furniture**

**End-Time Battles**

**End-Time Geography**

**The Division of the Land During the Millennium**

***Ezekiel 47—48***

**“The Rule of Christ” Video**

A Theological Survey of Asia (DTS)

III. Postmillennialism

**A. Meaning**

1. Postmillennialism teaches that the Second Coming of Christ is after the Millennium.

2. The view is accurately defined by one of its adherents this way: "Postmillennialism is that view of the last things which holds that the kingdom of God is now being extended in the world through the preaching of the gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of individuals, that the world eventually is to be Christianized and that the return of Christ is to occur at the close of a long period of righteousness and peace commonly called the millennium. It should be added that on postmillennial principles the Second Coming of Christ will be followed immediately by the general resurrection, the general judgment, and the introduction of heaven and hell in their fullness.

"The millennium to which the postmillennialist looks forward is thus a golden age of spiritual prosperity during this present dispensation, that is, during the Church Age. This is to be brought about through forces now active in the world. It is to last an indefinitely long period of time, perhaps much longer than a literal one thousand years. The changed character of individuals will be reflected in an uplifted social, economic, political and cultural life of mankind…

"This does not mean that there will be a time on this earth when every person will be a Christian or that all sin will be abolished. But it does mean that evil in all its many forms eventually will be reduced to negligible proportions, the Christian principles will be the rule, not the exception, and that Christ will return to a truly Christianized world" (Loraine Boettner, in *The Meaning of the Millennium*, ed. Robert Clouse, 117-18).

3. Without question the postmillennial system is the most optimistic millennial view.

**B. Advocates**

1. Postmillennialism became popular through the work of Daniel Whitby (1638-1726) and waned during the nineteenth century. Then it gained prominence as the most important and influential millennial view at the turn of this century, but two world wars did much to contribute to its decline! While recent years have seen a resurgence of this position, it is still the least popular system of millennial interpretation today.

2. Well-known past propagators of postmillennialism include Charles Hodge, W. G. T. Shedd, Augustus H. Strong, B. B. Warfield, and Daniel Whitby. Modern advocates include Loraine Boettner, Jefferson John Davis and Jay M. Kik.

3. A form of postmillennialism which has recently gained some prominence is aligned closely with theonomy, a view which comes from two Greek words—*theos* (God) and *nomos* (law). Theonomy stems from the Reformed teaching that government should use the Old Testament law as the basis for enforcing justice. These proponents such as Greg Bahnsen, David Chilton, Rousas J. Rushdoony, Gary North, and Gary DeMar argue that the Mosaic law is still in effect and that “civil authorities should be pressured by the church to carry out the death penalty for idolatry, witchcraft, murder, adultery, incorrigibility in children, apostasy…blasphemy, homosexuality, and sabbath breaking” (Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics*, 82, 427, 439, 445, 466ff.; summarized by Lightner, *The Last Days Handbook*, 87; cf. David Chilton, *Paradise Restored: An Eschatology of Dominion* [Tyler, TX: Reconstruction Press, 1985]—reviewed in *Bib Sac* 143 [1986]: 173-74).

This new postmillennialism or theonomy is also called Christian Reconstructionism or Dominion Theology and was a driving force behind the 1988 campaign to nominate Pat Robertson as President of the US. They hoped that if a Christian such as Robertson was elected then the Mosaic law could be enforced upon the general public as a “pre-evangelism” in the hopes that many would turn to Christ and usher in the millennium.

**C. Diagram**

**D. Support Cited**

1. The Millennium has no specific beginning point but will be an earthly kingdom ushered in by the Church at the latter end of the Church Age.

Response: Nearly all of the arguments cited for amillennialism may be said of postmillennialism since the two systems are largely similar. However, the nature of this Millennium differs significantly since the amillennialist sees it as a spiritual kingdom but the postmillennialist views it as a literal earthly kingdom. The Scripture is clear concerning the growing sinfulness of the world and the necessity for immediate, divine action at the beginning of the Millennium (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43). This Millennium will not be brought in by the church, but the Lord.

2. The number of the saved will far exceed the number of the lost(Zech 9:10; Matt. 5:3; Luke 20:35; Heb. 11:16; 1 Pet. 3:19; Rev. 7:9-10; 19:20; 21:1, 8-16).

Response: Jesus stated, “Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad which leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it” (Matt. 7:13-14). This indicates that in the present age more will be lost than saved. The number of verses cited (above) for his view is impressive but even a casual glance at them reveals that none of them teach his point that most of mankind will be saved. Boettner cites these verses as referring to mankind in general for all ages, but they actually have more limited scope.

3. The world is growing better and better so that when Christ returns He will find a Christianized world. "Today the world at large is on a far higher plane [than existed on earth before the coming of Christ]. Christian principles are the accepted standards in many nations even though they are not consistently practiced. Slavery and polygamy have practically disappeared. The status of women and children has been improved immeasurably. Social and economic conditions in almost all nations have reached a new level. A spirit of cooperation is much more manifest among the nations than it has ever been before" (Boettner, 126). Our modern era has seen significant advancements in evangelistic and missionary activity, Bible translation and distribution, the number of theological institutions, Christian media, transportation, knowledge, atomic and solar energy, human rights, etc.

Response: The expected negative reply to Christ's question in Luke 18:8, "When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" suggests that when He returns He will find relatively few true believers. The supposed "evidence for a better world" cited above is debatable in many respects and leaves out much of the modern data: international unrest, two world wars in this century alone, the abortion of hundreds of millions of babies worldwide, Nazism's slaughter of six million Jews, the fall of one-third of the world to atheistic communism, etc.—all of this in contrast to the 200 hundred year period of the *Pax Romana* during the New Testament era.

4. Premillennialists ignore figurative language in Scripture. "That a great deal of the Bible is given in figurative or symbolic language, which by no stretch of the imagination can be taken literally, should be apparent to everyone. We spiritualize these statements because we regard this as the only way in which their true meaning can be brought out… Premillennialists often materialize and literalize the prophecies to such an extent that they keep them on an earthly level and miss their true and deeper meaning…" (Boettner, 136, 137).

Response: Boettner is correct to claim that postmillennial view spiritualizes prophecy, but the postmillennialist is guilty of a "straw man tactic" here in stating that premillennial hermeneutics does not take into account the use of figurative language.

The principle of literal interpretation, "as its advocates have explained times without number, leaves room for all the devices and nuances of language, including the use of figure, metaphor, simile, symbol, and even allegory… There are many instances of prophetical reference to literal things which are embellished with figurative expressions. In Isaiah 11:1 the coming of the King of the Kingdom is spoken of as a 'rod' and a 'branch,' but the King is a very literal person, a descendant of a literal Jewish ancestor, 'Jesse.' Again, in Isaiah 55:12-13, the hills 'break forth… into singing' and the 'trees… clap their hands.' Such language, read in its context, can mislead no one with an ordinary amount of intelligence. It pictures the joy of nature over its literal deliverance from a very literal curse imposed by a literal God on a literal earth (Gen. 3:17-19)" (McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, 139-40).

5. Mortals and immortals could not live together in the Millennium. The premillennial concept of millennium saints in glorified bodies mingling with men who are still in their non-resurrected fleshly bodies results in “a mongrel kingdom… To bring Christ and the saints to live again in the sinful environment of this world would seem to be an equivalent of introducing sin into heaven. As the amillennialist William J. Grier has observed, such a company would indeed be a ‘mixtum gatherum’” (Boettner, 122-23).

Response: What appears to be an impossibility to postmillennialists has indeed already happened. Christ Himself mingled with men in His glorified body following His resurrection. Although Jesus had an immortal body He apparently did not look much different than most men since He was not recognized even by some of His own disciples (Luke 24:31-32). That people will be in the millennium in natural bodies was argued even as early as the church father Irenaeus who advocated this belief in AD 185 (*Against Heresies*  5.35.1 in *Ante-Nicean Fathers*, 1:565).

6. Mortals will not enter the Millennium. This argument is similar to that above except that it is not based on logic but on a specific text: “I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable” (1 Cor. 15:50). Given that the kingdom is clearly the millennium in the near context of verse 24, how can one say that mortals will live in an earthly kingdom?

Response: Actually, postmils also argue for mortal believers on earth in the millennium (though they see it happening through the Church rather than the return of Christ). Paul’s major point in 1 Corinthians 15 is not *the time* when believers will get glorified bodies, but *the need* for them before the eternal state comes into effect. Nevertheless, since this kingdom will be handed over to the Father at the end of the millennium (vv. 24-25), the thought at verse 50 picks up at this time period, namely the eternal state.

This new postmillennialism called theonomy or reconstructionism is clearly refuted by H. Wayne House and Thomas D. Ice (a former reconstructionist himself) in *Dominion Theology: Blessing or Curse?* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1988), 460 pp. US$15.95. A review of this book by Norman Geisler is in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 146 (April-June 1989): 226-27. See also the series of three articles by Robert P. Lightner in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 143 (1986): 26-36, 134-145, 228-45, as well as Bruce Barton, *Heaven on Earth? The Social and Political Agendas of Dominion Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993?), US$10.99. The following review of Bahnsen’s newest book, *House Divided*, places the postmillennial view in clearer light.

John F. Walvoord in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 147 (July-September 1990): 370-72

Walvoord’s review (1 of 2)

Walvoord’s review (2 of 2)

IV. Amillennialism

**A. Meaning**

1. Amillennialism teaches that the "Second Coming of Christ is at the end of the Church Age and there is no earthly Millennium. Strictly, amillenarians believe that the present state of the righteous in heaven is the Millennium, but there is no earthly Millennium" (Charles Ryrie, “A Synopsis of Bible Doctrine,” *Ryrie Study Bible*, 1952).

2. "Amillennialism denies there will be a literal millennial kingdom on earth. Generally speaking, this view holds that Christ will return in His Second Coming and immediately usher in the new heavens and the new earth with no intervening thousand-year reign. This view interprets many passages in the Old and New Testaments that refer to the millennial kingdom as being fulfilled in a nonliteral way, either in the present experience of the church on earth or the experience of the church in heaven" (Chafer/Walvoord, *Major Bible Themes*, 352).

3. "The term *amillennialism* is not a happy one. It suggests that amillennialists either do not believe in any millennium or that they simply ignore the first six verses of Revelation 20, which speaks of a millennial reign. Neither of these two statements is true. Though it is true that amillennialists do not believe in a literal thousand-year earthly reign which will follow the return of Christ, the term *amillennialism* is not an accurate description of their view. Professor Jay E. Adams of Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia has suggested that the term *amillennialism* be replaced by the expression *realized millennialism”* (Anthony Hoekema, in *The Meaning of the Millennium*, ed. Robert Clouse, 155). Hoekema says that neither term is very good, so he suggests the term “inaugurated eschatology.” Why? While it “does full justice to the fact that the great eschatological incision into history has already been made, it does not rule out a further development and final consummation in the future” (p. 177).

**B. Advocates**

1. Augustine originated amillennialism in the 4th century. He influenced so many that the Council of Ephesus in 431 condemned belief in a literal millennium as superstitious. Official Catholic dogma in the Middle Ages was also amillennial and the view was common in the Reformation until postmillennialism came to the fore with Daniel Whitby (1638-1726) and continued until World War II. Catholicism is amillennial as it believes *it is Christ’s kingdom* on earth (though see p. 110n), the most prominent view in the past 200 years among evangelicals has been premillennialism.

2. Modern advocates include Jay Adams, Oswald T. Allis, Louis Berkhof, G. C. Berkouwer, William E. Cox, John Gilmore, Floyd E. Hamilton, William Hendriksen, Anthony A. Hoekema, Leon Morris, George Murray, Geerhardus Vos, and J. G. Voss.

**C. Diagram**  (Warfield View)



**D. Support Cited**

1. The thousand-year period in Revelation 20:1-6 is not a literal thousand years but rather the period between the first and second advents. Verses 1-3 have to do with the earth and verses 4-6 relate to heaven (Hoekema, 159-72). Believers are living in the Millennium now and the binding of Satan occurs at the *present* time. This binding refers to being released from Satan’s deception of the nations during the Old Testament era (Matt. 12:29; 28:19; Luke 10:17-18; John 12:31-32). See Hoekema again, 161-63.

Response:

a. Hermeneutics: There is no reason to abandon a normal, literal, historical and grammatical interpretation unless a text clearly indicates figurative language, and Revelation 20:1-6 has no such language. This 1000 years must not be spiritualized to mean anything other than a literal time period. Similarly, 1260, 7000, and 144,000 in the book should be taken in their normal sense as genuine numbers.

b. Chronology: The entire passage follows the Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 19) in chronological order. It would seem strange that the time period envisioned in chapter 20 would precede that of chapter 19.

c. Place: The reign spoken of takes place on earth (20:1, "coming down from heaven"), not in heaven as amillennialists claim for verses 4-6. Revelation 5:10 specifically says that the kingdom reign will be on the earth.

d. Binding: The amillennial citations for Satan being bound are not convincing since:

1) Although Satan was defeated at Calvary, he still is free to tempt individuals (Eph. 6:10f.) as the ruler of this world (John 16:11), the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2), the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4), and the one who "prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Pet. 5:8).

2) A glance at the local newspaper probably would convince most of us that even the nations are still being deceived by Satan!

3) He is not simply bound but thrown into and sealed in the Abyss (Rev. 20:3). This shows Satan not simply restricted but completely inactive (Walvoord, *Revelation*, 291).

4) He is loosed after the millennium for a long enough time to gather an army opposing God (Rev. 20:7-9). This can’t fit into the amillennial structure which has the eternal state immediately following a realized millennium. Under the amil scheme, the nations will *not even exist* after their millennium.

2. The Abrahamic Covenant either: (a) has been fulfilled already (Josh. 21:43-45; 1 Kings 4:21), (b) will be fulfilled in the new earth literally and eternally (Hoekema, 185-86), (c) or has implied conditions (i.e, is not unconditional in nature). Similar unexpressed conditions are seen in the command to Jonah that God would destroy Nineveh (Jonah 1:2; 3:2-4) and that God promised a perpetual priesthood to the line of Aaron (1 Sam. 2:30). However, God spared Nineveh and he cut off Eli by installing Samuel, thus breaking the Aaronic line.

Response:

a. The passages cited above do not support the view that the Abrahamic Covenant has already been fulfilled for these reasons:

1) God fulfilled all of His obligations concerning the promises *for which Israel qualified*, and even long after Joshua 21:43-45 was written the land promise was *still unfulfilled* (Jer. 16:15; 32:41; Ezek. 28:25; Amos 9:12; Zech. 10:9-10). This last passage was written even *after* the exile and return to Palestine!

2) Concerning 1 Kings 4:21, note that all of the land was not possessed (cf. Gen. 15:18) but only occupied temporarily (Beitzel, 121). Abraham was promised this land as a *permanent* possession.

b. Hoekema sees the Abrahamic Covenant fulfilled in the eternal state on the new earth (pp. 159-72). But this new earth will be so radically different that it will not have any sea (Rev. 21:1), which comprises 73% of the present earth! In such a situation the boundaries of the covenant (Euphrates to Wadi of Egypt, cf. Gen. 15:18) would almost certainly be missing. Also, these boundaries are specified for each tribe of Israel (Ezek. 47).

c. The unconditional nature of the Abrahamic Covenant is seen in its: designation as an eternal covenant (Gen. 17:7, 13, 19; 1 Chron. 16:17; Ps. 105:10), lack of conditions (except for the original condition that Abraham leave his homeland to go to the promised land), ritual in which God alone passed through the pieces of the sacrifice (Gen. 15:7-21; Jer. 34:18), reiteration to Abraham and the nation despite acts of disobedience (Jer. 31:36), immutability (Heb. 6:13-18; cf. Gen. 15:8-21), and the entire scriptural revelation concerning Israel's future (e.g., Rom. 9–11).

d. Concerning Jonah and Aaron, both of these issues are vastly different in that Jonah was given a message (not a covenant) and the Aaronic priesthood was a part of the Mosaic covenant which was a conditional (not an unconditional) covenant. Also, "unstated conditions cannot be construed to mean that conditions are nevertheless involved" (Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*, 59).

3. Since Israel failed to keep the Abrahamic Covenant God rejected the nation and is now fulfilling His promises originally for the nation through the Church. Therefore, the Church is the "New Israel."

Response: The unconditional nature of the covenant (above) argues for the fact that God did not indeed permanently reject His people. Israel still has a future (Rom. 11:1-25) and is distinct from the church in that Israel and the Gentiles are contrasted in the New Testament (Acts 3:12; 4:8; 21:28; Rom. 10:1), as are natural Israel and the church (Rom. 11:1-25; 1 Cor. 10:32). See pages 130-32 for more details.

4. As regards *future eschatology*, amillennialism affirms the following (six events put in chronological order by Hoekema, 181-86):

a. “The ‘signs of the times’ have both present and future relevance.”

Response: Both amillennialists and premillennialists agree here that the signs indicating the return of Christ have been present from the beginning of the Church to the present day—at least in a general sense they have been present.

b. “The Second Coming of Christ will be a single event.”

Response: A chart of contrasts between the Rapture and the Revelation is found under the section in support of pretribulationalism (p. 60).

c. “At the time of Christ's return, there will be a general resurrection, both of believers and unbelievers” (Rev. 20:1-6). This general resurrection is noted in John 5:28-29 and Acts 24:15. Most amillennialists say "they came to life" (Rev. 20:4) is not physical resurrection as verse 5 the physical resurrection of all men. However, Hoekema sees "they came to life" (Rev. 20:4) and “first resurrection” (Rev. 20:5) both as the believer’s transition from physical death to life in heaven with Christ without a resurrected body (p. 171).

Response:

1) The resurrection of the Tribulation martyrs and the "rest of the dead" have 1000 years between them (Rev. 20:4-5), so they cannot refer to the same resurrection.

2) John 5:28-29 and Acts 24:15 do not assert that there will be a general judgment. "All they do is assert that both the wicked and the righteous will be raised. The time is not stated. In Revelation 20:5 the time element is stated. Revelation 20:11-15 has to do with the wicked. This means that verses 4-6 deal specifically with the righteous (and the words 'came to life' must be taken in the normal sense of physical resurrection)…" (Hoyt, *The Meaning of the Millennium*, 195). Rather than one resurrection, the Scripture teaches the resurrection of Christians at the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:16) and after the Tribulation (Rev. 20:4), as well as the resurrection of Old Testament saints (Dan. 12:2) and of the unsaved at the Great White Throne (Rev. 20:11-15).

3) It’s inconsistent to say the resurrection of verse 4 is spiritual while the resurrection of verse 5 is physical. The same word is used in the same context. The word “resurrection” is used 40 times in the NT, always for a physical, bodily resurrection (except Luke 2:34). See page 159 for further details.

d. “After the resurrection, believers who are then still alive shall suddenly be transformed and glorified” (1 Cor. 15:51-52).

Response: The time of this event is at the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18) which includes a resurrection only of those "in Christ" (v. 16), not a general resurrection.

e. “The ‘rapture’ of all believers now takes place” (1 Thess. 4:17). The Greek verb translated "to meet" (ἀπάντησιν) "is a technical term used… to describe a public welcome given by a city to a visiting dignitary. People would ordinarily leave the city to meet the distinguished visitor and then go back into the city… all Paul is saying here is that raised and transformed believers are caught in the clouds to meet the descending Lord, implying that after this meeting they will go back with him to the earth" (Hoekema, 183).

Response: One must be careful not to attach too much theological significance to the secular usage of a word in Scripture. Nevertheless, the premillennial position does not argue that the saints caught up with Christ will *not* return to the earth since this indeed will occur seven years later following the Tribulation. However, the amillennialist view that believers will return to the earth *immediately* is a teaching not mentioned in the text.

f. “Now follows the final judgment.”

Response: Scripture teaches many judgments (not one), specifically the judgment of: believers at the Rapture (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10); OT saints (Dan. 12:1-3), Tribulation saints (Rev. 20:4), Israel (Ezek. 20:37-38), and Gentiles (or Nations) at the Second Coming (Matt. 25:31-46; Joel 3:2); and after the millennium are Satan and fallen angels (Jude 6; 1 Cor. 6:3) and the unsaved dead (Rev. 20:11-15). What Hoekema refers to as “the final judgment” is only the last of these seven judgments, taking place at the Great White Throne. See page 159 for further details.

g. “After the judgment the final state is ushered in.”

Response: It goes without saying that all three millennial views agree that the eternal state is the last "event" on God's eschatological calendar.

See the articles by Jeffrey L. Townsend, “Is the Present Age the Millennium?” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 140 (July-September 1983): 206-24 (He says “no”—he’s premillennial); Jack Deere, Premillennialism in Revelation 20:4-6,” *Bib Sac* (January-March 1978) reprinted in *The Bib Sac Reader* (eds. Walvoord & Zuck, Dallas: DTS, 1983), 52-67*.* See also pages 130-32a for more amillennial arguments and responses.

**Amillennial Chart of Revelation**

William Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors,* 16-19

One common view of the book of Revelation by amillennial scholars sees the book as presenting our present age seven times in parallel sections. Hendriksen is typical of this view which spiritualizes the 1000 years of Revelation 20:1-6 and applies this time period to our own time. (Other commentators who see it this way are Lenski, Warfield, and Sadlet, and S. L. Morris; cf. also John Gilmore, *Probing Heaven*). In chart form the view would look like this:



***Premillennial Response***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Christ in the Midst of the Seven Lampstands (1–3)** Seven literal churches of Asia each depict conditions in congregations  throughout the church age until Christ’s return (1:7) | Correct except that 1:19 denotes the vision of Christ (1:9-18) as past, with 1:7 looking to his final triumph |
| **The Vision of Heaven and the Seven Seals (4–7)** Christ rules from heaven now (5:5-6) until the second coming (6:16-17)  at the end of the age with the triumphant church (7:16-17) | These texts do not say what is claimed and the seals are so terrible they could not have yet happened yet. |
| **The Seven Trumpets (8–11)** A *series* of repeated judgments in the present age afflicts the wicked (8–9)  but the Church is protected (10–11) until the final judgment (11:15, 18) | Trumpets occur *after* the seals and in sequence; even a casual observation shows they have not yet occurred. |
| **The Persecuting Dragon (12–14)** A woman (the Church) gives birth to a child (Christ) but she is persecuted by the dragon (Satan) and his agents until the second coming (14:14, 16) | The woman is *Israel* which gave us the Messiah and *Jews* will be persecuted 3 and 1/2 years (12:6). |
| **The Seven Bowls (15–16)** The disappearance of islands and mountains (16:20) is seen as the final judgment and chapters 15–16 are “events that will take place in connection with it” | Agreed, so these chapters *do not* denote the whole church age as Hendriksen claims of each section. |
| **The Fall of Babylon (17–19)** Babylon (the world system of seduction) continues the entire church age  until its destruction at Christ’s second coming (19:11-21) | This is a parenthesis within the chronological order of the book that shows how the world will be destroyed |
| **The Great Consummation (20–22)** The present age (20:1-6) is not a literal 1000 years and this “millennium” occurs *before* chapter 19 to be followed by a general judgment and the eternal state | It is more natural that Christ’s return (Rev. 19) precedes his rule (Rev. 20) over a literal 1000 years. |

**Recapitulation Evaluated**

**Views on Revelation 20:1-6**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Amillennial** | **Premillennial** |
| ***Selected Advocates*** | Anthony Hoekema, Leon Morris, William Hendriksen, John Gilmore | Herman Hoyt, John Walvoord, George Ladd, Robert Mounce |
| ***Outline of Revelation*** | Progressive Parallelism (p. 158a) | Futuristic (p. 99) |
| ***Revelation 19—20 Timeline*** | Non-chronological  Millennium (Rev. 20) precedes Christ’s return (Rev. 19) | Chronological  Christ’s return (Rev. 19) precedes millennium (Rev. 20) |
| ***1000 years  (six times in 20:2-7)*** | Non-literal (depicts church age of indefinite length) | Literal (but Ladd and some other covenant premillennialists disagree) |
| ***Identity of Binding Angel (20:1-2)*** | Christ since: (1) He holds the keys of hades (1:5, 18; 3:7), (2) “angel” need not mean angel (cf. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14), and (3) Dan. 12:1 says Messiah is Michael the archangel (Gilmore, 375-77). But Morris, 137 disagrees. | An angel since: (1) Christ could have given an angel the key, (2) Christ is called *”the* angel of the Lord” (Gen. 22:16 with Heb. 6:13; Gen. 22:11, 12 with Heb. 12:25), and (3) and Dan. 12:1 does not equate Michael and Christ. |
| ***Binding of Satan***  ***(20:2-3)*** | Present: restricted from deceiving nations but can deceive individuals by being “denied full control” (Gilmore, 378; Matt. 12:29) | Future: deceives both individuals and nations now, inconsistent to say he can deceive one and not the other  (cf. 1 Pet. 5:8 says Satan is loose!) |
| ***Time of 20:4-6 rule*** | Present | Future (cf. Rev. 13:15 is future) |
| ***Place of 20:4-6 rule*** | Heaven | Earth (Rev. 20:1; cf. 5:10) |
| ***“Came to life” (ἔζησαν in 20:4b) and “first resurrection” (ἡ ἀνάστασις ἡ πρώτῃ in vv. 5b-6a)*** | Spiritual: Believer’s *transition* from physical death to life in heaven with Christ *without* a resurrected body (Hoekema, 171): (1) this is the only time in the NT ajnavstasi" means other than a physical resurrection, (2) the root of e[zhsan (zavw) means being alive (3:1; 4:9, 10; 7:2; 15:7) | Physical: Believer’s bodily *resurrection* as: (1) this is the normal use of the terms, (2) the resurrections *precede* the 1000 years, (3) all are resurrected together, not individually, and (4) arguing from a root is fallacious and provides no real parallel passages |
| ***“Came to life”***  ***(ἔζησαν in 20:5)*** | A different meaning (physical resurrection here) than meant by the same phrase in verse 4 (spiritual there) | A consistent meaning of physical resurrection in both verses (which matches the physical meaning of the same Greek verb in 2:8) |
| ***Nature of the implied second resurrection*** | Believer’s bodily resurrection  (20:4-5) | Unbeliever’s resurrection  (20:12-13) |
| ***Number of Physical Resurrections***  ***(20:4-6, 12-13)*** | One general resurrection (but the believers have two “resurrections”—one spiritual and one physical—“the rest” includes the first group) | Several resurrections—4 groups in 2-3 time periods (“the rest” denotes a different group from those in the 1st resurrection) |
| ***Persons Judged at the Great White Throne (20:11-15)*** | All people (in a general judgment that includes both believers and unbelievers) | Unbelievers only (but another resurrection and judgment of millennium believers is possible) |

**Resurrections & Judgments**

**I. Introduction**

A. Amillennialists teach from John 5:28-29 one resurrection of all people, but the Bible records at least *four* distinct resurrected groups in three separate time periods (see below).

B. It is inaccurate to speak of a single judgment day as Scripture records *seven* judgments.

C. Multiple judgments should not sound strange to our ears as there has already been multiple judgments in the past: Lucifer and angels (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6), expulsion from Eden (Gen. 3:23), Flood (Gen. 6—7), Babel (Gen. 11:1-9), Northern nation of Israel (2 Kings 17:1-6), Judah (2 Kings 25:1-12), Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), and even the present (Rom. 1:18).

D. Past judgments only applied to *some* people, but future judgments will apply to *all* people who have ever lived (Heb. 9:27). The general guide for severity of punishment will be: the greater the knowledge of the truth, the greater the judgment (Matt. 11:24; Luke 12:48).

**II. Chart of Resurrections and Judgments**



|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Time | Rapture | Second Coming at End of the Tribulation | | | | End of Millennium | | |
| Resurrection | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Judgment | Judgment Seat of Christ | Old Testament Saints | Tribulation Saints | Nation of Israel | Nations (Gentiles) | Satan and Fallen Angels | Great White Throne |
| Persons | Believers of church age  (1 Thess. 4:13-18) | Believers of OT times | Believers martyred in the Tribulation | Jews who survive the Tribulation | Gentiles who survive the Tribulation | Satan and demons | Unbelievers of all time |
| Place | *Bema* of Christ (heaven) | Earth? | Earth? | Wilderness (Ezek. 20:35) | Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:1-2) | Angelic sphere? | Great White Throne in Heaven |
| Basis | Works and walk of the Christian life | Faith in God | Faith in Christ | Faith in Christ shown in works (Mal. 3:2-3) | Faith in Christ shown in treatment of Israel (Matt. 25:40, 45) | Satan’s fall (Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:12-19); demonic allegiance to Satan | Rejection of God’s general revelation and/or special revelation in Christ |
| Results | Rewards or loss of rewards | Rewards  (Dan. 12:3) | Reign with Christ in the Millennium | Believers enter kingdom; rebels sent to Hades | Believers enter kingdom; rebels sent to Hades | Lake of Fire (hell) | Lake of Fire (hell) |
| Scripture | Luke 14:14; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 15:20-54; 2 Cor. 5:10 | Dan. 12:1-3 | Rev. 20:4-6 | Zech. 13:8-9; 14:4; Matt. 25:1-30 | Joel 3:1-2; 11-16; Isa. 34:1-2; Matt. 25:31-46 | Matt. 25:41; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 20:10 | Rev. 20:11-15 |

**Questions on Resurrections and Judgments**

Question 1: Daniel 12:2 says, “Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt” (NIV). Daniel 12:1 places the resurrections during the time when believing Israel is delivered at the end of the tribulation period. However, a resurrection of the lost at this time provides them immortal bodies 1000 years before their ultimate end in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14-15). The preceding chart shows Daniel 12:2 relating to Old Testament saints, but doesn’t it relate to *all* who are *saved* as well as those *unsaved?* And how could the unrighteous be raised at this point since Revelation 20:5 clearly states that they would not be raised until after the 1000-year period?

Answer: This text is not as problematic as it may at first appear:

1. Technically, this verse teaches only that both groups will be raised after the tribulation. It does not exclude a time period in between the two resurrections. In fact, this would not be unusual as OT prophets often include events together which we see now as separated by large time periods (e.g., Isa. 61:1-2).

2. The best solution to the problem lies in questioning whether the above translation is correct. “Actually the Hebrew seems to separate sharply between the two classes of resurrection. Tregelles, following earlier Jewish commentators, translated verse 2, ‘And many from among the sleepers of the dust of the earth shall awake; these shall be unto everlasting life; but… the rest of the sleepers, those who do not awake at this time, shall be unto shame and everlasting contempt.’ Robert Culver defends this translation by finding support in commentaries by Seiss, and Nathaniel West” (Walvoord, *Daniel*, 287-88).

3. Note that the text says “many” who sleep rather than “all.” This is deliberate and thus does not indicate a general resurrection of all people but only of believing Jews. Some amillenarians suggest that “many” really means “all,” and this is true in some parallel passages (Leupold cites Matt. 20:28; 26:28; Rom. 5:15, 16). But other amillennial scholars disagree, taking the text in its more natural sense (e.g., Young, Beven).

4. The passage goes on to record the nature of the righteous’ reward (v. 3) but says nothing of the punishment of the wicked. While this does not *prove* that both groups are not raised at this point, it nonetheless supports it.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Question 2: Why do so many premillennialists insist that believers will not appear at the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15)? Many point out that Christians are not mentioned here, but this argument from silence seems weak.

Answer: I agree. I do not feel it is necessary to exclude all believers. What about those who will be born in mortal bodies during the millennium and then will come to faith in Christ? Surely they must also appear for judgment to receive glorified bodies for eternity. While such persons could not technically be called members of the Church (since this exists only from Pentecost to the Rapture), they still must be judged—not for salvation but for rewards. (However, such a judgment of rewards for them is not mentioned in Scripture.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**What Do *You* Think of Heaven and Hell?**

Please circle one of these three responses to each of the following questions:

(A) Agree, (U) Unsure, or (D) Disagree.

**Hell**

1. A U D While many people have gone to hades, no one has ever yet gone to hell.

2. A U D Hell will have literal fire (Luke 16:24), worms (Mark 9:47-48), and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 25:30).

3. A U D If hell has *literal* “fire” (Jude 7), it can’t be *literal* “blackest darkness” (Jude 13).

Crockett, 30

4. A U D Hell isn’t eternal because it will *consume* the bodies of those who go there.

5. A U D Hell has differing degrees of punishment.

6. A U D Mentally capable people today who have never heard about Jesus go to hell.

7. A U D Believing that descriptions of hell are literal will stir us to evangelism more than believing that descriptions of hell are symbolic.

8. A U D People in hell have physical bodies that experience real physical pain.

**Heaven**

9. A U D People in heaven have physical bodies that experience real physical sensations.

10. A U D Heaven will have literal streets of gold.

11. A U D If you take descriptions of heaven literally, then you should do the same for hell.

12. A U D Heaven has differing degrees of reward.

13. A U D Mentally capable people today have to place their faith in Christ to go to heaven.

14. A U D Every person will either go to heaven or to hades/hell immediately after death (there is no such thing as purgatory or another temporary waiting place).

15. A U D Heaven will come to earth rather than people going to heaven (Rev. 21:2).

16. A U D Sides of the New Jerusalem (heaven’s capital) measure 1500 miles (Rev. 21:16).

**The Eternal States**

**I. Hell**

A. Recent Attacks on the Biblical Doctrine of Hell (cf. p. 17 of these notes):

1. **Universalism** is the belief that all people will be saved (it is also called restorationism or reconciliationism). The older form said this happens after a temporary punishment, but the newer form excludes *any* punishment such as is taught in Mormonism. Universalists include Brennan Manning (*The Signature of Jesus*, 12), William Barclay (*The Revelation of John*, 2:216-18), the 20th century neo orthodox scholar Karl Barth, the liberals G. B. Caird, John Hick, and John A. T. Robinson, and the Mormons.

Crocket, 142

a. Ryrie (*Basic Theology*, 521) summarizes how universalists support their claim:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Support Cited** | **Biblical Response** |
| “in Christ all shall be made alive”  (1 Cor. 15:22) | The context refers *only to believers* in the phrase “those who belong to him” (v. 23) |
| “Mormons believe that all men will be saved, but each in his own order”  (*Look* magazine, 5 Oct. 1954) | This is a misinterpretation of 1 Corinthians 15:23 which is addressed only to believers |
| “I will draw all men to Myself”  (John 12:32) | The cross makes salvation only *possible.* The context also speaks of *condemnation* (v. 48) |
| “every tongue will confess”  (Phil. 2:10-11) | All will confess Christ as *Lord*, but not Savior |
| God “desires all to be saved” (1 Tim. 2:4) | This is God’s *desire*, not His promise |
| God is love and goodness so He couldn’t send anyone to Hell (1 John 4:8) | God is also righteous, holy, and just |

b. Practical Implications:

(1) Universalism provides a false hope for every man beyond the grave.

(2) Such a belief serves to “encourage the wicked not to turn from their evil ways and so save their lives” (Ezek. 13:22).

(3) Universalism assumes God is not just since He refuses to punish wickedness.

c. Refutation: There are *two* destinies for mankind—not one (John 3:36; Rev. 20:15).

“The eternal sin of unbelief has no forgiveness (Luke 12:10; Mark 3:29, ASV). That wicked man who has resisted every appeal to accept Christ has no hope in death. There is no remedy for him (Prov. 11:7; 29:1). In that state of torment to which he goes there can be no change of condition (Luke 16:26). The wrath of God abides on him (John 3:36), the final end of which is perdition (Phil. 3:18-19), and there is no hope (1 Thess. 4:13; John 8:21; Matt. 26:24)” (Hoyt, *End Times*, 235).

2. **Annihilationism** (also called conditionalism or conditional immortality) considers “eternal punishment” as the death (extinction) of both soul and body forever (cf. p. 17).

a. Advocates

1) Seventh-day Adventists say the unsaved experience “everlasting punishment,” but by this they mean temporary judgment which as eternal *effects* (i.e., after a short time of suffering the person is destroyed forever).

2) Jehovah’s Witnesses deny any form of punishment for *any* period of time.

3) Evangelicals (former evangelicals?!) have begun to uphold annihilationism, such as John R. W. Stott and David L. Edwards (*Evangelical Essentials*, IVP, 1988), F. F. Bruce, Clark Pinnock, Edward Fudge, Philip E. Hughes, Stephen Travis, and Michael Green. They advocate a new, more acceptable term for annihilationism called “conditional immortality” (eternal life based on the condition of faith in Christ, but no eternal judgment for rejecting Him).

(for the names above see Pinnock’s article, p. 137, n. 5, and p. 142)

Clark Pinnock has written most extensively on annihilationism. One noteworthy book where he expresses this view is *Four Views on Hell* (William V. Crockett, ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 192 pp. US$10.99). These four views are: literal (John F.  Walvoord, Dallas Seminary), metaphorical (William V. Crockett, Alliance Seminary), conditional immortality/annihilation (Clark H. Pinnock, McMaster Divinity College), and purgatory (Zachary J. Hayes, Catholic Theological Union). Each author also responds to the other views. All of these views are summarized on page 169.

b. Arguments for Annihilationism (from Pinnock’s article) and Rebuttals

1) The traditional view is offensive: Conscious, endless torment “has been a stumbling block for believers and an effective weapon in the hands of skeptics for use against the faith” (Pinnock, 136).

Response: Pinnock is right here. Endless torment *is* difficult to stomach for any compassionate person. But is this reason to throw it out? Perhaps our view of God is too low and our view of sin so warped that we think judgment of *any* type is undeserved. God says, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion” (Rom. 9:15). “But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? ‘Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, “Why did you make me like this”’” (Rom. 9:20). We may be offended at God’s sovereign choices, but He is still sovereign. Since when do we look to unbelievers for our theology anyway?

2) Annihilationism is more supportable than Universalism: “I will argue that it is more scriptural, theologically coherent, and practical to interpret the nature of hell as the destruction rather than the endless torture of the wicked…for many believers today, faced with a choice between hell as everlasting conscious punishment and universal salvation, will choose universalism. What I offer them is a third possibility and another choice” (Pinnock, 137).

Response: Pinnock is right that universalism (no judgment in its contemporary form) is better than eternal torment. But how is conditionalism better than universalism? Given the choice, I would prefer that *no one* go to hell (universalism) than for some to go even to a temporary hell. The issue is not what we prefer but instead, which is biblical.

3) God and believers in heaven would never delight to see people in hell. “…we are asked to believe that God endlessly tortures sinners by the million, sinners who perish because the Father has decided not to elect them to salvation, though he could have done so, and whose torments are supposed to gladden the hearts of believers in heaven. The problems with the doctrine are both extensive and profound” (Pinnock, 136).

Response: Pinnock repeatedly says that many traditional view advocates have taught that hell-fire brings joy to God and to those with Him. He implies that Augustine and Jonathan Edwards taught this, but never does Pinnock quote them saying God is delighted with hell-fire. The only actual “advocate” of such is the irreverent Italian poet Dante (1265-1321), whose *Inferno* actually *ridiculed* hell-fire from this angle.

Pinnock also assumes that the traditional view teaches double-predestination (the unbiblical belief that God elects some to heaven and most to hell). Scripture only affirms that God has chosen believers (Eph. 1:5, 11). It does not say He chooses unbelievers for hell. To the contrary, the invitation is given to all who will believe. God is even withholding His judgment to give time for more to repent (2 Pet. 3:9). Pinnock has set up a “straw man” argument.

4) Death is consistently seen as destruction in the NT. The Bible gives us “the impression of final, irreversible destruction, of closure with God” (Pinnock, 144). This is seen in the OT (“the wicked will fade like the grass and wither like the herb…will be cut off and be no more…will perish and vanish like smoke… will be altogether destroyed,” Ps. 37; cf. Mal. 4:1-2). Pinnock says that several NT authors also teach destruction as annihilation (Pinnock, 146, *italics* mine):

a) John the Baptist warned that the wicked would be “cut down and thrown into the fire” which was like *“burning up* the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Matt. 3:10, 12; cf. 13:30, 42, 49-50).

b) Jesus said God can *“destroy* both body and soul in hell” (Matt. 10:28)

c) Paul noted that everlasting *destruction* would come upon unrepentant sinners (2 Thess. 1:9; cf. Gal. 6:8; 1 Cor. 3:17; Phil. 1:28; 3:19).

d) Peter spoke of the *“destruction* of ungodly men” (2 Pet. 3:7) and of false teachers who brought upon themselves “swift *destruction”* (2:1, 3). “He said they would be like the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah that were burned to ashes (2:6), and that they would perish like the ancient world perished in the great Flood (3:6-7).”

e) “The author of Hebrews likewise referred to the wicked who shrank back and would be *destroyed* (Heb. 10:39).”

f) “Jude pointed to Sodom as an analogy to God’s final punishment, being the city that underwent ‘the punishment of eternal fire’ (Jude 7).”

g) “Similarly, the apocalypse of John speaks both of a lake of fire that will *consume* the wicked and of the second death (Rev. 20:14-15).”

Response: The key question is: does “destruction” require or even imply annihilation? The word for “ruin, destroy” (ἀπωλεία BAGD 95a) is parallel to “kill” (ἀποκτείνω BAGD 94a; Matt 10:28) and used elsewhere to mean loss of life (Matt. 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33; John 12:25). The verses quoted by Pinnock all relate to the *physical* death of the wicked, not the cessation of their existence (Walvoord, *ibid*, 168).

Note, for example, that in “a” above the fire is *unquenchable.* Note also that the point in Matthew 10 (“b” above) is not the *length* of punishment but to teach the “nonfinality of death” and that “hell is a place of torment for the whole person” (Carson, “Matthew,” in *EBC*, 8:254-55). The “destructions” of “d” and “e” above all refer to physical death.

What can be said of “eternal destruction” (“c” above)? Isn’t this annihilation? No, for in Galatians 6:8 the phrase is contrasted with “eternal life,” which obviously implies continued existence (cf. Rom. 2:7; 5:21; 6:22-23). This departure is banishment from God’s presence, not the extinguishing of one’s own presence (2 Thess. 1:9b; cf. Ps. 36:9; Matt. 25:41, 46; Luke 13:27). Point “f” above argues this point more than it does annihilationism.

Perhaps the final blow to the concept of “destruction” meaning annihilationism is Pinnock’s final point above (“g”). Never does Revelation 20 use the word “consume” as he argues. To the contrary, at the great white throne judgment the place of torment (Hades) will give up the dead that have been there, some for thousands of years (v. 13). Furthermore, “if the wicked had not existed after their death, there would be nobody in *hades* and there would be no future judgment” (Walvoord, 169 *italics* his).

5) “Eternal” means “irreversible” in the NT. “One receives the impression that ‘eternal punishment’ refers to a divine judgment whose results cannot be reversed rather than to the experience of endless torment” (Pinnock, 144).

Response: The same term for “eternal” (*aionios*) is used of “eternal life.” Certainly the term implies more than simply irreversibility. It obviously refers to the *length* of life and the *length* of destruction or torment. All Greek lexicons without a theological bias affirm that this word means “eternal.” One wonders if hell for unbelievers is not eternal, then is it eternal for Satan either who is “tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Rev. 20:10)? What does “eternal” mean except “eternal”?

6) The idea of the immortality of the soul came from Greeks—not the Bible. “There has been a virtual consensus that the soul survives death because it is by nature an incorporeal substance. The assumption goes back to Plato’s view of the soul as metaphysically indestructible, a view shared by Augustine, Aquinas, and Calvin…. The Bible does not teach the natural immortality of the soul. It points instead to the resurrection of the body as God’s gift to believers. God alone has immortality (1 Tim. 6:16) but graciously grants embodied life to his people (1 Cor. 15:21, 50-54; 2 Tim. 1:10)” (Pinnock, 147-48).

Response:

a) If 1 Timothy 6:16 actually attributes immortality to God alone, what then of believers according to this logic? The annihilationists attempt to prove that only God is immortal but this contradicts their own teaching about the immortality of Christians. It is best to see this verse in the context of first century emperor worship in which deceased emperors were declared immortal. Paul’s statement here “is not intended to deny immortality to other beings, but to bring out that it belongs inherently and by right only to God, as the very source of life” (Kelly, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 146).

b) Hebrews 9:27 states “it is appointed for men to die once, and after this *comes* judgment” (NASB) or “man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment” (NIV). This judgment comes not *at* death, but *after* death. For many, judgment will not come for thousands of years until the final judgment day in Revelation 20.

c) Some may argue that unbelievers experience judgment when they enter hades for a temporary torment, but Scripture nowhere states that the unsaved are judged immediately after death. It says they wait in torment until their final judgment at the great white throne (Rev. 20).

d) The unsaved will live forever (Eccl. 12:5; Matt. 25:46; Rev. 14:11).

7) Eternal punishment is morally wrong. It is unjust for God to eternally judge sins committed during a finite existence. “Everlasting torture is intolerable from a moral point of view because it pictures God like a bloodthirsty monster who maintains an everlasting Auschwitz for his enemies whom he does not even allow to die. How can one love a God like that? I suppose one might be afraid of him, but could we love and respect him?” (Pinnock, 149).

Response: Following Pinnock’s logic, God would also be sadistic and unfair to allow people to suffer in hades for thousands of years until this very day. Hades in Luke 16 is anything but a picnic, but who can blame God of moral injustice?

Is there really a moral problem with eternal hell—at least for those who will rest even personal opinion into the hands of an all-loving, all-knowing, all-holy God? Pinnock notes that in *The Great Divorce,* C. S. Lewis attempts to picture hell as boring and almost pleasant. The lake of fire becomes a drab place where day trips to heaven can be made so a return to hell can be accomplished on Thursdays to attend the theological society! “In such renditions, hell may be nasty and inconvenient but certainly no lake of fire” (Pinnock, 150). I agree.

c. Conclusion Regarding Annihilationism: If given the choice, most Christians would prefer annihilation over eternal torment. I certainly would. But the arguments for conditionalism are far too weak to sway one who upholds the authority of Scripture.

**3. Purgatory**

a. The Issue: Can sin be *purged* (hence the name “purgatory”) in a place of torment ending in heaven on the other side? Here’s how some Catholics define this view:

If we are not quite ready for heaven at the time of death, neither do we seem to be evil ogres. If, theologically, we cannot get the masses of mediocre Christians into heaven, is it really possible that all these millions over the ages wind up in hell with Satan and his minions for all eternity?

. . . . Purgatory, as Roman Catholic theology envisions it, involves a process of purification after death for those who need it. It is a process in which concern of the living for the dead, expressed through prayers and charitable works, may have a beneficial effect on the healing of the dead (Zachery Hayes, *Four Views on Hell*, ed. William Crockett, 96, 98).

Purgatory is the intermediate state of unknown duration in which those who die imperfect, but not in unrepented mortal sin, undergo a period of penal purification, to qualify for admission into heaven. They share in the communion of the saints and are benefited by our prayers and good works (P. J. Toner, “Eschatology,” *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 5:533).

b. Rebuttal: But what does the Bible say? No, a temporary place of punishment for those eventually going to heaven does not exist for these reasons:

1) Even Catholics admit that purgatory is *not taught in the Bible*. Support used to be sought in some verses (e.g., Isa. 4:4; Micah 7:8; 1 Cor. 3:13-15), but Catholics rarely cite even these verses anymore. Hayes says that “although there is no clear textual basis in Scripture for the later doctrine of purgatory, neither is there anything that is clearly contrary to that doctrine” (Hayes, 107). In response, Scripture clearly says that punishment is “for ever and ever” (Rev. 20:10). Also, no text can be found that indicates a second chance to believe after death.

2) *Support for purgatory is mostly found in the Apocrypha.* Appeal for centuries has been to Judas Maccabeus in 2 Maccabees 12:41-46 (c. 200 BC), who discovered that some of his men killed in battle wore pagan amulets. He collected money from his surviving soldiers and sent it to Jerusalem as an “expiatory sacrifice,” with the result, “And thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from their sin” (v. 46).

3) *Hebrews 9:27* says “man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.” Where we are immediately after death is a fixed condition with no “crossing over” possible (Luke 16:26; cf. 13:28). In parabolic form the irreversibility of one’s state is indicated as the door being shut (Matt. 25:10-12; Luke 13:22-30).

4) *The foundation for purgatory is salvation by works,* which is destroyed when salvation by faith is seen clearly (Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:21; Eph. 2:8-9). Believers are *in Christ* and enter God’s presence on this basis, not on their works.

5) *Hayes claims that mediocre Christians do not go to heaven.* But the Bible affirms that carnal Christians have not lost their salvation since the eternal security of each believer is God’s responsibility (John 10:27-29; Eph. 1:13-14). Note also that 1 Corinthians 1:7-9 assured the most carnal church (Corinth) that God would be faithful to present them blameless on the day of Christ.

6) *The teaching of having a second chance to believe after death is unscriptural.* There is not a single instance in the Bible of a sinner being saved after death. Nor is there a single passage that holds out any promise of this in the future. But there are passages which contain positive teaching to the contrary (adapted from Arthur Pink, *Eternal Punishment*, 14-15):

a) "A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed —without remedy" (Prov. 29:1). Once the sinner is “destroyed” (KJV "cut off") he is "without remedy." Nothing could be clearer: at death his doom is sealed.

b) In Matthew 9:6 we read, "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins, (then He said to the paralytic), ‘Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.’"… Why did the Saviour add the qualifying cords—“The Son of Man has power *on earth* to forgive sins”? This was because he wants us to understand that after a sinner *leaves* the “earth” the Son of Man… has no "power" (or "authority" as *exousia* really means) to forgive sins. In other words, one’s state is sealed at death.

c) John 12:25: "He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life *in this world* shall keep it to life eternal." Why did Christ say, “in this world”? He wanted to show that one’s destiny is fixed once we leave this world.

d) In John 8:21 Christ said to His enemies: "I go My way, and you shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins; where I go, you cannot come." Observe carefully the order of the last two clauses. Once they died in their sins, it was impossible for them to go to heaven. The solemn force of this verse comes out even more clearly if we contrast with it John 13:36: "Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you shall follow Me afterwards." Mark the absence of the qualifying "now" in John 8:21. To Peter it was said, as to a representative saint, "You shall follow Me (to heaven) afterwards"; but to the wicked, Christ declared, “Where I go, you cannot come”!

e) Only two classes of people will be resurrected: those to a “resurrection of life” and a “resurrection of damnation” (John 5:29).

f) The hopelessness of the lost excludes another chance to believe after death:

1. Those who die without Christ do so “without hope” (1 Thess. 4:13; cf. the same phrase in Eph. 2:12-13 speaks of those only in this life).
2. Even the very “expectation of the wicked shall perish” (Prov. 10:28).
3. Those who resist the light have no sacrifice for sins and experience a “judgment without mercy” (Heb. 10:26-29; Jas. 2:13).
4. Unbelievers are “reserved the blackness of darkness forever” (Jude 13).

God, help us grasp the horrible reality of this truth!

**Five Major Views on Hell**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **View** | **Universalism** | **Annihilationism** | **Purgatory** | **Metaphorical** | **Literal** |
| Other Names | Restorationism  Reconciliationism | Conditionalism  Conditional  Immortality | Catholic  Further Probation  Postmortem Conversion | Symbolic  Non-literal | Traditional  Classical |
| Who’s Saved? | All | Some | Some | Some | Some |
| Who’s Tormented? | Some (old view)  None (new view) | Some | Some | Some | Some |
| Literal, Bodily Suffering? | Yes (old view)  No (new view) | Yes | Yes (but some say metaphorical) | No | Yes |
| Salvation After Suffering? | Yes (old view)  N/A (new view) | No | Possible Peterson, 226 | No | No |
| Purpose of Suffering? | Redemption | Punishment | Redemption | Punishment | Punishment |
| State Fixed at Death? | No (old view)  Yes (new view) | Yes | No for those with venial sins | Yes | Yes |
| Hell Eternal? | No (it’s non-existent) | No (it’s temporal) | ? | Yes | Yes |
| Soul Eternal? | Yes | Believers only | Yes but.L/Dem448 | Yes | Yes |
| Key Verses Cited | 1 Cor. 15:22  John 12:32  Phil. 2:10  1 Tim. 2:4  1 John 4:8 | Matt. 10:28  2 Pet. 3:7  Heb. 10:39  Jude 7  Rev. 20:14b | 2 Mac. 12:39f.  Mal. 3:2-3  Luke 12:59  1 Cor. 3:11-15  Jude 23 | Jude 7≠Jude 14 (fire but dark)  Matt. 25:41 (spirit but pain)  Rev. 1:14 | Luke 16:19-31  Jude 7  2 Pet. 2:9  Rev. 14:9-11  Rev. 20:10-15 |
| Theological Persuasion | Liberals & Mormons | Anglicans, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, & “Evangelicals” | Catholics &  Eastern  Orthodox | Evangelicals & Moderates | Evangelicals Only |
| Advocates | Wm. Barclay  Karl Barth  G. B. Caird  John Hick  John Robinson | Clark Pinnock  Basil Atkinson  F. F. Bruce  LeRoy E. Froom  Edward Fudge  H. Guillebaud  Philip Hughes  John R. W. Stott  John Wenham | Z. Hayes  Augustine  Thomas  Aquinas  Gregory the  Great p105  L. Berkhof  C. Pinnock  p.142 | Wm. Crockett  C. S. Lewis  John Calvin  D. A. Carson  M. Erickson  Billy Graham  Donald Guthrie  K. Kantzer p44  Leon Morris  J. I. Packer  R. A. Peterson  Herman Hoyt | J. F. Walvoord  J. Ankerburg  L. Boettner  Harry Buis  John Gerstner  R. Griffith  W. Grudem  R. Gundry  Murray Harris  W. Hendriksen  A. Hoekema  William Lane  Robert Morey  Arthur Pink  W.T.G. Shedd |

The above chart is on a continuum with the most liberal views at the left and the more conservative views at the right. Of course, it only represents the majority perspective in each category as various theologians even within the same view may differ in any of the categories.

The preceding chart is not complete, as it does not list the following perspectives (summarized from Lewis and Demarest, *Integrative Theology*, 3:446-55):

(1) Immortality of neither the soul nor the body affirms that the soul is the same as the mind and only a function of the brain. Advocates deny both the soul and body existence after life on earth and include monistic non-Christians such as empiricists (Hume), materialists, pantheists (Hegel), humanists (Carl Sagan), and Marxists. This atheistic view is contrary to the entire teaching of Scripture, but especially Revelation 20—22 which notes the final end of the righteous and wicked.

(2) Immortality of the soul but not the body is a denial of a bodily resurrection taught by Bultmann, W. N. Clarke (d. 1912), Henry Emerson Fosdick (d. 1969), and W. A. Brown (d. 1943). Paul warned against this heresy in 1 Corinthians 15.

(3) Soul sleep advocates, as well as teaching annihilationism, also teach that persons at death remain in the grave in a state of unconsciousness until the resurrection. Proponents include Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Oscar Cullman, and B. F. C. Atkinson. For support, they point to Scripture which likens death of Christians to sleep (Jer. 51:39, 57; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor. 15:6, 18, 20, 51). The soul sleep perspective contradicts Philippians 1:23 (see p. 17).

(4) Further probation (also called postmortem conversion) is a perspective which believes that God allows a second chance to repent after death so that one’s destiny is not set at death—especially for those who have never heard the gospel. Advocates include Franz Delitzsch (19th century scholar) and modern “evangelicals” such as Dale Moody (1962), Donald Bloesch, and Clark Pinnock. The distinction between this view and purgatory is difficult to determine except that punishment is downplayed. Appeal is made to Isaiah 26:19; John 5:25-29; Ephesians 4:8, and 1 Peter 3:19, 20; 4:6. See the purgatory section for a refutation of this argumentation.

(5) Instantaneous resurrection argues that believers are not without a body immediately after death; instead, Christians receive their resurrected body at that moment. Appeal is made to several texts (Rom. 8:19; Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:44; 2 Cor. 5:1f.). On the positive side, this view makes the physical heaven a more tangible experience for the believing dead (since they have a body there). However, it does not answer why a deceased person leaves his body behind except that the new body has no link to the old besides personality. Some claim the same for Christ’s resurrected body, which is termed as an “immaterial,” “spiritual,” or “invisible body” (e.g., Murray Harris, F. F. Bruce, A. B. Bruce, R. A. Charles).

(6) Absorption Into the Whole is a modern Catholic view espoused by Karl Rahner (d. 1984) and Monika Hellwig. This perspective is heavily influenced by Eastern philosophy in its insistence that at death the soul loses its uniqueness by being “united with the Infinite.” These teachers feel it inconsistent that a soul could be without a body and then joined again with it later. Here is an example of new age philosophy being taught by those claiming to be Christians. Such a view makes a personal presence with Christ impossible since personality will no longer exist, so it contradicts passages such as Philippians 1:23 and the numerous texts which mention individuals in heaven (e.g., Rev. 21:27).

(7) Reincarnation means that individuals come back *to earth* after death, though in a different life form depending upon the amount of *karma* (= sin?) in the previous life. Traditionally a Hindu tenant, the New Age Movement has been so successful that recent studies show that 25% of Americans adhere to this. However, Hebrews 9:27 notes that judgment follows a single death. See pages 17a-d for more info.

Fortunately, there are some recent responses to the preceding unorthodox views of hell, especially universalism and annihilationism. These include the following:

Bauckham, Richard J. “Universalism: A Historical Survey.” *Themelios 4* (January 1979): 48.

Notes how universalism is a relatively new teaching in the church with the exception of only a few church fathers.

Blamires, Harry. *Knowing the Truth about Heaven and Hell: Our Choices and Where They Lead Us.* Ann Arbor, MI: Servant, 1988.

Dixon, Larry. *The Other Side of the Good News: Confronting the Contemporary Challenges to Jesus’ Teaching on Hell.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997. US$16.99 pb.

A detailed analysis refuting universalism, annihilationism, and postmortem conversion.

McKnight, Scot. “Eternal Consequences or Eternal Consciousness?” *Through No Fault of Their Own? The Fate of Those Who Have Never Heard*. ed. William V. Crockett and James G. Sigountos (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 147-57.

Argues against the annihilationist viewpoints of Stott, Pinnock, and some “evangelicals.”

Nash, Ronald H. *Is Jesus the Only Savior?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.

Evangelical, argues against universalism and against an inclusivistic view of salvation.

Packer, J. I. In *Evangelical Affirmations*. Eds. Kenneth S. Kantzer and Carl F. H. Henry. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990. 107-26.?

Argues for a metaphorical view of hell but against annihilationism.

Pagenkemper, Karl E. “Rejection Imagery in the Synoptic Parables.” 2 parts. *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153 (April-June 1996): 179-98; 153 (July-September 1996): 308-31.

Traces how Jesus’ parables teach that those who reject God’s offer of salvation are eternally rejected (not temporally or not simply losing rewards), and how the basis of such a rejection is spurning of God’s grace (as opposed to the lordship salvation view).

Peterson, Robert A. *Hell on Trial: The Case for Eternal Punishment.* Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1995. 264 pp. Available at Life BookShop.

A carefully documented study of hell that evaluates OT and NT teaching and church history. Universalism (David Hick) and annihilationism (John Stott) are especially critiqued and found wanting in favor of the traditional view, except he does not see literal fire (p. 192), worms (p. 64), etc. He is unclear about the state of those who die before they are mentally competent. Peterson is Professor of Systematic Theology at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, MO. See also his “Does the Bible Teach Annihilationism?” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156 (January-March 1999): 13-27.

Richard, Ramesh. *The Population of Heaven: A Biblical Response to the Inclusivist Position on Who Will Be Saved.* Chicago: Moody, 1994. 170 pp.

A concise but effective work by a faculty member at Dallas Seminary.

Scharen, Hans. “Gehenna in the Synoptics.” 2 parts. *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (July-September 1992): 324-37; 150 (October-December 1992): 454-70.

Supports an eternal view of hell.

B. Biblical Answers to Questions on Hell

1. Why do we need to study and teach about hell? The history of preaching about hell and judgment, like many areas of theology, seems to have gone into a “pendulum swing.”

a. In the 19th century preachers’ sermons on damnation, judgment, fire, sulfur, and hell were common—and probably out of balance since not much was said about heaven (e.g., Jonathan Edwards’ “Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God” sermon).

b. But “the pendulum has swung” this century when we hear *no* preaching on judgment and hell. Perhaps this is due in part to liberalism that prides itself on optimism.

c. We need to find a balance through expositional preaching through the books of Scripture, which is a great way to not preach on the same subjects all the time.

2. Where is hell?

a. The traditional view supposes that hell is under the earth, but if this earth and its atmosphere (“the first heaven” in Rev. 21:1) will be destroyed before the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:11; 21:1), hell must be in outer space, probably beyond what people can ever see.

b. However, many assume that the earth will only be “laid bare” (2 Pet. 3:10; cf. discussion under the following “heaven” section of these notes), and thus will not be utterly destroyed to the core. Given this scenario, hades (and eventually hell) could be under the earth’s crust.

3. What is hell like?

a. Eternal (Matt. 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:8-9; 1 Cor. 1:18; 4:3; Heb. 2:3)

1) One way to distinguish hell (Gehenna) from hades (Sheol) is the length of time sin is judged in each. Hades is but temporary as it will be cast into and absorbed by the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14), which is a synonym for hell. However, hell is eternal. Technically, no one yet has ever gone to hell—only to hades (Luke 16).

2) The same word for “eternal” (Heb. *olam*) is used for both future bliss and future judgment (Dan. 12:2), so hell is eternal in the same way that heaven is eternal.

b. Eternal consumption by worms (Mark 9:47-48). Hoyt, 239, spiritualizes this as “the gnawings of conscience and remorse that course through the memory ceaselessly.”

c. Total Separation from God’s Presence (2 Thess. 1:9; cf. Pagenkemper’s article)

d. Outer Darkness (Matt. 8:12; 25:30; 2 Peter 2:17; Jude 13; cf. *1 Enoch* 102:8; *Ps. Sol.* 14:9)

e. Unquenchable fire (Matt. 5:22; 18:8-9; 25:41; Mark 9:47-48; Luke 16:24; James 3:6; Jude 7; Rev. 20:14-15; cf. Exod. 3:1-6; *Sib. Or.* 4:40-44).

1) Some say that literal darkness cannot be compatible with literal fire (e.g., George Henry Lang, *The Parabolic Teaching of Scripture* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956], 305-8). Hoyt, 239, spiritualizes fire as the “internal burning of the human spirit…” See Hans Scharen’s article for details here.

2) Response:

a) In Luke 16:24 the rich man wanted his tongue cooled from the fire, so how can this be seen figuratively?

b) Does our inability to reconcile fire and darkness together mean they can’t coexist? God made light before creating a sun (Gen. 1) and all things are possible with Him.

c) Intertestamental writers believed both darkness and fire (e.g., *Sib. Or.* 4:40-44).

f. Degrees of punishment (Matt. 10:15; 11:20-24; Mark 12:40; Rom. 2:5-6; 5:13) based on spiritual light received (Luke 12:47-48) and sins committed (Rev. 20:12-13)

g. Justice of God Uncontested (Luke 16:19-31). In the story of the rich man and Lazarus the rich man never questioned the appropriateness of his plight. The implication is that he knew that his punishment was deserved.

h. Consciousness (Luke 16:23-24)

i. Memory (Luke 16:27-28)

j. No hope of release (Matt. 25:46; Heb. 6:2)

k. Weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:12)

l. Loneliness due to separation from all people, whether unbelievers or believers (Luke 13:28)

4 . Who will go to hell? Most evangelicals believe that those who *hear* the message about Christ *and reject* it will go to hell (John 3:36; cf. Luke 16:27-31). But what about those who *never hear* the message about Christ in the first place?

a. Some (e.g., universalists) say all religions are basically the same and each provides a route to God; however, this denies the uniqueness of Christianity.

b. Some (e.g., Catholics) say there’s a second chance after death, but we have already seen on page 167 that Hebrews 9:27 excludes any kind of purgatory.

c. Others point to the sincerity of the unevangelised, claiming that they will be judged only if they fail to live up to the light which they already have. However, this claims a form of salvation by works and Romans 1:20 says that *all* people *are* without excuse—not they *may be* without excuse.

d. One view attracting some evangelicals says if the unevangelised respond in faith to the light received, God saves them *on the basis of Christ’s saving work*—even though they do not know about this Giver of salvation (John Sanders, *No Other Name: An Investigation into the Destiny of the Unevangelized* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992], 215, 282-83 and Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God’s Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992], 149-50; idem, “Toward an Evangelical Theology of Religions,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 33 (1990): 359-68). For a rebuttal, see Robert A. Peterson, *Hell on Trial* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1995), 228-34.

e. The only proper response to the state of the unevangelised is that they indeed are lost without Christ. This is supported in several ways:

1) Scriptural Arguments:

a) God’s wrath is on people rejecting the clear light of conscience and creation evidence so that all are “without excuse” (Rom. 1:18-20; 2:12-16). Thus, God’s judgment “is based not on their response to unrevealed truth but to revelation they *have* received” (J. Ronald Blue, “Untold Billions: Are They Really Lost?” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 138 [Oct.-Dec. 1981]: 344; cf. Millard J. Erickson, “The Destiny of the Unevangelized,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152 [January-December 1995 in 4 parts]; *The Evangelical Mind and Heart* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993], 130-31), Ronald H. Nash, *Is Jesus the Only Savior?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994).

b] God does not send people to hell—He only lets those who reject what is plain to them go on the self-designated course to hell (ibid, 347). These are “given over” to heterosexual lusts (Rom. 1:24-25), homosexuality (vv. 26-27), and a depraved mind (vv. 28-32).

c] No one is righteous (Rom. 3:10-11) and all are condemned (5:18). This is why all people must call upon the name of the Lord to be saved (Rom. 10:13; cf. John 14:6; Acts 4:12), which cannot happen unless someone is sent to tell them about Christ (vv. 14-15).

2) Christ’s Great Commission assumes a lost world and is given in all NT historical books (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 20:21; Acts 1:8).

3) Apostolic Example: Paul’s passion was to reach people for Christ in new areas which never heard the gospel (Rom. 15:17-24). How could this have been his passion if they were not lost? Each apostle was persecuted while seeking to reach the lost, and all but John died a martyr’s death doing so.

4) Logical Argument: If the unreached are *not* headed for hell, then the worst thing a Christian could do is to tell them about Christ! Why? Because if they *hear* the message, there’s a possibility of rejecting it and going to hell; however, if they *don’t hear* the message in the first place, hell isn’t even a possibility. Therefore, the best decision is to call back all our missionaries.

5. Can Christians really enjoy heaven when they know loved ones are in hell?

a. Tears aren’t shed in heaven (Rev. 21:4), so the answer must be yes.

b. In heaven believers will see for the first time how loathsome sin really is before a holy God. In such an environment, hell for the unbelieving will not seem as unjust as it does at the present time where we have a high tolerance for sin.

c. Christ promises about heaven, “I am making everything new!” (Rev. 20:5). This refers to more than physical things and most certainly includes believers’ attitudes.

6. What happens to babies who die? I believe that they go to heaven based on two texts:

a. David showed confidence in seeing his infant son who died (2 Sam. 12:23). While someone may question whether David’s opinion is correct (or whether we can read a NT understanding of the afterlife into his words), neither of these counterarguments is convincing to me. See Robert P. Lightner, *Heaven for Those who Can’t Believe* (Schaumburg, IL: Regular Baptist Press, 1977) for support for these babies.

b. Jesus noted that the kingdom of God belonged to little children (Mark 10:14-15). Some believe this means we need childlike faith to enter heaven (Sanders, *No Other Name*, 290), but the passage appears to teach both doctrines.

7. How can I communicate hell to non-Christians? A few suggestions:

a. Don’t be afraid to talk about hell. Jesus wasn’t! Christ talked about hell even more than He did about heaven.

b. Talk about sin in your evangelistic presentations. Talk about how God is holy and just and therefore must judge sin.

c. Remind unbelievers that hell was “prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41). Man through his disobedience has entered into this arrangement.

d. Avoid speaking of hell and sin as “spiritual separation from God.” Unbelievers are *used* to being separated from God and because of their sin many have convinced themselves that separation is *good*—so this hardly seems like a punishment!

**Traditional versus Biblical Views of Hell**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Traditions on Hell** | **The Bible on Hell** |
| Man dwells with the devil | Man is alone (Luke 13:28) |
| “At least my friends  will be there” | Yes, but you won’t see them (Luke 13:28) |
| Bodies suffer mild discomfort | Bodies suffer from burning sulfur and consumption by worms (Mark 9:47-48; Rev. 21:8) |
| Satan is tormenter over all in Hell | Satan in torment with those tormented (Rev. 20:10) |
| A place of solid earth | A lake of suffering (Rev. 20:10) |
| People alone suffer there | Demons as well as people suffer  (2 Pet. 2:4) |
| Satan rules with a pitchfork | Satan thrown into Hell without any emblems of dominion (Rev. 20:10) |
|  |  |

**II. Heaven**

**Traditional versus Biblical Views of Heaven**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Traditions on Heaven** | **The Bible on Heaven** |
| Man dwells with God | God dwells with Man (Rev. 21:3) |
| We go to heaven | Heaven comes to us on Earth (Rev. 21:2) |
| Our bodies have wings | Our bodies are like Christ’s without wings (Luke 24:39-43; 1 John 3:2) |
| Live in clouds | Live in city (Rev. 21:2–22:6) |
| No Earth | New Earth (Rev. 21:1) |
| Peter at the gate | 12 angels at 12 gates (Rev. 21:12) |
| No animals | Animals (Rev. 19:11, 14)? |
|  |  |

A. **Terminology**: The Bible uses the term “heaven(s)” in at least four ways:

1. *Atmosphere:* The first “heavens” is the sky immediately above us (Gen. 1:6-8).

2. *Outer Space:* The second “heavens” contains the sun, moon, and stars (Gen. 1:1, 14).

3. *Abode of God and Saints:* Paul called this place the “third heaven” (2 Cor. 12:2) which he equated with paradise (v. 4). We will study this place in this section.

4. *Millennium:* This 1000 year period is sometimes called the “new heavens and new earth” (Isa. 65:17; 66:22) and the “kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 22:2; 25:1).

B. **New Heavens & New Earth**: We often refer to the eternal state of the redeemed as simply “heaven.” However, the scriptural term for our eternal home is the “new heaven and new earth” (Rev. 21:1). Some questions concerning this…

1. Is there an allusion to the first heaven and earth in Genesis 1 here? Yes! Revelation 20—22 contrasts with Genesis 1—3, best seen in this chart form adapted from Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville: Nelson, 1983), 515:

The Consummation of All Things

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Genesis 1—3** | **Revelation 20—22** |
| "In the beginning God created the *heavens and the earth"* (1:1) | "Then I saw a *new heaven and a new earth"* (21:1) |
| "The darkness He called *night"* (1:5) | "There will be *no night* there" (21:25) |
| "God made *two great lights"* (sun and moon; 1:16) | "The city *does not need the* *sun or the moon"* (21:23) |
| "The day you eat of it you will surely *die"* (2:17) | "There will be *no more death"* (21:4) |
| Satan *appears* as deceiver (3:1) | Satan *disappears* forever (20:10) |
| Defilement *enters* the garden (3:6-7) | Defilement *never* *enters* the city (21:27) |
| Fellowship with God *interrupted* (3:8-10) | Fellowship with God *resumed* (21:3) |
| Initial triumph of the *serpent* (3:13) | Ultimate triumph of the *Lamb* (20:10; 22:3) |
| "I will greatly *multiply your sorrow"* (3:16) | "There will be *no more... sorrow* or crying or pain" (21:4) |
| "*Cursed* is the ground because of you" (3:17) | "*No longer* will there be any *curse"*  (22:3) |
| Man's dominion *broken* in the fall of the first man, Adam (3:19) | Man's dominion *restored* in the rule of the new man, Christ (22:5) |
| First paradise *closed* (3:23) | New paradise *opened* (21:25) |
| *Prohibition* from the tree of life (3:24) | *Access* to the tree of life (22:14) |
| Man *driven from God's presence* (3:24) | "They *will see His face"* (22:4) |

Here we see the first three chapters of the Bible (where man’s fellowship with God is broken) compared to the last three chapters of the Bible (where man’s fellowship with God is restored). Do you know what to call the rest of Scripture in the middle (Gen. 4—Rev. 19)? It’s called missions!

2. Question: Does “then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had *passed away*, and there was no longer any sea” (Rev. 21:1) refer to a *different* galaxy and planet (annihilation and replacement of the present creation) or does it refer to this *same* planet and solar system which is judged with fire but renewed?

Answer:

a. Annihilation View: Some verses seem to indicate that the entire solar system will be destroyed or annihilated after the millennium (Walvoord, 305-6, 311; Hal Lindsey, *There’s a New World Coming*, 287):

1) “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will *disappear* with a roar; the elements will be *destroyed* by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be *laid bare*…That day will bring about the *destruction* of the heavens by fire, and the *elements will melt* in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness” (2 Pet. 3:10, 12b). This description seems to fit annihilation more than a partial destruction followed by a remaking of this planet.

a) A figurative sense to the word “disappear” (παρελεύσονται) means to “pass away, come to an end, disappear” (BAGD 626a). This may denote annihilation:

1] “I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth *disappear*, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means *disappear* from the Law until everything is accomplished” (Matt. 5:18; Luke 16:17). The words of Scripture are assured from disappearing. A concept of renewal cannot be sustained here (unless it refers to disappearing *as we know it?*).

2] “… this generation will certainly not *pass away* until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will *pass away*, but my words will never *pass away”* (Matt. 24:34-35; Mark 13:30-31; Luke 21:32-33).

3] “…the one who is rich should take pride in his low position, because he will *pass away* like a wild flower” (Jas. 1:10). But he *will* still exist.

4] “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old *has gone*, the new has come!” (2 Cor. 5:17). Yet it doesn’t mean annihilation of consequences.

Summary: In the above verses, the idea of nonexistence (not renewal) can be seen in the word “disappear.” However, this word doesn’t necessarily indicate the *removal* instead of the renovation of the present planet.

b) The word “destroyed” (λύω) used three times in 2 Peter 3:10-12 may mean either to “break up into its component parts” or “to destroy, bring to an end, abolish, do away with” (BAGD 483d). The first sense is used of a ship breaking up (Acts 27:41), the a meeting breaking up (Acts 13:43), and destroying the barrier between Jew and Gentile in the church (Eph. 2:14). The second meaning refers to destroying the works of the devil (1 John 3:8) and abolishing the Sabbath (John 5:18). Most, if not all, of the above texts seem to connote a nonexistence, but this is debatable.

2) At the time of the end, the sky will be rolled up like a scroll (Isa. 34:4; Rev. 6:14) as it will be said that “earth and sky fled from [God’s] presence, and there was no place for them” (Rev. 20:11). This may denote annihilation (though the Rev. 6:14 text relates to the Tribulation, so over 1000 years will still remain!).

3) Christ said he was going to his “Father’s house” (heaven) to “prepare a place” for his disciples until his return (John 14:2-3). Since this “place” is being created now, it must be separate from the present creation rather than a renovation of it. (However, “place” probably refers to the New Jerusalem, which is completely new, while at the same time allowing for a renovation of our present earth.)

4) The new Jerusalem will not need a sun or moon (Rev. 21:23), so celestial bodies may have been annihilated. (But the text does not specifically say that a sun or moon will not exist—it only notes that the city is not dependent upon them.)

b. Renewal View: In contrast to the annihilation view, other verses seem to indicate that our same planet is judged and renewed without an annihilation:

1) 2 Peter 3:10 notes that “the earth and everything in it will be laid bare” (NIV translation of εὑρεθήσεται, to “find, discover” BAGD 325a, c), implying continued existence. This may mean “when the intervening heavens are burned away, the earth and its works, from the divine point of view, become visible. This provides an ironic contrast with the picture of the wicked trying to hide from God… (Isa. 2:19; Hos. 10:8; Rev. 6:15-16)” (Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* [Word Biblical Com.], 319). In other words, after God’s judgment of the earth, it is not entirely annihilated—only its sin will be exposed.

Response: The text is quite uncertain here with seven alternate readings. One of them is that the earth “will *not* be found” and thus explicitly teaches annihilation. In fact, all the other five options teach annihilation as well.

Rebuttal to Response: The NIV follows the best manuscript (a) and is the most unusual rendering (and thus likely the original text).

2) The term “new” may indicate quality rather than age:

It is interesting to note that in the eschatological anticipation of Isaiah the prophet there is the strong theme of retaining the earth in a revised form, or its preservation by recreation (Isa. 34:4; 51:6; 65:17; 66:22)… The remaking of the heavens and earth does not mean something entirely new, but something qualitatively better than the old. The word *new* is the word *kainos,* which refers to something of superior value, functionally superior, a rejuvenated form. Age does not automatically disqualify the attribution of the adjective *new,* for the new Jerusalem used old-world jewels… “New wine” or fresh wine was still wine…” (John Gilmore, *Probing Heaven*, 82; cf. Ryrie, *Revelation*, 119).

Response: While “new” refers to a better quality, Gilmore’s illustration of wine is inadequate. New wine may be of better quality, but because it is fresh it is also newer in time. The same can be said for the new heavens and new earth. It will be better in quality as well as newer in time (Walvoord, 316).

Also, *kainos* can also mean “something not previously present” or something “unknown, remarkable” (BAGD 394a). It repeatedly has this idea (Mark 1:27; 16:17; John 13:34; Acts 17:19, 21; 1 John 2:7f.; Rev. 2:17; 3:12; 5:9; 14:3).

Rebuttal to Response: When the word contrasts something old, however, it may have the meaning of superior in kind. For example, it is used of the new covenant (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6; Heb. 8:8; 13:9, 15), a new believer (Eph. 4:24; Gal. 6:15), and the results of being converted (2 Cor. 5:17). Also, the new entity (church) is composed of Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:15).

Isaiah uses *kaivos* of the new heavens and new earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22), meaning the millennial (cf. below) reconstruction of the earth altered previously existing elements. It would make sense that Peter (2 Pet. 3:13) and John (Rev. 21:1) intend the same meaning of “remade from existing parts.”

3) The context of 2 Peter 3 mentions the “destruction of ungodly men” (v. 7). A different word is used, but that these unsaved men are not annihilated may argue for parallel meaning concerning the destruction of the elements (vv. 10-13).

4) “Elements will melt in the heat” when God judges the earth after the millennium. Melting only changes the form of a substance but does not cause it to cease to exist.

5) The resurrection of the body will not be an entirely new body but actually a recreation of the old one (1 Cor. 15:35-54). This provides a natural parallel to the recreation of the old earth.

6) The present creation “waits in eager expectation” for the redemption of both itself and God’s children (Rom. 8:19-22). This clearly argues better for a recreation of the earth than a replacement of it.

c. Conclusion: While one cannot be dogmatic on whether “new heaven and new earth” denotes an annihilation of the present creation or a renovation of it, the evidence seems to better support the renovation theory.

3. Question: Is John’s “new heaven and new earth” the same as Isaiah’s?

Answer: It has been thought that Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 uses the identical phrase "new heavens and new earth" used of heaven by Peter (2 Pet. 3:13) and John (Rev. 21:1). However, the latter two refer to “heaven” in the singular.[[113]](#footnote-113) Also, even if the phrases were exactly the same, Isaiah is not required to point to the same referent since a term used in different contexts may not always have the same meaning. Even though my view is a minority view, I believe the authors referred to different time periods.

Most commentators see the new heavens and new earth in Isaiah 66:22 as the eternal state, (the same time as in Rev. 21:1)[[114]](#footnote-114) others like myself advocate Israel's restored earthly kingdom,[[115]](#footnote-115) and Peters even combines these two views by advocating an earthly kingdom in the eternal state.[[116]](#footnote-116) Another perspective is more ambiguous, seeing only a time of a new radical theology.[[117]](#footnote-117)

However, several reasons can be provided to demonstrate that the time in question is the kingdom age that *precedes* the new heavens and new earth. Isaiah’s "new heavens and new earth" has elements that are impossible in eternity and several factors in the context of Isaiah's passages indicate an earthly millennial scene:

**Contrasting Isaiah’s and John’s “New Heaven(s) and New Earth”**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Isaiah’s New Heavens**  **and New Earth**  **(Isa. 65:17; 66:22)**[[118]](#footnote-118) | **John’s New Heaven**  **and New Earth**  **(Rev. 21:1)** |
| English Term Used | Plural: “new heavens” | Singular: “new heaven” |
| Time Period | Millennium | Eternal State |
| Life span of Inhabitants | Extended yet not infinite life (65:20) | Eternal Life |
| Death | Possible, though dying at 100 years old is “young” (65:20; cf. 66:24)! | No death (Rev. 21:4) since death is abolished at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:14) |
| Marriage & Childbirth | Possible (65:23) | Impossible (Matt. 22:30) |
| Activity | Building of houses and planting of vineyards (65:21) | Christ claimed that he himself would prepare a place for us (John 14:1f.). |
| Animal Activity | Peaceful cohabitation of wild animals (65:25a) | No animals are noted by John or in any other text on heaven |
| Associated City | Protection of God in Jerusalem (65:25b) | Focus is the new Jerusalem (Rev. 20—21) |
| Gathering of Nations | Brought to Jerusalem to see God’s glory (66:18-20; cf. Zech. 14:16-19) | God’s glory provides light for the nations (21:23-24) |
| Priesthood & Temple | Has a temple, priests, and Levites (66:20-21; cf. Ezek. 40—43) | Has no temple (21:22), so by implication no priests are needed |
| Celebrations | New Moon and the Sabbath (56:6-7a; 66:23)[[119]](#footnote-119) | No need for these since there will be no need for rest in eternity[[120]](#footnote-120) |
| Time | Still existent | Abolished with night (Rev. 22:5), so rest every seven "days" is absurd. |
| Place of Worship | Jerusalem (65:23) | Throne of God (22:3-4) |

4. Question: Will the “new heaven and new earth” have the same stars as our present solar system? The new Jerusalem will not need the sun or moon to provide light (Rev. 21:23; 22:5) since this is provided by God. But does this mean that stars, planets and moons will not even exist as part of the entire new creation?

Answer:

a. It is true that the text does indicate that the sun and moon are not needed in the new Jerusalem. However, it may be stretching it to imply that celestial bodies are not needed outside this city to illumine the new earth.

b. However, another way to look at the phrase “new heaven and new earth” is to take the two as identical. In other words, heaven will have come to earth:

“Since God will make the new earth his dwelling place, and since where God dwells there heaven is, we shall then continue to be in heaven while we are on the new earth. For heaven and earth will then no longer be separated, as they are now, but will be one (see Rev. 21:1-3)” (Anthony Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979], 274).

Response: Technically, God will not dwell on the new earth as Hoekema claims but in the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2-3, 10-11, 22-24).

c. Up to this point in this study we have looked only in general at the relationship between the old heaven and earth to the new heaven and earth. But how do the heavenly designations relate to one another? It is difficult to tell from Revelation 21—22 the relationship between the new heaven (v. 1), the new earth (v. 1), heaven (v. 2), and the new Jerusalem (21:2—22:5).

1) Evidently each of these four are different parts, for the “new Jerusalem” comes down *out of heaven* (3:12; 21:2, 10), so it must be separate from it. (But this does not explain why God’s throne is in the new Jerusalem; 22:1).

2) While “heaven” (v. 2) could be the same as the “new heaven” (v. 1), this also seems unlikely. Why would the present heaven itself need to be renewed or replaced? It would seem that the “new heaven” then refers to new galaxies.

3) Certainly the “new earth” (v. 1) is separate from the “new Jerusalem,” for the latter is a city rather than a planet. Some feel that this city will be so huge that it couldn’t be on the new earth (see next section) so it hovers above the actual city of Jerusalem on the renewed earth. Thus the new city actually serves as a satellite city from which the saints may come and go to and from the new earth.

C. **The** **New Jerusalem**

1. *Figurative View*: Many scholars see this city as symbolic of the church (Morris, 242; Hendriksen, 199; Ladd, 276; Mounce, 370-71). These reasons are given:

a. The city is described as a “bride beautifully dressed for her husband” (21:2; see also vv. 9-10). Since the term “bride” often refers to the church (Isa. 54:5; Eph. 5:32; etc.), it would seem so here too (Hendriksen, 199). “Even in the Old Testament the Church is represented under the symbolism of a city (Isa. 26:1; Ps. 48; etc.)” (Hendriksen, 199).

Response: Contrary to popular belief, the church is never called the bride of Christ in the NT. Paul does use the husband-wife relationship to illustrate Christ’s love for the church (Eph. 5:32), but the word “bride” or “wife” is actually never used for the church. In fact, verses 9-10 denote the “bride” or “wife” as the new Jerusalem itself—not the church! Also, Isaiah doesn’t mention the church; this is reading the NT back into the OT. Even a casual glance at the above texts will show that they do not refer to the church but rather to Jerusalem (Ps. 48; Isa. 26:1) or Israel (Isa. 54:5). Finally, more than just the church will live in this city (Heb. 12:22-24) so it cannot be equated with the church. The inscription of the names of both the 12 tribes of Israel (21:12) and the 12 apostles (21:14) argue that both Israel and the church will inhabit the city—not simply the church.

b. “One wonders if John means to identify the heavenly Jerusalem with God’s redeemed people, even as the church is likened to the temple of God in the New Testament (1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:21)” (Ladd, 276-77).

Response: The church is indeed called a temple (Eph. 2:21), but it is composed of believers each of whom is also a temple (1 Cor. 6:19). However, just because it is called a temple in the epistles does not mean that it is a city in Revelation. The epistles do not contain detailed descriptions like John has here. If it is not to be taken literally, then why all the very physical depictions, including walls, pearls, specific jewels, and even measurements?

c. The city and the bride are said to be one and the same. An angel told John, “‘Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.’ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God” (21:9b-10).

Response: The above observation (bride = city) is true. The problem is the identity of the bride. As noted earlier, the church is never called the bride of Christ. Also, Hebrews 12:22 clearly distinguishes the new Jerusalem from its inhabitants: “But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God…” Then the city and its inhabitants—angels, the church, OT saints (cf. Heb. 11:10), God, Christ—are specified in Hebrews 12:22-24 as separate.

d. “There is a good deal of vivid description, sometimes of a very material kind. But when John speaks of streets paved with gold, of a city whose gates are made of single pearls, and the like, we must not understand him to mean that the heavenly city will be as material as present earthly cities. It is his way of bringing out the important point that the ultimate state of affairs will be very precious. He is concerned with spiritual states, not with physical realities” (Morris, *Revelation*, 242).

Response: Morris’ “sometimes of a very material kind” is a gross understatement. The *whole chapter* speaks of physical realities! The spiritualized view runs into great problems concerning authorial intent too. Would the original readers have spiritualized these things? I doubt it. Are we then arguing against a physical heaven like eastern mystics? Hopefully even those who argue against a literal view of the new Jerusalem still believe heaven is a literal place. We only have one physical description of heaven, so we must be careful not to throw it away so easily.

e. Conclusion: The spiritualized view of the new Jerusalem is unlikely. Evidence for a literal view is clear from the following (some of this is review from above):

1) Physical measurements and specific descriptions (gates, walls, etc.) are given.

2) The city is called the bride but the church is not.

3) The city and its inhabitants are distinguished (Heb. 12:22).

4) The original readers would most likely have interpreted this literally.

5) Even those who argue *against* a literal view here generally believe in a literal heaven (though they deny that this description is it).

6) The alternate interpretations (i.e., that this is the church, all the redeemed, etc.) do not have contextual support either here or elsewhere in the NT.

2. *Literal View*: A more natural view of the text takes the passage at face value (Walvoord, 313, 323-24; Ryrie, 120-22; Paul Lee Tan, *A Pictorial Guide to Bible Prophecy*, 210; Hal Lindsey, *There’s a New World Coming*, 289). It says it is a city, so why not?

a. Names: Besides the “new Jerusalem,” this city has several other titles:

• the bride (Rev. 21:9a)

• the wife of the Lamb (Rev. 21:9b)

• Jerusalem (Rev. 21:10)

• the Holy City (Rev. 21:2, 10; 22:19)

• Mount Zion (Heb. 12:22a; Rev. 14:1)

• the Heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22b)

• the city of the living God (Heb. 12:22c)

• the dwelling of God (Rev. 21:3) or “tabernacle of God” (NASB)

• the city of my God (Rev. 3:12), “my” referring to Jesus

• the heavenly country (Heb. 11:16a)

• the city (Heb. 11:16b)

Note that the numerous references to the city argues for a specific, literal city.

b. Inhabitants: Who will dwell in the new Jerusalem? Hebrews 12:22-24 mentions this city and then seems to give a rather full list of its inhabitants, although they are not specifically designated as such. These are listed in the following order:

1) *God* (v. 22a): The first thing John noted about this city is that it came from God in heaven so that God himself will dwell with men (Rev. 21:2-3). This wonderful aspect is often overlooked in our many questions about heaven. The best selling point for heaven is that we will be with God!

2) *Angels* (v. 22b): These number “thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly.”

3) *Church Saints* (v. 23a): Each has his or her name written in the book of life (cf. Rev. 20:15).

4) *Redeemed Outside the Church Age* (v. 23b): These “spirits of righteous men made perfect” are distinguished from the church and probably mean those redeemed before Pentecost (Noah, Abraham, Rahab, etc.) and those saved in the Tribulation (Rev. 6:9-11; 7:1-17; 20:4).

5) *Christ* (v. 24a): He is noted as the mediator of a new covenant. John elsewhere promised that when we see him we shall be like him (1 John 3:2).

Question: If all these people are living in the city, then who lives in the new earth? and the new heavens? Or are these places simply locations to which we can make excursions from our “headquarters” at the new Jerusalem? This is boggling to even think about but we don’t have enough data to answer with any certainty.

c. Time: Will the heavenly Jerusalem exist only during the eternal state or during the millennium as well? Some advocate that the new Jerusalem will be present during the 1000 year millennium (e.g., Lindsey, 289; Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 577; William Kelly, *Lectures on Revelation*, 459f., and *Exposition of Revelation*, 248f.). Ryrie agrees, for while Revelation 21:1—22:5 relates to the eternal state,

[Some commentators] feel that 21:9-21 reverts to a description of the millennial state. This would seem incongruent with the chronological pattern of the book and this section. Perhaps the best way to understand this entire section is to regard the new Jerusalem as the abode of the redeemed of all ages. Conditions within the new Jerusalem are conditions of eternity. Of course the redeemed will be inhabiting the city during the millennium as well as during eternity. Always the conditions within the city are eternal, even when the city is related to the millennium… [21:9-27] describes the city’s relation to the millennial state. In other words, there seem to be two descents of the city, 21:1-8 being the one in relation to eternity and 21:9—22:5 the one in relation to the millennium (Ryrie, 118, 120)

Support:

1) It would seem inappropriate for the church to have been raptured and living with Christ for seven years which is followed by 1000 years on the old earth again. This would also be a major “let down” for believers!

2) Some factors in Revelation 21:9—22:5 seem to indicate a millennial rather than eternal scene:

a) The descent of the city is noted twice. All agree that the first descent in verse 2 relates to the eternal state since the earth will have no sea. In contrast, many millennial passages mention bodies of water. It is possible that the second descent (v. 9) denotes a different time period, if contextual factors support it.

b) The kings of the earth bringing their splendor into the heavenly city (Rev. 21:24, 26) is parallel to the same happening with the earthly Jerusalem (Zech. 14:16-19).

c) Leaves for the healing of the nations (22:7) would hardly be needed in the eternal state but would be handy in the millennium.

3) The book of Revelation is mostly chronological, but certain exceptions do occur. Some events in chapter 17 actually occur before some preceding chapters. Thus it is not totally out of character that 19:9f. occurs before 19:1-8.

Response:

1) Ryrie notes that the redeemed of all ages will live in the city. This logic would also imply that the same is true of the present—that all saved people who have died presently live in the city.

2) It is best to argue for a chronological approach unless clear factors mitigate against it. The city is not revealed until after the millennium (20:1-6), judgments (20:7-15), and creation of the new heaven and new earth (21:1).

3) Other passages relating to the millennium note that believers will reign with Christ not from the suspended city, but will reign on the earth (Rev. 5:10; 20:4-6). However, we also will reign from the new Jerusalem as well (22:5), though these are in two different time periods.

4) The description of the city in 21:2 matches that of 21:9, so the natural reading is that both relate to the same event.

5) The implication that no temple exists during this time (21:22) is inconsistent with the millennial age when Ezekiel’s temple will be on earth (Ezek. 40—43).

6) We do not know whether a return to a millennial earth after seven years with Christ in heaven will actually be a “let down” for us. After all, Christ himself will be reigning and we will reign with him.

7) The kingly splendor (21:24) finds a parallel to millennial descriptions, but just because the descriptions are similar, it does not mean they are the same. One clear difference is that Zechariah clearly had in mind the earthly Jerusalem whereas John’s vision related to the heavenly city.

8) Leaves for the “healing of the nations” (22:2) do not necessitate a millennium. The word here should be understood as “health-giving” since the root meaning carries the idea of serving or ministering. “In other words, the leaves of the tree promote the enjoyment of life in the new Jerusalem, and are not for the correcting of ills which do not exist…as indicated in verse 3” (Walvoord, 330).

9) It is not unthinkable that mortal and immortal believers could live together on the earth with the latter living in a separate place. Jesus mixed with his disciples for 40 days in his glorified body, so by God’s grace we could do the same.

Conclusion: It appears that the new Jerusalem will be in the eternal state and not in the millennium.

d. Size: Ancient people needed a city to guarantee security, so some scholars feel this “description of the church” in the form of a city of enormous size was given to comfort believers. However, this still doesn’t answer where believers will be for eternity. Is not a literal place needed to inhabit the saved from all ages? And would not heaven have to be very large (literally)! Just how large is it?

1) *City Size:* The width and length are equal at 2200 kilometers (Rev. 21:16). This is the same distance from Singapore (south) past Borneo to Sulawesi (east) to Manila (north) to China (west)! Such a city has never even been dreamed of being built on earth, for this place is roughly half the size of all southeast Asia (see the picture at the end of this section)!

2) *Wall Size:* The wall measurement is 144 cubits or 65 meters (216 feet). But no adjective appears to show whether it means “thick” (NIV text) or “high” (NIV margin; Ryrie, 121). If “thick” is correct and the walls extend to the top of the city this would make the wall 11,616,000 feet high (2200 kilometers)! However, if the 65 meter reference is to the *height* of the walls, then the walls will extend up only 0.000018595% of the city height! Either case is beyond imagination.

e. Shape: The height is the same as the width and length, but the actual shape of the city is not stated.

1) The three identical dimensions makes one think immediately of a cube—especially since it has walls (Rev. 21:12-14, 17-21; cf. Tan, 210). This also finds parallel in God’s earthly dwelling place within the cubed holy place in the tabernacle (Exod. 26:15?) and Solomon’s temple (1 Kings 6:20).

2) However, some see it as a pyramid shaped city (Hoyt, 226; cf. Walvoord, *Millennial Kingdom,* 334):

Christ, the chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:20), will appear at the top where the throne of God will be located, and from which there will issue the river of pure water (Rev. 22:1). From this point too will issue the light that floods the city and the surrounding region (Rev. 21:23).

3) J. Vernon McGee thinks that the city is a cube in space within a crystal sphere:

Several times attention is called to the fact that the city is like a crystal-clear stone or crystal-clear gold. This emphasis leads us to believe that the city is seen through the crystal. We live *outside* the planet called earth, but the Bride will dwell *within* the planet called the New Jerusalem. The glory of light streaming through this crystal-clear prism, will break up into a polychromed rainbow of breath-taking beauty (*Reveling Through Revelation*, 2:104-5).

Conclusion: The arguments for a pyramid shape could as easily be applied to a cube, but high walls seem out of place with a pyramid. McGee’s view is also unlikely as the *city itself* is clear as crystal (21:11) and no sphere is noted. It appears that the traditional cube shape is a better option.

f. Colours:

1) General: The overall impression of the city is indescribable, but John did his best: “It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal” (21:11).

2) City: Gold as “pure as glass” or “like transparent glass” is used for both the buildings (v. 18b) and the street (v. 21b). While hues abound, yet everything has a sense of translucence—after all, there will not be any reason to hide anything! “Also, no one wants to be out of sight of Jesus for very long, and this way you can see Him twenty-four hours a day!” (Lindsey, 292).

3) Wall: The wall is made of jasper alone (v. 18a).

4) Gates: White is prominent since each of the twelve gates is made from a single pearl (21:21). Some who deny the literal view question the “size of the oyster” but this only shows their lack of confidence in God’s abilities.

5) Foundations: The foundations are made from 12 precious stones (Rev. 21:19-20). It seems that God likes green as the foundation is probably green more than any other colour. However, several of these stones come in a variety of hues, with the following options (numbers refer to layer in the foundation):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Layer** | **Stones/Hues** | **Clear** | **Green** | **Blue** | **Red** | **Yellow** | **Brown** | **Purple** |
| Wall | Jasper (v. 11) | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | Amethyst |  |  |  |  |  |  | x |
| 11 | Jacinth |  |  | x | x |  |  |  |
| 10 | Chrysoprase |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Topaz |  | x | x |  | x |  |  |
| 8 | Beryl |  | x | x |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Chrysolite |  | x |  |  | x |  |  |
| 6 | Carnelian |  |  |  | x |  |  |  |
| 5 | Sardonyx |  |  |  | x |  | x |  |
| 4 | Emerald |  | x |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Chalcedony |  | x |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Sapphire |  |  | x |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | Jasper | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |

g. Location: Does the city rest on earth or is it suspended above the earth? Some point to the foundations as evidence that it will rest on the earth (Lindsey, 289).

However, others note that the new Jerusalem will hover over the earth as a satellite city (Walvoord, 312-13; Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 577). If indeed this heavenly city exists during the millennium with the present Jerusalem still existing, it seems likely that the new city will be at the spot of the old, though not squashing it! While the city is seen descending to the earth (Rev. 21:2, 10) it is never stated that it actually reached earth. This may also explain how believers with mortal bodies (who lived through the Tribulation) could live on earth at the same time as those in glorified bodies. The latter would dwell in the suspended city.

h. God’s Presence takes the place of any temple (Rev. 21:22), where he formerly dwelt on earth prior to the giving of the Holy Spirit. We will serve him and actually see him face to face (22:3-4). The traditional view of heaven sees *us as going up* to God, but Scripture records *God as coming down* to dwell with us (21:3)!

i. The River of Life flows from the throne of God (Rev. 22:1-5), presumably at the top of the city. Evidently the same tree of life which used to be in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:22, 24) is large enough to straddle the river which flows from “Main Street.” Incidentally, this is the only street mentioned in connection with the city.

D. **Will There Be Degrees of Reward in Heaven?**

1. Most Christians assume varying degrees of reward in the new Jerusalem. (Actually the Bible emphasizes millennial rewards more than in the eternal state; cf. Joseph Dillow, *The Reign of the Servant Kings*). Yet it does seem to teach heavenly degrees of reward:

a. John encouraged a woman to deny hospitality to false teachers so that she could “receive a full reward” (2 John 8). This would indicate that a reward of a lesser degree was possible due to her action. In fact, he warns her, “Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for…”

b. Certain rewards are promised people who serve in various capacities (cf. rewards and crowns on pp. 75-77 and below on this page). This would mean that those who do not do them would not receive these particular rewards. Therefore, the reward is not equal for all. In this light, Paul noted that “the Lord will reward everyone for whatever he does, whether he is slave or free” (Eph. 6:8).

2. What is the nature of the heavenly rewards? What will these rewards be like?

a. Rewards of Responsibility (cf. W. A. Criswell and Paige Patterson, *Heaven*, 208-14)

1) In Luke 19:11-27 (Parable of the Ten Minas) Jesus taught that before going on a journey, a nobleman gave each of his ten servants the same amount of money—one mina each. Upon returning, the master rewarded each accordingly with differing degrees of responsibility based on their faithfulness.

2) Matthew 25:14-30 (Parable of the Talents) records a similar story, except each man received a different amount of money to invest for his master (the one who buried his master’s money depicts an unsaved man, v. 30). This parable also depicts varying degrees of reward: “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness’” (v. 21).

b. Rewards of Possession

1) Five crowns (*stephanos*) are noted as personal possessions in heaven (cf. p. 76). Thesecrowns are not kingly crowns (*diadems*) but victor’s wreaths made of vines or leaves (or even gold and silver in the form of a garland or wreath):

a) An *incorruptible crown* is for those who master their flesh (1 Cor. 9:25).

b) A *crown of hope or joy* is for those who bore fruit in others’ lives for Christ (1 Thess. 2:19). This is sometimes called the soul-winner’s crown.

c) A *crown of life* is for believers who patiently endure trials and suffering (James 1:12; Rev. 2:10).

d) A *crown of righteousness* is for one longing for Christ’s return (2 Tim. 4:8).

e) A *crown of glory* rewards spiritual shepherds who feed the flock (1 Pet. 5:4).

2) We too often view ownership as sinful, though this is not scriptural.

a) As joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17; Heb. 1:2), we own what He owns! This is joint-ownership in a communal sense but “to deny private property inevitably ends in denying privacy” (Gilmore, 302) much like the mystical idea of blending into the “Total One.” Ownership in heaven will not include the sinful possessiveness of earth.

b) We have a heavenly inheritance which is “imperishable and undefiled, and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Pet. 1:4 NASB).

3. However, a recent article argues against levels of reward (Craig L. Blomberg, “Degrees of Reward in the Kingdom of Heaven?” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 35 [June 1992]: 159-72). He provides some interesting thoughts:

a. The vineyard worker parable teaches that each worker received the same pay no matter how long he worked (Matt. 20:1-16). This teaches that all believers are rewarded equally since all receive pay by grace. The ending, “the last shall be first, and the first, last” (v. 16), means that all positions in heaven are interchangeable.

Response: Do they indeed receive pay by grace? In each case the pay was for work, not faith. The main point that “the last shall be first, and the first, last” (v. 16) may better indicate that God’s system of ranking people in heaven differs from that which man uses on earth.

b. Scholars do not agree on the form these differing heavenly rewards will take. Suggestions include capacity for service, added responsibilities, degree of bliss, possessions, and an enriched relationship with God.

Response: Our ignorance of the type of reward does not deny its existence (see preceding discussion for more details on types of reward).

c. If heaven is perfection, how can there be varying degrees of perfection?

Response: This may seem inappropriate from our vantage point since we are not God, but he has made many perfect things which differ in quality even in our present world. For example, plants are perfectly made yet less durable than jewels.

d. Blomberg considers passages generally used to teach rewards not convincing.

1) The crown passages speak of the reward of eternal life itself, not something in addition to it (1 Cor. 9:25; 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4). [But this does not seem to be the normal reading of each passage.]

2) The texts about those who are the “least” or “greatest” relate only to the “present aspects of the kingdom” (Matt. 5:19; 11:11; 18:4; Mark 9:34-35; Luke 9:48). [No, for people here are compared with the least of the people there.]

3) The quality of each man’s works and their rewards (1 Cor. 3:11-15) relates to the degree of shame or satisfaction at the judgment (cf. 1 John 2:28), not the lasting results of it which persist for all time in an everlasting hierarchy. [Even this is not correct, since verse 14 declares that “if what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.” It is true that the nature of the reward is not stated, so the belief that it is merely momentary satisfaction may be true or false—no one knows. However, 2 Corinthians 5:10 does indicate that each will be judged for his deeds and “will receive what is due him.”]

Other arguments of Blomberg should be considered. This article is worth reading. Perhaps we need to re-evaluate long-held views in this area.

E. **How Will Our Bodies Be Different Than They Are Now?** This is a mystery somewhat, but here’s some of my personal opinions…

1. We will have individual places for each believer to live (John 14:2)! The old KJV translation “in my Father’s house are many mansions” is unfortunate as the word simply means “dwelling places” (NASB) or “rooms” (NIV). Since the new Jerusalem is far from being a literal “house” (as it is a city), we will have neither rooms in a mansion nor “mansions in a house.” What kind of structure in the city we will live in is unstated. Perhaps more faithful ones will have better HDB flats (Heaven Development Board)!

2. We will have an ability to eat (Rev. 19:9?; 22:2?) but no need to do so!

3. We will be able to transport ourselves by thought as Jesus did in His glorified body (Luke 24:36).

Disagreeing with this is Hoyt, 229-31, who believes that saved humanity in the eternal state will be composed of two basic groups:

a. *Glorified (resurrected) saints* include…

1) Members of the Church in glorified (transformed) bodies (1 Cor. 15:51-54)

2) Old Testament saints and martyred tribulation saints whom “will experience glorification by resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6; Dan. 12:2; Isa. 26:19-21)” and a “special relation to the New Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22-24)” (Hoyt, 230)

b. *Mortal (unresurrected) saints* who will be saved in the Tribulation and enter the millennium in mortal bodies. Hoyt says that in heaven they’ll lack the sinful nature that they had in the millennium and still have the ability to procreate in their natural bodies on the new earth. Perhaps Isaiah 60:19-22 supports this.

Response: Hoyt correctly notes that the Scripture does not say that the unresurrected millennial redeemed will receive transformed, glorified bodies. However, he assumes (though unstated as an assumption) that God annihilates their sinful nature which is active in the millennium. I feel that the transformation of their bodies into glorified bodies is just as likely as the elimination of their sinful nature—both about which Scripture remains silent. Also, angels and people are not married in heaven (Matt. 22:30). Finally, death will still be possible for those with mortal bodies in the millennium (Isa. 65:20), but Hoyt assumes death will happen only to non-Christian children of those believers entering the millennium from the Tribulation.

4. We will have the ability to recognize one another (same race, sex, color): Don’t worry, you will still be Chinese! Many dispensationalists teach that the distinction between Israel and the church continues even throughout the eternal state (e.g., Hoyt, 232-33). Hoyt says that the church will have the highest position, OT and Tribulation saints second highest, and then those in natural bodies include Israel and the Gentiles. I need more study here, especially on the various heavenly groups in Hebrews 12:22-24.

F. **What Will We Do in Heaven?** How will we occupy our time?

1. Oftentimes our focus is upon rest. Perhaps that’s because we work too hard here! (When I ask Singaporeans, “How are you?” most respond, “Busy” or “Tired.”)

2. It is true that Scripture refers to death as rest (Gen. 47:30; 1 Kings 1:21; Ps. 16:9; Dan. 12:13; Rev. 14:13).

3. However, the focus of Scripture is not rest, but service in heaven—restful work! Remember that Adam in the Garden of Eden was given purposeful work even before the Fall. In other words, work itself is not a curse—it’s those cursed weeds that make the toil so hard. Service has always been part of heaven’s environment.

a. The angels’ job description is service. They don’t just float around doing nothing!

1) “Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to *serve* those who will inherit salvation?” (Heb. 1:14). This ministry of service for God by ministering to man includes delivering messages to those on earth (Luke 1:11-20, 26-38).

2) Angels also serve God through *worship* (Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8-11; 5:8, 14), *singing* (Rev. 5:9-13; 15:1-4), and other ways. Since they are primarily servants, they refuse people to worship them (Rev. 22:9; cf. Col. 2:18).

b. The redeemed will also serve him in heaven:

1) “His servants will *serve* him” (Rev. 22:3b).

2) “They will *reign* forever and ever” (Rev. 22:5b).

3) “Jesus replied, ‘No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for *service* in the kingdom of God’” (Luke 9:62).

4) “…they are before the throne of God and *serve* him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them” (Rev. 7:15).

5) “and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to *serve* his God and Father —to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen” (Rev. 1:6).

6) “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to *serve* our God, and they will reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:10).

7) The redeemed will also sing (presumably in key, finally, for some!):

a) “Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, *singing:* ‘To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!’” (Rev. 5:13).

b) “And [the 144,000 redeemed Jews] sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth” (Rev. 14:3).

There still remains *much* about heaven that we do not know and will not know until we arrive. In the meantime let’s praise God our place is reserved and say…

**“Amen! Come Lord Jesus!”**

**(Revelation 22:20)**

**The Size of the New Jerusalem**

Paul Lee Tan, *A Pictorial Guide to Prophecy*, 210

**Differences Between the Millennium and Heaven**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Millennium** | **Heaven** |
| **Duration** | **1000 years (Rev. 20:1-6)** | **Eternal (Rev. 22:5)** |
| **Death** | **Possible (Isa. 65:20)** | **Impossible (Rev. 21:4)** |
| **Longevity of Life** | **“Never again will there be an infant who lives a few days. He who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth” (Isa. 65:20)** | **No aging (Rev. 21:4 implied)** |
| **Sin Nature** | **Active (Rev. 20:7-9)** | **Abolished (Rev. 21:27)** |
| **Inhabitants** | **Initially Christian, but later includes unbelievers —no living with angels? (Matt. 25:34; Rev. 20:7-9)** | **Saints and angels alone (Rev. 21:27)** |
| **Bodies** | **Mortal and immortal living together (Isa. 65:20; 1 Cor. 15:42-44)** | **Only immortal (glorified)**  **(1 Cor. 15:42-44)** |
| **Satan** | **Bound, but then released after 1000 years (Rev. 20:3, 7)** | **In lake of burning sulfur, never to be released again (Rev. 20:10)** |
| **Political &**  **Religious Centre** | **Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3; Micah 4:1-2, 7)** | **New Jerusalem (Rev. 21)** |
| **Place** | **Earth (Rev. 5:10)** | **New heavens and new earth (Rev. 21:1)** |
| **Key**  **Passages** | **Psalm 72; Isaiah 2; 11; 65—66; Revelation 20:1-6** | **Revelation 21—22** |

**Books About Heaven**

Finally some books on heaven are coming out! Although some of the best works are not yet available in the SBC library, those Singapore Bible College does have are marked with an asterisk:

(cf. Gilmore, 447-48)

\*Beiderwerden, George. *Heaven.* St. Louis: Concordia, 1961. 31 pp. *A short work available in the SBC library* (call number 248.86 BEI).

\*Bonnell, John Sutherland. *Heaven and Hell.* New York: Abingdon, 1922. 62 pp. *Longer than Beiderwerden* (call number 237.2 BON).

\*Criswell, W. A., and Patterson, Paige. *Heaven.* Wheaton: Living Books (Tyndale), 1991. 306 pp. *A substantial work by a well-known Baptist pastor and a scholar, easy-to-read style, includes lyrics of several hymns on heaven; does not interact much with opposing views.*

\*Gilmore, John. *Probing Heaven: Key Questions on the Hereafter.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989. 466 pp. *Addresses 21 practical questions about heaven (Where is heaven? Who will be there? What shall we do there? Can we be sure of going there? Are there sexual differences in heaven? Does heaven have equality, humor, growth, ownership, memory, and recognition? Is heaven reincarnation? etc.), amillennial (e.g., p. 262; anti-premillennial, actually), posttribulational, views the Book of Revelation as stages of church history. Gilmore obtained his D.Min. from Denver Seminary. This is the most thorough book on heaven in the SBC library with numerous footnotes and interaction with other views, though he often rambles on with numerous details (but many good illustrations).*

McDannell, Colleen, and Lang, Bernard. *Heaven: A History.* New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 1988. *Spans church’s views throughout history, but weak on authority of Scripture.*

\*Ng, Richard. *A Comparative Study of the Concept of Heaven in Five Major Religions.* Singapore Bible College Senior Paper, BTh, 1982. 29 pp. (call number SP 1981-1982 no. 9).

Kreeft, Peter J. *Heaven.* San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980. *Responds to modern objections to heaven. Relies on C. S. Lewis and Roman Catholic view of heaven.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Heaven: But Never Dreamed of Asking.* San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982. *A sequel to the above, more detailed.*

Schilder, Klaas. *Heaven: What Is It?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950. *Abbreviated from the original Dutch edition, theological, now out of print, but the best book cited on this page.*

Schoonhoven, Calvin R. *The Wrath of Heaven.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966. *Compact, well researched in original languages.*

\*Scroggie, W. Graham. *What About Heaven.* London: Pickering & Ingels Ltd., 1954. 137 pp. (call number 237.6 SCR).

Smith, Wilbur. *The Biblical Doctrine of Heaven.* Chicago: Moody, 1968. *Premillennial, cites authors from ancient to modern times, interesting, high view of Scripture.*

\*Swedenborg, Emanuel. *Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell.* New York: Swedenborg Foundation, 1938. 455 pp. *This, the second largest book on heaven in the SBC library, is from the Swedenborgianism cult!* (call number 289.4 SWE).

Tada, Joni Eareckson. *Heaven: Your Real Home.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995. 215 pp. $18.99. *Warm style from a woman paralyzed from the shoulders down.*

Toon, Peter. *Heaven and Hell: A Biblical and Theological Overview.* Nashville: Nelson, 1986. *Short but thorough, more up-to-date than Schilder and second best (next to Schilder) of the books cited here.*

**Ancient Map of Israel**

*David C. Cook Publishing Co.*



Adapted from Marjie Mehlis, *Maps of the Holy Land for Overhead Projection* (Elgin, IL: David C. Cook Pub. Co., 1973), 8; Barry J. Beitzel, *The Moody Bible Atlas* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 191

**British Mandate and Jewish Populations in Europe**

John Phillips, *Exploring the World of the Jew*, 144

**Arab Independence After WWI**

Stanley A. Ellison, *Who Owns the Land? The Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Portland: Multnomah, 1991), 108-9

**Jewish Returns After 1948**

Stanley A. Ellison, *Who Owns the Land? The Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Portland: Multnomah, 1991), 94-95

**Maps of Israel (1947, 1949)**

David Dolan, *Holy War for the Promised Land*, 249-50

**The History of Jerusalem**

The history of Jerusalem is a long and complicated one. Since the city has been one of the most destroyed and rebuilt cities in the world, deciphering the various layers of civilizations has proven a challenge for even the best archaeologists.

Jerusalem is divided into two general sections: the New City (developed largely since 1967) and the Old City (surrounded by a wall built by the Muslim Turks in AD 1530). The eastern part of Jerusalem includes the Mount of Olives and Kidron Valley and has a large Arab population whereas western Jerusalem is entirely Jewish.

Jerusalem means “City of (the god) Salim,” for it originally was a Canaanite city. This Egyptian, West Semitic, and Akkadian “Salim” in Hebrew sounds much like “Shalom,” or “peace.” Thus it has been called the “City of Peace,” but perhaps no other city has been fought over more! The Bible also calls this city Salem, Jebus, Zion, Ariel, and the City. Other names include Aelia Capitolina (Roman name after the AD 132 Jewish revolt to fourth century) and El-Quds (Muslim).

Jerusalem remains the largest populated city in Israel (600,000). Tel Aviv is larger when the outside metropolitan areas are included and most nations consider Tel Aviv the capital. However, Israel regards Jerusalem the “real” capital. Every foot walks with a sense of history. Just look at the history of the 14 periods of control over this incredible city:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Dates | Period |
| **3150-1006 BC** | Canaanite/Jebusite (not conquered by Joshua) |
| **1006-586 BC** | Israelite (David until Nebuchadnezzar's destruction) |
| **586-538 BC** | Babylonian (Judah’s exile) |
| **538-331 BC** | Persian (Judah’s return) |
| **331-143 BC** | Hellenistic (Greek) |
| **143-63 BC** | Hasmonean (limited Jewish self-rule under Greeks) |
| **63 BC-AD 324** | Roman (time of Christ and early church) |
| **AD 324-638** | Byzantine (“Christian” Roman Empire—i.e., Eastern Orthodox control) |
| **AD 638-1099** | Early Moslem (Dome of Rock built) |
| **AD 1099-1187** | Crusader (“Christian”) |
| **AD 1187-1517** | Mamluk (Moslem) |
| **AD 1517-1917** | Ottoman (Turkish Moslem, built present walls) |
| **AD 1917-1948** | British Rule (under League of Nations mandate) |
| **AD 1948-1967** | State of Israel (but Jordan controlled East Jerusalem) |
| **AD 1967-1993** | East Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan controlled by Israel |
| **AD 1993-now** | Gaza Strip, Jericho, Bethlehem conceded to Palestinian self-rule |

**Important Dates in the Modern History of Israel**

**Important Dates in the Modern History of Israel (2 of 2)**

**A History of Modern Israel**

Marvin J. Rosenthal, *Zion’s Fire* magazine (Sept/Oct 1993): 11-24 (1 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (2 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (3 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (4 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (5 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (6 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (7 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (8 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (9 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (10 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (11 of 12)

A History of Modern Israel (12 of 12)

**Comparing Luke 19:37 and Zechariah 14:4**

Luke 19:37 notes that Jesus fulfilled Zechariah 9:9 at the Triumphal Entry when He was hailed as Messiah at the summit of the Mount of Olives. More than that, Zechariah 14:4 prophesizes that the *next* time He will be acknowledged as Messiah will be *at this very point* where He was *last* acknowledged as Messiah!

**The Jewish Calendar**

John H. Walton, *Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament*, rev. ed., 19

**Eschatology of Israel’s Feasts (Leviticus 23)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date** | **Length** | | **Feast** | **Significance (Past)** | **Typology (Future)** |
| 1. | Weekly | 1 day | | Sabbath\*  (Shabbat) | Reminder of:  • Creation rest of God  • Deliverance from Egypt  Sign of Mosaic Covenant  (Exod. 20, 31; Deut 5) | Millennial rest  (Heb. 4:1-11) |
| 2. | 1-14  (Nisan) | 1 day  (Read Song  of Songs) | | Passover\*†  (Pesach) | Redemption from Egypt by blood of the sacrificial lamb (Exod. 12) | Redemption from sin by Christ's death as Lamb  (1 Cor. 5:7b) |
| 3. | 1-15  to 1-21  (Nisan) | 7 days | | Unleavened  Bread\*† | Separation/break from dependence upon Egypt to dependence upon God | Separated life of the redeemed for God  (1 Cor. 5:7a, 8) |
| 4. | 1-16  (Day after Harvest Sabbath) | 1 day | | Firstfruits  (barley sheaf ceremony) | Anticipation of God's *future* material provisions  -begins grain harvest | Resurrection of Christ  (1 Cor. 15:20) |
| 5. | 3-6  (Sivan) | 1 day  (Read Ruth) | | Pentecost†  (Shavuoth)  (Weeks)  (Harvest) | Thanksgiving for God's *past* material provisions  -ends grain harvest (Deut. 16:9-12) | Coming of the Holy Spirit to complete Christ's resurrection (Acts 2) |
| — | Spring-Summer | no feasts | | — | Enjoyment of the harvest | Church Age |
| 6. | 7-1  (Tishri) | 1 day | | Trumpets  (New Year)  (Rosh Hashanah) | Preparation for national redemption and cleansing on Day of Atonement | Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13f.) Revelation (Matt. 24:31)  —Kingdom preparation |
| 7. | 7-10  (Tishri) | 1 day | | Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) | National repentance and cleansing from sins of the people (Lev. 16) | National repentance of Israel in the Tribulation (Rom. 11:26-27) |
| 8. | 7-15  to 7-21  (Tishri) | 7 days  (Read  Eccles.) | Tabernacles\*†  (Booths/Tents)  (Sukkot)  (the Lord)  (Ingathering) | | Anticipated fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant (Neh. 8) | Actual fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant  —Kingdom (Matt. 17:4) |
| 9. | 7-22  (Tishri) | 1 day | Shemini Atzeret  (Simchat Torah) | | “Eighth Day of Assembly” “Rejoicing in the Torah” |  |
| The following days are not commanded in Scripture and probably have no eschatological significance: | | | | | | | |
| 10. | 5-9  (Ab) | 1 day  (Read Lam.) | | 9th of Ab  (Tish’ah be’ab) | Destructions of Jerusalem: 586 BC & AD 70 | **↑** |
| 11. | 9-25  (Kislev) | 1 day  + 7 more days of candle lighting | | Hanukkah  (Dedication)  (Lights)  (Illumination)  (Maccabees) | Saving of the nation  under Judas Maccabeus  in 164 BC  (cf. John 10:22) | *This Typology column shows that the order of Israel’s annual feasts prophetically parallels her experience as a nation throughout history!* |
| 12. | 12-14/15  (Adar) | 2 days  (Read Esther) | | Purim  (Lots) | Saving of the nation  under Esther (9:21) |  |

\* Feasts celebrated in the Millennium (Isa. 66:23; Ezek. 45:21; 46:1; Zech. 14:16-19; Luke 22:16)

† Feasts celebrated in three annual Jerusalem pilgrimages by all male Israelites (Exod. 23:14-17)

**Eschatological Hope and Suffering**

The following chart shows that many New Testament writings came in response to false teaching or persecution. Notice also how often teaching on persecution of the recipients was accompanied by teaching on eschatological hope in light of Christ’s return:

**False Teaching Persecution Eschatological Hope**

Matthew by Jews (AD 40s) 13:1-52; 24:1—25:46

Mark by Romans (AD 60s) 13:1-37

Luke 21:5-38

John AD 60s

Acts by Romans (AD 60s) 2:16-20, 25, 34-35, 40

Romans 2:1 11:25-27; 13:11-14

1 Corinthians 15:12 15:12-58

2 Corinthians 3:1; 10:10; 11:3-4

Galatians 1:6-9; 3:1

Ephesians

Philippians 3:2-4, 9, 18-19 1:13, 28-30 1:6, 10; 2:10, 16; 3:20-21

Colossians 2:8, 16-23

1 Thessalonians 4:8 1:6; 3:6 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13—5:11, 23

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 1:7 2:1-12

1 Timothy 1:3-11; 4:1-3, 7; 6:3-5 1:18-19; 6:12 4:8; 6:14, 19

2 Timothy 3:6-9; 4:3-4 1:8 3:1-9

Titus 1:10-16

Philemon

Hebrews 2:1 10:30-32 1:11-13; 4:1-11

James 1:2-4 5:7-9

1 Peter 1:6-7; 3:8-17 1:5, 20; 4:7; 5:4

2 Peter 2:1-22 3:3-13 1:16; 3:3-15

1 John 1:18-19; 4:1-3

2 John vv. 7, 9

3 John vv. 9-11

Jude v. 4 v. 19 vv. 14-18, 24-25

Revelation 2:14-15, 20 2:13 1:1, 5-8; 2:27; 3:5, 12, 21; 4—22

\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Christian versus Hindu Eschatology**

One may not think the biblical view of eschatology presented in this study is really that unique until he compares it with the view of the future held by other religious groups. In particular, the eschatology of Hinduism provides the most striking contrast to Christianity.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Christian** | **Hindu** |
| Concept of Time | Linear | Cyclical |
| View of History | History moves toward an end | History only recycles itself |
| Types of Deaths/Person | 3: spiritual, physical, second | 1: physical |
| # of Physical Deaths per Person | 1: resurrection | Millions: reincarnation |
| # of States of Departed Spirits | 2: heaven or hades | 2: rebirth or salvation from cycles (with Brahman or Macrocosm) |
| Soul’s Origin | Created at birth | Gnostic/preexistent: only human after 8,400,000 incarnations |
| Soul’s Nature | Made in God’s image | Emanation of supreme soul |
| Soul’s Identity in Afterlife | Separate identity from God and other people | Indistinct identity (merged with the divine essence) |
| Fear of Death | None | Ever present |
| Resurrection | One per individual | None due to reincarnation |
| Accountability | High (believe & live now) | Low (just go through more cycles of life) |
| Judgment(s) | One based on faith | Millions based on works |
| Heaven’s Nature | Worship of Creator | Gratification of sensual desires |
| Concept of Afterlife | More defined | Vague |
| Concept of Self (Soul) | Defined (sinful, separate) | Vague (ignorant, inseparate) |
| Results of These Concepts | Purpose, meaningfulness | Fatalism, meaninglessness |

Adapted from Manish Jacob, “A Study of Hindu Eschatology in Comparison with Dispensational Eschatology,” unpublished research paper for the course TH 304 Eschatology, Singapore Bible College, May 1991.

**Christian versus Buddhist Eschatology**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Points in Common** | **Buddhism** | **Christianity** |
| Immortality of the soul | Upheld | Upheld |
| Judgment after death | Yes (18 gates of hell must be passed to expose one’s life deeds and determine destiny) | Yes (Heb. 9:27) |
| Results of judgment | Punishment of 18 types is applied to the part of the body responsible (liars/gossips have tongue cut out); some become animals (moderately bad people become a rabbit, bird, or other carefree animal; really bad people become beasts of suffering who work hard such as a cow, donkey, and certain types of dogs) | A general description of punishment applies to all in hell (fire, sulfur, pain, worms, etc.) but a specific type of sin is not attached to a specific part of the body |
| Who decides one’s ultimate judgment—oneself or another? | Another (Buddha) | Another (God) |
| Effectiveness of rituals performed one behalf of one who dies | Ineffective (“No one has enough money to do the amount of good works required; therefore, works do not get one into heaven”) | Ineffective |
| Hell as an eternal place of torment | Yes (but some say “no”?) | Yes |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Differences** | **Buddhism** | **Christianity** |
| Eschatological view of time | Circular (“in every ending is a corresponding beginning”) | Linear |
| Afterlife | Reincarnation (31 planes) | Resurrection |
| Resurrection of the body? | No (a different body is provided for the individual) | Yes (same body is glorified) |
| Nature of man | Basically good | Depraved |
| Source of truth and understanding | Meditation (self-motivation) | Scripture (God revealing Himself to seekers motivated by Him) |
| Concern for the future | Discouraged (it’s a form of attachment to the world) | Encouraged (it exhorts holy living due to a certain future) |
| “Purgatory” taught | Yes, in sense, as people have further opportunities in future lives to do good or bad | No |
| Basis of judgment | Karma: the impersonal natural law operating in accordance with our actions (if you do good, good will come to you now and in the future; if you do bad, bad will come to you now and in the future) | Faith in Christ |
| Assurance of salvation | Impossible in this life | God’s will! (1 John 5:11-13) |
| Source of Judgment | Collective evil (the end of world will occur when the moral attitude of society goes down to the lowest level) | God |
| Elements of Destruction | Fire, water, and wind | Fire (water not an instrument of judgment since Genesis 9) |
| Temporal dwelling for the believing | None | Christ’s presence until resurrection |
| Eternal dwelling for the believing | Nirvana (the highest wisdom, contemplation of the ultimate, pure, unconditioned Truth) | New Heavens and New Earth (Heaven) |
| Eternal life given on basis of… | Works (the reduction of the three mental defiling factors: greed, hatred, and delusion) | Faith |
| Heaven | Not a place but an impermanent state of mind (or 33 heavens & 28 subsidiary heavens?) | A permanent place |
| Hell | Not a place but a state of existence where one has a “subtle body” and mind which experiences “anxiety and distress” | A permanent place |
| Difficulty in understanding | Very complex (intangible) | Complex (tangible) |

**Christian versus Muslim Eschatology**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Points in Common** | **Islam** | **Christianity** |
| Eschatological view of time | Linear | Linear |
| Christ will come again | Yes (“to break the cross and kill the swine” followed by an “eruption of a fire in Eden”) | Yes |
| Purpose of Christ’s coming | Defeat Antichrist, live 40 days, then die (He didn’t die in AD 33 but has been in a “state of animated suspension” since) | Defeat Antichrist, then rule |
| Resurrection of the body | Yes | Yes |
| Destruction of present world | Yes (includes angels, earth will “spill out all its contents”) | Yes (but excludes angels) |
| Signs preceding Judgment Day | Yes | Yes |
| Judgment announced with the trumpet of an archangel | Yes (or “siren” or “horn”; cf. Qur’an 56:15-56; cf. 36:51) | Yes |
| Levels of Reward | Yes—seven levels in Paradise | Yes—degrees but not “levels” |
| Hell as a place of eternal torment | Yes (“destruction by fire”; cf. Qur’an 56), in 8 levels of torment (4:56; 14:49-50; 22:21; 74:27-29) eternally (47:15; 87:13) | Yes |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Differences** | **Islam** | **Christianity** |
| Nature of man | Basically good (Sura 7:23) | Depraved |
| “Purgatory” taught | Yes (called “barzakh”) | No |
| Who must experience death? | All people (Muslims included) | All people except those alive when Christ returns |
| Assurance of salvation | Impossible in this life | God’s will! (1 John 5:11-13) |
| Nature of the Judge | Allah is arbitrary | God is just |
| Double predestination | Yes (Sura 35:8) | No (2 Peter 3:9) |
| Those experiencing Tribulation | Believers of Allah hidden with the prophet, followed by “wind of destruction” which will kill believers and unbelievers alike | Only unbelievers (all views) with all Christians: (1) gone (pretrib), or (2) gone for 3 1/2 years (midtrib) or (3) protected through the Tribulation (posttrib) |
| End time signs | **Major** (Sura 21:96; 27:82; 43:61)  Gross materialism (“beast of the earth”; cf. Rev. 13:11-18)  Women outnumbering men  Muslims defeat Jews in battle  Muslims and Christians battle unbelievers together, then…  Muslims defeat Christians in battle  **Minor**  Afflictions  Increase in bloodshed and war  Contraction of time  Religious knowledge decrease  Prevalence of the ungodly | Earthquake increase  False christs  Travel increase  Knowledge increase  Israel reestablished  Temple worship reestablished |
| Result of end-time battle(s) | “Great Destruction” which destroys all but God, then a resurrection/recreation | Armageddon leaves only believers to enter the Millennium (Rev. 19); Battle of Gog and Magog followed by destruction of earth and heavens (Rev. 20) |
| End time rule | Gog and Magog led by the Darius, the king of Persia (Sura 21:96) | Christ |
| Length of Judgment | 50,000 years (?) | Unspecified |
| Temporal dwelling for the dead | Most scholars say both evil and good with Allah, but some say “Alam Bazar” for all or for only the wicked | Christ’s presence for Christians or Hades for non-Christians |
| Eternal dwelling for the believing | “Janah” (Paradise) | New Heavens and New Earth  (Heaven) |
| Eternal life given on basis of… | Works (which results in attaining the mercy of Allah) | Faith |
| Nature of eternal life | “Mutashibir”—Sensual pleasure in sex with virgins (55:56), eating (56:15-22), and happiness (Sura 47) | Praise and worship of God |
| Israel | Eternally destroyed | Eternally restored (Jer. 31:35-37) |
| Difficulty in understanding | Simple (unified views) | Complex (many views) |

**A Muslim View of Christ’s Second Coming** (1 of 2)

**A Muslim View of Christ’s Second Coming** (2 of 2)**Text of the Palestinian National Covenant**

Adopted in May 1964 under the Leadership of Ahmed Shukeiri, followed by Yassar Arafat in 1969

"This covenant will be called The Palestinian National Covenant (al-mithaqal-watani al-filastini).

ARTICLE 1: Palestine is the homeland of the Palestinian Arab people and an integral part of the great Arab homeland, and the people of Palestine is [sic] a part of the Arab nation.

ARTICLE 2: Palestine with its boundaries that existed at the time of the British mandate is an integral regional unit. [i.e., only the 1922 boundaries with a united Palestine apply.]

ARTICLE 3: The Palestinian Arab people possesses [sic] the legal right to its homeland, and when the liberation of its homeland is completed it will exercise self-determination solely according to its own will and choice.

ARTICLE 4: The Palestinian personality is an innate, persistent characteristic that does not disappear, and it is transferred from fathers to sons. The Zionist occupation, and the dispersal of the Palestinian Arab people as a result of the disasters which came over it, do not deprive it from its Palestinian personality and affiliation and do not nullify them.

ARTICLE 5: The Palestinians are the Arab citizens who were living permanently in Palestine until 1947, whether they were expelled from there or remained. Whoever is born to a Palestinian Arab father after this date, within Palestine or outside it, is a Palestinian.

ARTICLE 6: Jews who were living permanently in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians. [The dating of the Zionist invasion is considered to have begun in 1917 or some say the 1880s. Only those living in the land before then can stay after the land’s “liberation.” Of course, this means no one!]

ARTICLE 7: The Palestinian affiliation and the material, Spiritual and historical tie with Palestine are permanent realities. The upbringing of the Palestinian individual in an Arab and revolutionary fashion, the undertaking of all means of forging consciousness and training the Palestinian, in order to acquaint him profoundly with his homeland spiritually and materially, and preparing him for the conflict and the armed struggle, as well as for the sacrifice of his property and his life to restore his homeland, until the liberation of all this is a national duty.

ARTICLE 8: The phase in which the people of Palestine is [sic] living is that of national (watani) struggle for the liberation of Palestine. Therefore the contradictions among the Palestinian national forces are of secondary order which must be suspended in the interest of the fundamental contradiction between Zionism and colonialism on the one side and the Palestinian Arab people on the other. On this basis, the Palestinian masses, whether in the homeland or in places of exile (mahajir), organisations and individuals, comprise one national front which acts to restore Palestine and liberate it through armed struggle. [This article thus calls for unity between fighting factions of the PLO.]

ARTICLE 9: Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine and is therefore a strategy and not tactics. The Palestinian Arab people affirms its absolute resolution and abiding determination to pursue the armed struggle and to march forward towards the armed popular revolution, to liberate its homeland and return to it [to maintain] its right to a natural life in it, and to exercise its right of self-determination in it and sovereignty over it.

ARTICLE 10: Fedayeen action forms the nucleus of the popular Palestinian war of liberation. This demands its promotion, extension and protection, and the mobilisation of all the masses and scientific capacities of the Palestinians, their organisation and involvement in the armed Palestinian revolution and cohesion in the national (watani) struggle among the various groups of the people of Palestine, and between them and the Arab masses, to guarantee the continuation of the revolution, its advancement and victory.

ARTICLE 11: The Palestinians will have three mottoes: national (wataniyya) unity, national (qawmiyya) mobilisation and liberation.

ARTICLE 12: The Palestinian Arab people believes [sic] in Arab unity. In order to fulfill its role in realising this, it must preserve, in this phase of its national (watani) struggle, its Palestinian personality and the constituents thereof, increase consciousness of its existence and resists any plan that tends to disintegrate or weaken it.

ARTICLE 13: Arab unity and the liberation of Palestine are two complementary aims. Each one paves the way for the realisation of the other. Arab unity leads to the liberation of Palestine and the liberation of Palestine leads to Arab unity. Working for both goes hand in hand.

ARTICLE 14: The destiny of the Arab nation, indeed the very Arab existence, depends on the destiny of the Palestine issue. The endeavour and effort of the Arab nation to liberate Palestine follows from this connection. The people of Palestine assumes [sic] its vanguard role in realising this sacred national (qawmi) aim.

ARTICLE 15: The liberation of Palestine, from the Arab viewpoint, is a national (qawmi) duty to repulse the Zionist, Imperialist invasion from the great Arab homeland and to purge the Zionist presence from Palestine. Its full responsibility falls upon the Arab nation, peoples and governments, with the Palestinian Arab people at their head. For this purpose, the Arab nation must mobilise all its military, human, material and spiritual capacities to participate actively with the Palestinian people in the liberation of Palestine. They must, especially in the present stage of armed Palestinian revolution, grant and offer the people of Palestine all possible help and every material and human support, and afford it every sure means and opportunity enabling it to continue to assume its vanguard's role [sic] in pursuing its armed revolution until the liberation of its homeland [sic].

ARTICLE 16: The liberation of Palestine, from a spiritual viewpoint, will prepare an atmosphere of tranquillity and peace for the Holy Land in the shade of which all the Holy Places will be safeguarded, and freedom of worship and visitation to all will be guaranteed, without distinction or discrimination of race, colour, language or religion. For this reason, the people of Palestine looks [sic] to the support of all the spiritual forces in the world.

ARTICLE 17: The liberation of Palestine, from a human viewpoint will restore to the Palestinian man his dignity, glory and freedom. For this, the Palestinian Arab people looks [sic] to the support of those in the world who believe in the dignity and freedom of man.

ARTICLE 18: The liberation of Palestine, from an international viewpoint, is a defensive act necessitated by the requirements of self-defence. For this reason the Arab people of Palestine, desiring to befriend all peoples, looks to the support of the states which love freedom, justice and peace in restoring the legal situation to Palestine, establishing security and peace in its territory, and enabling its people to exercise national (wataniyya) sovereignty and national (qawmiyya) freedom.

ARTICLE 19: The partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of Israel is fundamentally null and void, whatever time has elapsed, because it was contrary to the wish of the people of Palestine and its natural right to its homeland, and contradicts the principles embodied in the Charter of the UN, the first of which is the right of self determination.

ARTICLE 20: The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate document, and what has been based upon them are considered null and void. The claim of a historical or spiritual tie between Jews and Palestine does not tally with historical realities nor with the constituents of statehood in their true sense. Judaism, in its character as a religion of revelation, is not a nationality with an independent existence. Likewise, the Jews are not one people with an independent personality. They are rather citizens of the states to which they belong [i.e., there exists no State of Israel].

ARTICLE 21: The Palestinian Arab people, in expressing itself through the armed Palestinian revolution, rejects every solution that is a substitute for a complete liberation of Palestine, and rejects all plans that aim at the settlement of the Palestine issue or its internationalisation.

ARTICLE 22: Zionism is a political movement organically related to world Imperialism and hostile to all movements of liberation and progress in the world. It is a racist and fanatical movement in its formation: aggressive, expansionist and colonialist in its aims; and fascist and Nazi in its means. Israel is the tool of the Zionist movement and a human and geographical base for world Imperialism. It is a concentration and jumping-off point for Imperialism in the heart of the Arab homeland, to strike at the hopes of the Arab nation for liberation, unity and progress.

ARTICLE 23: The demands of security and peace and the requirements of truth and justice oblige all states that preserve friendly relations among peoples and maintain the loyalty of citizens to their homelands to consider Zionism an illegitimate movement and to prohibit its existence and activity.

ARTICLE 24: The Palestinian Arab people believes [sic] in the principle of justice, freedom, sovereignty, self-determination, human dignity and the right of peoples to exercise them.

ARTICLE 25: To realise the aims of this covenant and its principles the Palestine Liberation Organisation will undertake its full role in liberating Palestine.

ARTICLE 26: The Palestine Liberation Organisation, which represents the forces of the Palestinian revolution, is responsible for the movement of the Palestinian Arab people in its struggle to restore its homeland, liberate it, return to it and exercise the right of self-determination in it. This responsibility extends to all military, political and financial matters, and all else that the Palestinian issue requires in the Arab and international spheres.

ARTICLE 27: The Palestine Liberation Organisation will cooperate with all Arab states, each according to its capacities, and will maintain neutrality in their mutual relations in the light of and on the basis of, the requirements of the battle of liberation and will not interfere in the internal affairs of any Arab State.

ARTICLE 28: The Palestinian Arab people insists [sic] upon the originality and independence of its national (wataniyya) revolution and rejects every manner of interference, guardianship and subordination.

ARTICLE 29: The Palestinian Arab people possesses the prior and original right in liberating and restoring its homeland and will define its position with reference to all states and powers on the basis of their positions with reference to the issue [of Palestine] and the extent of their support for [the Palestinian Arab people] in its revolution to realise its aims.

ARTICLE 30: The fighters and bearers of arms in the battle of liberation are the nucleus of the popular army, which will be the protection arm of the gains of the Palestinian Arab people.

ARTICLE 31: This organisation shall have a flag, oath and anthem, all of which will be determined in accordance with a special system.

ARTICLE 32: To this covenant is attached a law known as the fundamental law of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, in which is determined the manner of the organisation's formation, its committees, institutions, the special function of every one of them and all the requisite duties associated with them in accordance with this covenant.

ARTICLE 33: This covenant cannot be amended except by a two-thirds majority of all the members of the National Assembly of the Palestine Liberation Organisation in a special session called for this purpose.

**Christian versus Jewish Eschatology**

**An Israeli View of the PLO**

***A Deadly Covenant***

Dr. Mordechai Nisan

Four days prior to the signing of the Declaration of Principles between the government of Israel and the PLO on September 13, 1993, Yasser Arafat conveyed in a letter to Prime Minister Rabin that "the PLO undertakes to submit to the Palestine National Council (PNC) for formal approval the necessary changes in regard to the Palestinian Covenant." That document, formulated in 1964 and slightly altered in 1968, sets out the fundamental principles of PLO ideology, which includes "the elimination of Zionism Palestine" (Art 15) and the "illegal" character of the State of Israel (Art 19).

Yitzhak Rabin, assassinated in November 1994, never lived to see Arafat introduce the promised changes to the PNC. Shimon Peres, his successor, claims that the April 1996 session of the PNC meeting in Gaza has indeed fulfilled the promise, while honest professional opinion deems that nothing of the kind occurred. The PLO perhaps stated its intentions to nullify these clauses of the covenant that call for Israel's destruction, but no more was concretely decided than to refer the matter to a committee. Ambiguity, in typical oriental fashion, is the political hallmark of Arab rhetoric toward Israel and peace-making.

I

The conundrum of the covenant does not basically lie with those clauses that directly deny Israel's right to existence. True, the call for "the liberation of Palestine" (Art 13) is irrevocably juxtaposed to the rejection of Israel's right to exist. In fact, the call for "liberating Palestine" appears in no less than EIGHTEEN of the covenant's thirty-three articles. To convincingly amend this covenant requires hardly less than its complete abandonment by the PLO.

The most central point to consider is, however, not even the glaring rejection of Israel, the inadmissibility of Zionism, and the imperative to liberate Palestine. It is the national question, both the Palestinian and Jewish one, that is the key regarding the PLO's position toward Israel.

II

Article 1 affirms the existence of the "Arab Palestinian people ... an integral part of the Arab nation." The existence of a Palestinian identity is, according to Article 5, "genuine" and "essential," but never truly explicated aside from being naturally considered to be "Arab" (Art 5). Articles 5 and 6 together equate the Jews of Palestine through the instrumentality of Arab identity. This is the thrust in Palestinian ideology to ARABISE Jews who live in Palestine - or elsewhere in the Arab Middle East - AND THIS IS THE FIRST DENIAL OF JEWISH PEOPLEHOOD.

A second denial appears in Article 20, which declares that "Judaism, being a religion, is not an independent nationality." That the Jews are just a religious community revokes any claim they otherwise might advance in the name of national self-determination. The same article continues by affirming that the Jews are no more than citizens on the world, but not a united or integral national people. And a non-people can hardly lay convincing claim to a state.

The PLO, having affirmed the existence of a Palestinian people, requires its counterpoint in the non-existence of the Jewish people. This is the covenant's handling or mishandling of the 'national question,' in order to underscore the right of Palestinian statehood and to nullify the right of the State of Israel.

To bolster this point, the PLO juxtaposes the link between people-hood and territoriality in the case of the "Palestinians" and the Jews. Article 7 states that the Palestinian community's "material, spiritual and historical connection with Palestine" is an indisputable fact, while in contrast, any claims of "historical or religious ties of Jews with Palestine are incompatible with the facts of history" (Art 20).

III

It should be clear that calling upon the PLO to mend its covenant regarding articles denying Israel's existence is unrealistic and certainly inadequate. Just as the PLO denies Israeli statehood, it also and even more fundamentally denies Jewish people-hood. The issue is deeper than mere politics. Without resolving the 'national question,' the PLO can have no more magnanimous intention than granting Jews - whom they call "Zionist invaders" now ensconced in their "racist" but transitory state (Art 22) - the mere privilege of being an autonomous religious community in a future liberated Palestine. On this point the PLO and Hamas are in total agreement.

In the Declaration of Principles of 1993, the PLO, one party to the accord, is recognised as "representing the Palestinian people." The other party, "the Government of the State Israel," does not in the eyes of the PLO covenant represent anything or anybody more than "Zionist aggression" (Art 15), expansionism, colonialism, and fascism (Art 22).

There cannot be peace in the Middle East so long as the PLO Covenant exists and stirs the hearts of Palestinians and their political supporters. In truth, so long as the PLO exists, peace is vitally an impossibility - this because the PLO unalterably stands for 'THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE' WITHOUT ANY ISRAEL AT ALL. This is the political logic of the argument: so long indeed as the PLO EXISTS, Israel's existence is in danger. For the PLO exists solely for the purpose of undoing the existence of Israel. The truth is in the name: PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION. It is as blatant and pernicious as that.

In 1993 the Israeli government signed an agreement with its executioner.

Dr Mordechai Nisan is vice-president of the Foundation for Constitutional Democracy in the Middle East. He teaches Middle East Studies at the Rothberg School for Overseas Students of the Hebrew University Of Jerusalem. He is the author of a seminal book, *Toward a New Israel*.

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UPDATE: 15 DECEMBER 1998

ISRAEL ACCEPTS CHARTER 'VOTE'

The Israeli government said Monday a show-of-hands vote by members of the Palestinian National Council and other Palestinian bodies had been an acceptable demonstration of support for the cancelling of clauses in the PLO charter calling for Israel's destruction. Reacting immediately after the meeting here addressed by President Bill Clinton, Aviv Bushinsky, a spokesman for Israeli PM Binyamin Netanyahu, told REUTERS "The prime minister expressed satisfaction at the results of the vote in the PNC which was conducted because of the Israeli government's insistence for a vote."

Bushinsky said Israel would continue to insist Palestinians meet its other commitments contained in signed agreements "with the same vigour".

In other government reaction, Israel's Trade and Industry Minister Nathan Sharansky conceded that Israelis had witnessed the exhibition of support for peace, but said Yasser Arafat had wasted a perfect opportunity to tell his people that violence against Israel must stop.

"We accept this vote," he said. "We think this is a positive development. We think it should be said in Arabic more and more clearly and more and more often [that violence is an unacceptable option]."

Earlier, Arafat welcomed Clinton to the gathering of members of the PNC and other Palestinian political, legislative and religious organisations. He reiterated that a letter he sent to Clinton last January confirmed that the PLO had dropped clauses in its charter offensive to Israel.

He then called on the meeting to demonstrate their support for this and other decisions relating to amending the charter.

"I appeal to you to approve and confirm the previous decisions [by Palestinian bodies relating to changing the charter] ... to support the peace process. So would you be kind to raise your hands to agree on this?"

Most of the people in the auditorium - an estimated 1000 - appeared to do so, and many stood. Arafat then turned to Clinton and said: "As you see, there is strong support for our decisions and this proves that we have honoured our commitments".

Clinton said after the show of hands that the Palestinian officials had delivered a powerful message, not to the Israeli government, but to the Israeli people.

"You did a good thing here today by raising your hands. You know why? It has nothing to do with the government of Israel. You touched the people of Israel," Clinton said.

"I thank you for your rejection fully, finally and forever of the passages in the Palestinian charter calling for the destruction of Israel, for they were the ideological underpinnings of a struggle renounced at Oslo."

He also told the meeting, to applause, that he was "profoundly honoured to be the first American president to address the Palestinian people in a city governed by Palestinians".

Yet the most resounding cheers, and a standing ovation, were earned by Arafat, when he spoke in front of Clinton of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

He stopped short of saying such a state would be declared next May, an oft-repeated assertion that has met an angry response from Israel.

Compiled and written by Stan Goodenough

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**The Uniqueness of Israel**

Sometimes people wonder why the world’s attention is daily drawn to Israel. Why does such a tiny country receive so much international news media coverage? While some argue that Israel is no different than any other nation in the world, a brief look at the facts reveals that Israel is unique among the world’s 200 plus nations:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Every Other Nation in the World…** | **Israel…** |
| Was not founded in fulfillment of God’s Word | Was chosen of God and founded in fulfillment of God’s Word (Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 7:7-8; 9:6; 32:9; Ps. 33:12; Isa. 44:12; Amos 3:2; Acts 7:2-3; Rom. 9:11-12; Gal. 3:6-9) |
| Has been established by immigrants who brought their many cultures or else received independence of colonial powers (not a regathering from dispersion) | Has been brought back to its ancient homeland after nearly 2000 years of dispersion in which Jews still retained their cultural identity |
| Is part of a grouping of nations (Muslim, Arab, G7, UC, NATO, ASEAN, Communist, etc.) | Stands alone (though is inconsistently backed by the USA) |
| Spends a small proportion of it budget on defense | Spends a huge portion of it budget to defend itself |
| Does not allow its enemies to live in its land | Allows enemies to live on its land |
| Grows mostly from its birth rate | Grows mostly from immigration (primarily Russian Jews) |
| Has a capital which is secular or loyal to a single religion | Has a capital which is claimed by three world religions: Judaism, Islam, and Christianity |
| Has a capital for its own country alone | Has a capital (Jerusalem) which is destined to be the capital of the world (Isa. 2:1-5; 66:20; Zech. 14:16-21) |
| Would not put up with a death penalty being imposed for sale of land to its citizens | Must endure the Palestinian Authority death penalty for Arabs involved in selling land to Jews (cf. Gen. 16:12) |
| Is not negotiating the exchange of its land for peace with its neighbors | Negotiates transfer of its land to the PA, Jordan, Syria, and Egypt in exchange for peace |
| Has races composed of intellectuals which make up a reasonable percentage of the population | Is primarily populated by a race (Jews) with an incredible number of intellectuals so that while Jews comprise less than .5% of the world, they receive 12% of the Nobel prizes |

**If I Forget Thee: Does Jerusalem Really Matter to Islam?**

Daniel Pipes

The architects of the Oslo peace accords understood Jerusalem's power. Fearing that even discussing the holy city's future before less combustible issues are resolved would detonate the fragile truce between Israelis and Palestinians, they tried to delay this issue to the end. But they failed: riots met the opening a new entrance to an ancient tunnel last September and now the building of apartments on an empty plot in eastern Jerusalem has brought the negotiations to a halt. As it becomes clear that the struggle for Jerusalem will not wait, the outside world must confront the conflicting claims made by Jews and Muslims on the city that King David entered three millennia ago.

When they do, they will no doubt hear relativistic clichés to the effect that Jerusalem is "a city holy to both peoples," implying a parallel quality to the Jewish and Islamic claims to Jerusalem. But this is false. Jerusalem stands as the paramount religious city of Judaism, a place so holy that not just its soil but even its air is deemed sacred. Jews pray in its direction, mention its name constantly in prayers, close the Passover service with the wistful statement "Next year in Jerusalem," and recall the city in the blessing at the end of meals.

What about Jerusalem's role in Islam? Its significance pales next to Mecca and Medina, the twin cities where Muhammad lived and which hosted the great events of Islamic history. Jerusalem is not the place to which Muslims pray, it is not once mentioned by name in the Qur'an or in prayers, and it is directly connected to no events in Muhammad's life. The city never became a cultural center and it never served as capital of a sovereign Muslim state. Jerusalem has mattered to Muslims only intermittently over the past 13 centuries, and when it has mattered, as it does today, it has done so because of politics. Conversely, when the utility of Jerusalem expires, the passions abate and its status declines.

In AD 622, the Prophet Muhammad fled his home town of Mecca for Medina, a city with a substantial Jewish population. On arrival, if not earlier, he adopted a number of practices friendly to Jews, such as a Yom Kippur-like fast, a synagogue-like house of prayer, and kosher-style dietary laws. Muhammad also adopted the Judaic practice of facing the Temple Mount in Jerusalem during prayer; "He chose the Holy House in Jerusalem in order that the People of the Book [i.e., Jews] would be conciliated," notes At-Tabari, an early Muslim commentator on the Qur'an, "and the Jews were glad." Modern historians agree: W. Montgomery Watt, a leading biographer of Muhammad, interprets the prophet's "far-reaching concessions to Jewish feeling" as part of his "desire for a reconciliation with the Jews."

But Jews criticized the new faith and rejected Muhammad's gestures, leading Muhammad to eventually break with them, probably in early 624. The most dramatic sign of this change came in a Qur'anic passage (2:142-52) ordering the faithful no longer to pray toward Syria but toward Mecca instead. (The Qur'an and other sources only mention the direction as "Syria"; other information makes it clear that "Syria" means Jerusalem.)

This episode initiated a pattern that would be repeated many times over the succeeding centuries: Muslims take religious interest in Jerusalem because it serves them politically and when the political climate changes, their interest flags.

In the century after Muhammad's death, politics prompted the Damascus-based Umayyad dynasty, which controlled Jerusalem, to make this city sacred in Islam. Embroiled in fierce competition with a dissident leader in Mecca, the Umayyad rulers sought to diminish Arabia at Jerusalem's expense. They sponsored a genre of literature praising the "virtues of Jerusalem" and circulated accounts of the prophet's sayings or doings (called hadiths) favorable to Jerusalem. In 688-91, they built Islam's first grand structure, the Dome of the Rock, on top of the remains of the Jewish Temple.

In a particularly subtle and complex step, they even reinterpreted the Qur'an to make room for Jerusalem. The Qur'an, describing Muhammad's Night Journey (*isra'*), reads: "[God] takes His servant [i.e., Muhammad] by night from the Sacred Mosque to the furthest mosque." When this Qur'anic passage was first revealed, in about 621, a place called the Sacred Mosque already existed in Mecca. In contrast, the "furthest mosque" was a turn of phrase, not a place. Some early Muslims understood it as metaphorical or as a place in heaven. And if the "furthest mosque" did exist on earth, Palestine would have seemed an unlikely location, for that region elsewhere in the Qur'an (30:1) was called "the closest land" (*adna al-ard*).

But in 715, the Umayyads built a mosque in Jerusalem, again right on the Temple Mount, and called it the Furthest Mosque (al-masjid al-Aqsa, or Al-Aqsa Mosque). With this, the Umayyads not only post hoc inserted Jerusalem into the Qur'an but retroactively gave it a prominent role in Muhammad's life. For if the "furthest mosque" is in Jerusalem, then Muhammad's Night Journey and his subsequent ascension to heaven (*mi`raj*) also took place on the Temple Mount.

But, as ever, Jerusalem mattered theologically only when it mattered politically, and when the Umayyad dynasty collapsed in 750, Jerusalem fell into near-obscurity. For the next three and a half centuries, books praising the city lost favor and the construction of glorious buildings not only stopped, but existing ones fell apart (the Dome over the rock collapsed in 1016). "Learned men are few, and the Christians numerous," bemoaned a tenth-century Muslim native of Jerusalem. The rulers of the new dynasty bled Jerusalem and its region country through what F. E. Peters of New York University calls "their rapacity and their careless indifference."

By the early tenth century, notes Peters, Muslim rule over Jerusalem had an "almost casual" quality with "no particular political significance." In keeping with this near-indifference, the Crusader conquest of the city in 1099 initially aroused a mild Muslim response: "one does not detect either shock or a sense of religious loss and humiliation," notes Emmanuel Sivan of the Hebrew University, a scholar of this era.

Only as the effort to retake Jerusalem grew serious in about 1150 did Muslim leaders stress Jerusalem's importance to Islam. Once again, hadiths about Jerusalem's sanctity and books about the "virtues of Jerusalem" appeared. One hadith put words into the Prophet Muhammad's mouth saying that, after his own death, Jerusalem's falling to the infidels is the second greatest catastrophe facing Islam.

Once safely back in Muslim hands after Saladin's reconquest, however, interest in Jerusalem dropped, to the point where one of Saladin's grandsons temporarily ceded the city in 1229 to Emperor Friedrich II in return for the German's promise of military aid against his brother, a rival king. But learning that Jerusalem was back in Christian hands again provoked intense Muslim emotions; as a result, in 1244, the city was again under Muslim rule. The psychology at work here bears note: that Christian knights traveled from distant lands to make Jerusalem their capital made the city more valuable in Muslim eyes too. "It was a city strongly coveted by the enemies of the faith, and thus became, in a sort of mirror-image syndrome, dear to Muslim hearts," Sivan explains.

The city then lapsed back to its usual obscurity for nearly eight centuries. At one point, the city's entire population amounted to a miserable four thousand souls. The Temple Mount sanctuaries were abandoned and became dilapidated. Under Ottoman rule (1516-1917), Jerusalem suffered the indignity of being treated as a tax farm for non-resident, one-year (and so very rapacious) officials. The Turkish authorities raised funds by gouging European visitors, and so made little effort to promote Jerusalem's economy. The tax rolls show soap as the city's only export item. In 1611, George Sandys found that "Much lies waste; the old buildings (except a few) all ruined, the new contemptible." Gustav Flaubert of Madame Bovary fame visited in 1850 and found "Ruins everywhere." Mark Twain in 1867 wrote that Jerusalem "has lost all its ancient grandeur, and is become a pauper village."

In modern times, notes the Israeli scholar Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, Jerusalem "became the focus of religious and political Arab activity only at the beginning of the present century, and only because of the renewed Jewish activity in the city and Judaism's claims on the Western Wailing Wall." British rule over city, lasting from 1917 to 1948, further galvanized Muslim passion for Jerusalem. The Palestinian leader (and mufti of Jerusalem) Hajj Amin al-Husayni made the Temple Mount central to his anti-Zionist efforts, for example raising funds throughout the Arab world for the restoration of the Dome of the Rock. Arab politicians made Jerusalem a prominent destination; for example, Iraqi leaders frequently turned up, where they demonstrably prayed at Al-Aqsa and gave rousing speeches.

But when Muslims retook the Old City with its Islamic sanctuaries in 1948, they quickly lost interest in it. An initial excitement stirred when the Jordanian forces took the walled city in 1948 as evidenced by the Coptic bishop's crowning King `Abdallah as "King of Jerusalem" in November of that year but then the usual ennui [boredom] set in. The Hashemites had little affection for Jerusalem, where some of their most devoted enemies lived and where `Abdallah himself was shot dead in 1951. In fact, the Hashemites made a concerted effort to diminish the holy city's importance in favor of their capital, Amman. Jerusalem had served as the British administrative capital, but now all government offices there (save tourism) were shut down. The Jordanians also closed some local institutions (e.g., the Arab Higher Committee) and moved others to Amman (the treasury of the Palestinian waqf, or religious endowment).

Their effort succeeded. Once again, Arab Jerusalem became an isolated provincial town, now even less important than Nablus. The economy stagnated and many thousands left Arab Jerusalem. While the population of Amman increased five-fold in the period 1948-67, Jerusalem's grew just 50 percent. Amman was chosen as the site of the country's first university as well as of the royal family's many residences. Perhaps most insulting of all, Jordanian radio broadcast the Friday prayers not from Al-Aqsa Mosque but from a mosque in Amman.

Nor was Jordan alone in ignoring Jerusalem; the city virtually disappeared from the Arab diplomatic map. No foreign Arab leader came to Jerusalem between 1948 and 1967, and even King Husayn visited only rarely.

King Faysal of Saudi Arabia often spoke after 1967 of yearning to pray in Jerusalem, yet he appears never to have bothered to pray there when he had the chance. Perhaps most remarkable is that the PLO's founding document, the Palestinian National Covenant of 1964, does not even once mention Jerusalem.

All this abruptly changed after June 1967, when the Old City came under Israeli control. As in the British period, Palestinians again made Jerusalem the centerpiece of their political program. Pictures of the Dome of the Rock turned up everywhere, from Yasir Arafat's office to the corner grocery. The PLO's 1968 Constitution described Jerusalem as "the seat of the Palestine Liberation Organization."

Nor were Palestinians alone in their renewed interest. "As during the era of the Crusaders," Lazarus-Yafeh points out, many Muslim leaders "began again to emphasize the sanctity of Jerusalem in Islamic tradition," even dusting off old hadiths to back up their claims. Jerusalem became a mainstay of Arab League and United Nations resolutions. The formerly stingy Jordanian and Saudi governments now gave munificently to the Jerusalem waqf.

As it was under the British mandate, Jerusalem has since 1967 again become the primary vehicle for mobilizing international Muslim opinion. A fire at Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969 gave Faysal the occasion to convene twenty-five Muslim heads of state and establish the Organization of the Islamic Conference, a United Nations for Muslims. Lebanon's leading Shi`i authority regularly relies on the theme of liberating Jerusalem to inspire his own people to liberate Lebanon. Since the Islamic Revolution, Iran's 1-rial coin and 1000-rial banknote have featured the Dome of the Rock. Iranian soldiers at war with Saddam Husayn's forces in the 1980s received primitive maps marking a path through Iraq and onto Jerusalem. Ayatollah Khomeini decreed the last Friday of Ramadan as Jerusalem Day, and the holiday has served as a major occasion for anti-Israel harangues.

Since Israeli occupation, some ideologues have sought to establish the historical basis of Islamic attachment to Jerusalem by raising three main arguments, all of them historically dubious. First, they assert a Muslim connection to Jerusalem that predates the Jewish one. Ghada Talhami, a scholar at Lake Forest College, typically asserts that "There are other holy cities in Islam, but Jerusalem holds a special place in the hearts and minds of Muslims because its fate has always been intertwined with theirs."

Always? Jerusalem's founding antedated Islam by about two millennia, so how can that be? Ibrahim Hooper, national communications director for the Washington-based Council on American-Islamic Relations explains: "the Muslim attachment to Jerusalem does not begin with the prophet Muhammad, it begins with the prophets Abraham, David, Solomon and Jesus, who are also prophets in Islam." In other words, the central figures of Judaism and Christianity were really proto-Muslims.

Second, and equally anachronistic, is the claim that the Qur'an mentions Jerusalem. Hooper (and others) argue that "the Koran refers to Jerusalem by its Islamic centerpiece, al-Aqsa Mosque." But this makes no sense: a mosque built a century after the Qur'an was delivered cannot establish what a Qur'anic verse originally meant.

Third, some Muslims deny Jerusalem any importance to Jews. `Abd al- Malik Dahamshe, an Arab member of Israel's parliament, flatly stated last month that "the Western Wall is not associated with the remains of the Jewish Temple." A fundamentalist Israel Arab leader went further and announced that "It's prohibited for Jews to pray at the Western Wall." Or, in the succinct wording of a protest banner: "Jerusalem is Arab."

Despite these deafening claims that Jerusalem is essential to Islam, the religion does contain a recessive but persistent strain of anti-Jerusalem sentiment. Perhaps the most prominent adherent of this view was Ibn Taymiya (1263-1328), one of Islam's strictest and most influential religious thinkers. (The Wahhabis of Arabia are his modern-day successors.)

In an attempt to purify Islam of accretions and impieties, Ibn Taymiya dismissed the sacredness of Jerusalem as a notion deriving from Jews and Christians, and from the long-ago Umayyad rivalry with Mecca. More broadly, learned Muslims living in the years following the Crusades knew that the great publicity given to hadiths extolling Jerusalem's sanctity resulted from the Countercrusade-that is, from political exigency-and treated it warily.

Recalling that God once had Muslims direct their prayers toward Jerusalem and then turned them instead toward Mecca, some early hadiths suggested that Muslims specifically pray with away from Jerusalem, a rejection that still survives in vestigial form; he who prays in Al-Aqsa Mosque not coincidentally shows his back precisely to the Temple area toward which Jews pray.

In Jerusalem, theological and historical claims matter, serving as the functional equivalent of legal documents elsewhere. Whoever can establish a deeper and more lasting association with the city has a better chance of winning international support to rule it. In this context, the fact that politics has so long fueled the Muslim attachment to Jerusalem has two implications. First, it points to the relative weakness of the Islamic connection to the city, one that arises as much from transitory considerations of mundane need as from the immutable claims of faith.

Second, it suggests that the Muslim interest lies not so much in controlling Jerusalem as it does in denying control over the city to anyone else. Jerusalem will never be more than a secondary city for Muslims.

In contrast, Mecca is the eternal city of Islam, the place where Muslims believe Abraham nearly sacrificed Isaac's brother Ishmael and toward which Muslims turn to pray five times each day. Non-Muslims are strictly forbidden there, so it has a purely Muslim population. Mecca evokes in Muslims a feeling similar to that of Jerusalem among Jews: "Its very mention reverberates awe in Muslims' hearts," writes Abad Ahmad of the Islamic Society of Central Jersey. Very roughly speaking, what Jerusalem is to Jews, Mecca is to the Muslims. And just as Muslims rule an undivided Mecca, so Jews should rule an undivided Jerusalem.

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The author (Daniel Pipes) is editor of the Middle East Quarterly and author of *The Hidden Hand: Middle East Fears of Conspiracy* (St. Martin's Press).

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Jason and Leiah Elbaum

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**Midterm Study Guide**

**Format**

This exam will have varied questions: chart and diagram fill-ins and analysis, a short essay, short answer, and multiple choice. This will be a take-home exam that you must complete on your own time and submit the next class period. You will have one and a half hours to finish it.

**Content**

Please give attention to the following issues to prepare for the exam. Page numbers in the notes are given within parentheses.

1. The exam covers only the notes up to page 86e. It will not address readings from Benware’s book, though there is much overlap between the readings and the notes. Therefore study of Benware’s book can prove helpful even though all questions are answered in the course notes.

2. Know the major divisions of eschatology and why this study is important (11, 26).

3. Explain the three types of death and contrast them in various ways (12-13).

4 Contrast and compare the key words used for the intermediate and eternal states (13-16).

5. Know the definitions of the major unorthodox views of the intermediate state (17).

6. Explain the covenants of covenant theology (18-19).

7. Distinguish between the elements of the biblical covenants (20-24, 25d) and how these four covenants differ and develop the umbrella covenant.

8. Know the theological camps that have espoused the different views on the new covenant (25).

9. Distinguish between the major millennial views in broad strokes and their views on the conditionality of the biblical covenants (27).

10. Know what dispensationalism is and how it differs from non-dispensational views (28-30).

11. Have a clear understanding of the terms at the top of page 31.

12. Know which of the possible signs of the Lord’s return has already been fulfilled (31-34).

13. Know the definition, key advocates, some of the supports cited, and rebuttals to the five major views on the time of the Rapture (55-60, 66-74).

14. Show how the Rapture and Revelation differ (60) and how the concept of imminency affects one’s view of the Lord’s return (58-59).

15. Discuss the nature of the Judgment Seat of Christ (75-77).

16. Be familiar with views on the Marriage and Wedding Feast of the Lamb (77-78).

17. Be familiar with the role the Antichrist will play in world events and the key text on the length of his rule (79-86e).

18. Pray about this exam and ask God to give you a sense of urgency to serve Christ in light of His soon return.

**Final Exam Study Guide**

**Format**

This will be an essay exam based only on the class notes (pp. 87-191)—*not* on the reading. You will have two hours to complete it. Please bring several sheets of your own paper, a ruler if you want to draw charts, correction fluid, and a pen.

**Content**

Study the following issues to prepare for the exam: Hermeneutics, Tribulation, Millennium, Resurrections & Judgments, and Eternal States. Numbers below denote pages in the course notes.

**1. Hermeneutics**

a) Discuss the four different approaches to the book of Revelation, explaining what they mean and how to critique them (88-89).

b) Discuss the hermeneutics of the four major views on the millennium (122).

c) Compare and contrast Israel and the church, showing reasons why you agree or disagree that there exists a future for national Israel (128, 131-32).

**2. Tribulation**

a) Know the general content of the three cycles of judgments (94-97, 104).

b) Know the basic tribulation teachings of Ezekiel, Matthew, and Zechariah (108-110).

**3. Millennium**

a) Discuss the four major views on the millennium in these areas: nature and time of the millennium, history of popularity, key advocates (persons and/or groups), time of Christ’s return in relation to the tribulation, view on resurrections and judgments, etc. (122-26, 129-30, 150-52, 155-58).

b) Explain and critique the 6000 year theory (111-114).

c) Show how the kingdom concept is developed in Scripture (116-119).

d) Discuss and critique views on Ezekiel 40–48 (133-41).

e) Critique premil and amil views of Revelation 20:1-6 (159).

**4. Resurrections & Judgments**

a) Know the time and purpose of the various judgments (160-61).

b) Know the time and purpose of the various resurrections (160-61).

**5. Eternal States**

a) Define and show an argument cited for the three major unorthodox views on hell, key advocates for each view, and a biblical response to each (163-69).

b) Explain what hell is like biblically (171-72).

c) Explain what heaven is like biblically (175, 180-89).

d) Contrast the millennium with heaven (191).

**Term Paper Grade Sheet**

Student Topic Paper Grade Box

Note: The Introduction, Body, Conclusion, and Miscellaneous below concern the paper’s *content* (70% of the grade). The Form grade comprises the other 30% and is based on Campbell’s book and the SBC English Department Required Format for Writing Papers (1992 Revised) in the library.

1 2 3 4 5

Poor Minimal Average Good Excellent

**Introduction**

**Purpose** (the paper answers what problem?)     

**Scope** of the problem defined/narrowed down     

**Procedure** for addressing the problem introduced     

**Body**

**Wide research** (other views, good sources)    

**Individual work** (not excessive quotations)     

**Key passages/issues** addressed adequately     

**Development** (proves points, not just lists verses)     

**Interpretation** of passages/issues accurate (exegesis)     

**Conclusion**

**Solution** given to problem raised in introduction     

**Main points** reviewed and/or restated     

**Length** (1/2 to 1 page, w/o unnecessary info.)     

**Miscellaneous**

(These can be addressed anywhere in the paper)

**Application** (shows why the topic is important)     

**Depth** (leaves any questions unanswered?)     

**Overall** content     

**Form**

**Format** (typed, title page, length, pages numbered)     

**Spelling** and typographical errors, punctuation     

**Grammar** (agreement of subject/verb and tenses)     

**Footnoting** (better than endnoting; bibliography incl.)     

**Arranged** **logically** (not a collection of thoughts)     

**Sections** clearly stated without orphan headings     

**Summary**

Number of ticks per column \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Multiplied by point values of the column **x 1 x 2 x 3 x 4 x 5**

Equals the total point value for each column \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Net points of \_\_\_\_\_\_ minus 10 points per day late (\_\_\_\_ points) equals a final % grade of %

**Comments**: rev. 5-93

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Box \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Eschatology Midterm**

**Part I: Multiple Choice (21 points or 3 points each)**

Please *circle* the correct letter in each question.

1. Hades, Sheol, and Gehenna…

a. are different Greek words for the same place.

b. all have two sections—one for the righteous and one for the unrighteous.

c. describe places relating to either the intermediate or eternal state.

d. describe places relating to the body in the intermediate state.

e. none of the above.

2. It is important to stress that the eschatological covenants are *unconditional* because…

a. this helps to win arguments with people of other persuasions.

b. this provides insight into tribulationalism.

c. this argues that Israel still has a future.

d. this gives premillennialists reason to see Abraham as their spiritual father.

e. none of the above.

3. The difference between the premillennial and amillennial view on the millennium concerns the…

a. length of the millennium.

b. nature of the millennium.

c. time the millennium begins.

d. all of the above.

e. none of the above.

4. Which of the following lists of scholars have a person listed who is not of the same theological persuasion as the other three scholars in his grouping?

a. Chafer, Hoyt, Ryrie, Walvoord.

b. Archer, Harrison, Pentecost, Buswell.

c. Gundry, Ladd, Moo, Payne.

d. all of the above.

e. none of the above.

5. Which arguments support the contention that the Davidic Covenant concerns a literal kingdom?

a. The ordinary language for “kingdom” is used in reference to the covenant.

b. David and Israel both interpreted it literally.

c. Christ’s present session is often referred to as fulfilling this covenant.

d. Both “a” and “b” above.

e. Both “b” and “c” above.

6. Which of the following perspectives on the New Covenant have dispensationalists *never* held?

a. church alone view.

b. two new covenants view.

c. church participation view.

d. Israel alone view.

e. none of the above.

7. The Rapture and the Revelation are distinguished by the fact that…

a. at both events Christ will return to the earth for His church.

b. the Rapture removes the church and the Revelation removes Israel.

c. Revelation 3:10 refers to only one of these events.

d. different Greek words are used to describe each event.

e. none of the above.

**Part II: Short Answer (34 points)**

1. Name and define the two major divisions of eschatology (4 points).

a.

b.

2. Distinguish between physical and spiritual death. Please answer in chart form (6 points). For a possible 2 bonus points complete the four chart categories with the third type of death.

Does it relate to the

Type of Death Definition soul and/or the body? Who experiences it?

Physical Separation of

body & soul Body All people

Spiritual Separation from

God on earth Soul Unbelievers

Second Separation from

God in Hell Soul & Body Unbelievers

3. Briefly define the following terms in about 10-15 words or less (24 points, or 4 points each):

Universalism heretical belief that all people will be saved

Annihilationism heretical belief that the soul will cease to exist so that Hell is not experienced

Covenant an arrangement between God and man in which one or both must fulfill certain responsibilities for man’s benefit and God’s glory

Judgment Seat of Christ the accounting believers will give to Christ after the Rapture for deeds on earth which will result in reward or loss of reward

Wedding Supper of the Lamb a parabolic picture of Israel on earth in the millennial age

Daniel 9 OT chapter revealing the length of the Tribulation as 7 years or

OT chapter revealing that Antichrist will make and break a covenant with Israel

**Part III: Essay & Charts (45 points)**

1. Next Sunday at church you are talking with a friend about your educational experience at SBC. When you mention that you’re taking this eschatology course your friend replies, “Eschatology?! Why don’t they teach you something *practical* at Bible college? All of this stuff about dates and charts and who takes this and that view…” What would you say to your friend? (10 points)

2. Explain the various interpretations on the time of the Rapture. Include one argument cited for each view and a pretribulational response to that view (20 points).

View Explanation Argument Response

a. Pretribulational (Not needed here)

b.

c.

d.

e.

3. Briefly outline how the various covenants relate to eschatology, including a definition, key passage, and a key word for how three of them relate to the “umbrella covenant” (15 points).

Covenant Definition Scripture Relationship

a. “Umbrella Covenant”

b.

c.

d.

**Comparing the Two Heavens and Earths**

**Man Apart from Sin in Genesis vs. Revelation**

**Genesis 1—2 Revelation 21—22**

Man in created sinless state Man in recreated sinless state

**Conclusion**

Although many differing views exist in the doctrine of eschatology, it is imperative that these views be discussed in a manner which demonstrate godly humility and charity. I trust that nearly all who advocate the various positions also love the Lord Jesus Christ and desire His appearing. It is hoped that in this spirit the premillennial, pretribulational position advocated in this study has been received as being the model which fits the scriptural data most closely.

Nevertheless, as brothers in Christ who can agree even to disagree let us continually be "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (Titus 2:13).

**X. The Interpretation of Prophecy**

A. Confusion of Terminology

1. Literal should be taken in the philological sense.

2. Spiritual means non-literal, though not in its complete sense since no one is a strict literalist or a complete spiritualist.

3. The real issue in prophetic interpretation among evangelicals is this: *can prophetic literature be interpreted by the general method of grammatical exegesis, or is some special principle necessary?*

B. Principles for the Interpretation of Prophecy

1. Fundamentals in the interpretation of any passage of prophetic Scripture (regardless of one's millennial views).

a. *Give careful attention to the language of the prophetic passage* (the meaning and significance of all proper names, events, references to geography, etc.).

b. *Determine the historical background of the prophet and the prophecy*.

c. *Diligent attention must be paid to the context and flow of the discussion.*

d. *Be mindful of the non-systematic character of prophetic writings.* Widely separated events appear together (e.g., Messiah's suffering and glory).

e. *Search the entire body of prophetic Scripture for parallel passages* (e.g., day of the LORD).

2. Determine the distinct essence of the passage of prophetic Scripture.

a. Is the passage *predictive* (foretelling) or *didactic* (forthtelling)?

b. Is the passage *conditional* or *unconditional* ?

c. Is the passage *fulfilled*  or *unfulfilled* ?

3. Fulfillment of prophecy poses problems too.

a. If the prophecy is *fulfilled* then study the text with the historical fulfillment.

b. If the prophecy is *unfulfilled* then proceed with caution, determining the time and locality factors.

c. There is always the possibility of *multiple fulfillment*.

4. Take the literal meaning of a prophetic passage as the limiting or controlling guide. However, there is an *expanded typological principle* employed in Old Testament prophetic exegesis.

a. Remember that the early church considered the Old Testament a Christian book

b. What hermeneutical method does the New Testament use in interpreting the Old? Several:

1) To *prove* a point

2) To *explain* a point

3) To *illustrate* a point

4) To *fulfill* a prophecy

5) To cite in an *expanded typological sense*

c. Therefore, interpret prophecy literally unless the implicit or explicit teaching of the New Testament suggests typological interpretation.

5. The centrality of Jesus Christ must be kept in mind in all prophetic interpretation.

C. The Meaning of 1 Peter 1:20

1. The reference is to the origin, not the interpretation, of prophecy. The issue is inspiration, not interpretation, as the context clearly bears out.

2. However, Catholics say the passage teaches that the church, not the individual, is to interpret Scripture.

3. Some Protestants wrongly use it to prove that no prophetic passage is to be interpreted in isolation from other passages.

D. Recent Developments (esp. Barth, Brunner, Bultmann, and Gogarten)

How does the Church use the Old Testament? How does the Old relate to the New?

1. Repristination view: The Church corrects the Old Testament to make it come alive for the contemporary situation.

2. Educational view: The Old Testament becomes instructional for the Church although it contains nothing supernatural.

3. Promise view: The prophetic elements of the Old Testament are programmatic in that they indicate how God will act in the future.

4. Pattern view: The Old Testament prophetic passages indicate to man the character of God's action which is repeated in history.

What Eschatological Views Do You Hold?

*Instructions: Please tick two columns on this paper—one mark in columns 1-5 and one mark in columns 6-11.*

**Choose One Millennial View Choose One Tribulational View**

Premillennial Post- A- Don’t Pre-Trib Mid-Trib Post-Trib Partial Pre-Wrath Don’t

Historic Dispensational millennial millennial Know Rapture Rapture Know

**Bibliography**

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Boettner, Loraine. "Postmillennialism." In *The Meaning of the Millennium*, 117-142. Edited by Robert G. Clouse. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1977.

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Major Bible Themes*. Revised ed. by John F. Walvoord. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974.

Clouse, Robert G., ed. *The Meaning of the Millennium.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1977.

Constable, Thomas L. "Notes on 1 Thessalonians." Unpublished class notes from the course "Bible 308: Pauline Epistles and Revelation." Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas. Spring, 1986.

Hoekema, Anthony A. "Amillennialism." In *The Meaning of the Millennium*, 155-188. Edited by Robert G. Clouse. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1977.

Howe, Frederick R. Unpublished class notes from the course "Theology 406: Eschatology." Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas. Spring, 1986.

Hoyt, Herman A. "Dispensational Premillennialism." In *The Meaning of the Millennium*, 63-92. Edited by Robert G. Clouse. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1977.

Pentecost, J. Dwight. *Things to Come.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1958.

Radmacher, Earl. "The Current Status of Dispensationalism and Its Eschatology." In *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology*, 163-176. Edited by Kenneth S. Kantzer and Stanley N. Gundry. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979.

Ryrie, Charles. "A Synopsis of Bible Doctrine: The Doctrine of Future Things." In *The Ryrie Study Bible*, 1952-1954. Chicago: Moody Press, 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *What You Should Know About the Rapture.* Chicago: Moody Press, 1981.

Thiessen, Henry C. *Lectures in Systematic Theology.* Revised by Vernon D. Doerksen. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.

Walvoord, John F. "Revelation." In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 925-991. Edited by John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Wheaton: SP Publications, 1983.

A.

1.

a.

1)

a)

E. A Paper (30%) of 8-10 typed, double-spaced pages will be written on the eschatology of another religion (e.g., Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam), Israel’s Restoration, Daniel’s Seventy Weeks Prophecy, the Postponement Theory, or another subject with my approval. The paper should be written according to Campbell’s guidelines. (See the library copy of a sample paper and my Term Paper Grade Sheet.) If possible use bottom page footnoting (plagiarism will not be tolerated). The page count does not include a title page, table of contents, and bibliography of 8-10 sources (author, title, place of publication, publisher, date). Topics must be handed in on Friday, 24 April. The due date is Wednesday, 13 May.

You may substitute this assignment with a 30 minute sermon, two 15 minute funeral sermons (one for a believer and one for an unbeliever), or a creative project (group or individual) with my approval. See Ludwigson’s appendix for ideas on papers and creative projects.

**V. Course Schedule**

Note: Since holidays and graduation canceled three sessions, all classes will be from 7:30-9:30.

Session Date Subjects Reading Assignment # Pp. a

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 27 March | Syllabus & Introduction |  |  |
|  |  | Death |  |  |
|  |  | Intermediate State |  |  |
| 2 | 3 April | Abrahamic Covenant | Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 30:1-10;  2 Sam. 7:12-16; Jer. 31:31-34 |  |
|  |  | Other Covenants | Lightner, x-xiii, 17-29 |  |
|  |  | Areas of Agreement  Quiz 1 | Lightner, 30-50  40 |  |
| 3 | 10 April | Signs of the Second Coming | Lightner, 132-51 week 2 review |  |
|  |  | Rapture | Lightner, 92-114week 2 review |  |
|  |  | Quiz 2 | 1 Thess. 4:13-18 42 |  |
|  | 17 April | Good Friday Holiday | No Class |  |
| 4 | 24 April | Judgment Seat of Christ  Marriage Feast of the Lamb | Class notes, 26-60 |  |
|  |  | Antichrist & Daniel 9 | Daniel 9 |  |
|  |  | Tribulation | Revelation 6—19 (optional) |  |
|  |  | Quiz 3 | approx. 34 |  |
|  | 1 May | Labour Day Holiday | No Class |  |
| 5 | 8 May | “AD 2000” Video  (Dr. Jack Van Impe) | Lightner, 156-87 |  |
|  |  | Babylon & the Kingdom | Lightner, 53-71 |  |
|  |  | Premillennialism |  |  |
|  |  | Quiz 4 | 49 |  |
| 6 | 15 May | Ezekiel’s Temple/Topography | Ezekiel 40—48 |  |
|  |  | “The Rule of Christ” Video (Walvoord/Pentecost/Toussaint) | Lightner, 117-31  Revelation 20 |  |
|  |  | Postmillennialism | Lightner, 82-91 |  |
|  |  | Amillennialism  Quiz 5 | Lightner, 72-81  44 |  |
| 7 | 22 May | Resurrections & Judgments | Class notes, 81-86 |  |
|  |  | Eternal States: Hell | Matthew 24—25 |  |
|  |  | Eternal States: Heaven  Quiz 6 | Revelation 21—22  approx. 10 |  |
|  |  |  | 217 |  |
|  | 29 May | SBC Graduation | No Class (please go to Kallang Theatre instead!) |  |

**VI. Other Matters**

A. Contacting Me: If for some reason you may need to contact me I may be reached here at SBC by box L22 or by phone (466-4677, 466-4834, 466-8769). Also, my home address is #5 Jalan Keria, Singapore 2158 and my home phone number is 469-3027. My office hours when I can be available to talk are Tuesdays (10:55-11:40), Wednesdays (8:15-9:50), Thursdays (8:15-9:00), and Fridays (11:45-12:30). You can take me to lunch too!

B. Copying Class Notes: Permission granted until you make a lot of money publishing them. The same applies to taping class lectures.

**Syllabus 1995 Eve. Sch.**

**I. Catalogue Course Descriptions**

A. Evening School: What does the future hold? Do current events in the Mid-East, EC, China, and the former USSR relate to biblical prophecy? What happens to people after death? And what are heaven and hell like? Answers to these questions about eschatology (study of the future) and how they affect you now will be explored in this study. Required is the purchase of the 215 page book of class notes ($15).

B. Day School: This course covers the biblical doctrine of the return of Christ and the events associated with it. It is divided into two main parts: individual eschatology, dealing with subjects such as the nature of death, the immortality of the soul, and the intermediate state, and general eschatology, including subjects such as the second coming and events preceding it, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment. The course will also include a survey of the various millennial views.

**II. Course Objectives**

By the end of the course the student will be able to…

A. Defend the biblical view of personal eschatology (death, intermediate state, existence of hell, judgments, etc.).

B. Show familiarity with the various eschatological viewpoints concerning the millennium (pre-, a-, and postmillennial) and the rapture (pre-, mid-, and posttribulational).

C. Articulate the biblical covenants and their relationship to eschatology.

D. Feel acquainted with eschatology to confidently teach a Bible study on the subject.

E. See the relevance of eschatology to personal holiness, world mission, contemporary events, and Asian culture and religions.

**III. Course Requirements**

A. Readings (50% of course grade) from the class notes and the Bible will be assigned for each session. You will report the percentage you read of the week’s assignment on each quiz.

B. Quizzes (50% of course grade) will be given at the beginning of each week’s class session. Questions will be mostly short answer, but also true-false, multiple choice, etc. The content may cover one question from the previous week’s class session and 4 questions from the Scripture and class notes assigned for that week. A bonus question may also be included for 2-5 points. The lowest of the 7 quiz grades will be dropped and not counted towards the final course grade. Quizzes are to encourage punctuality, review of previous sessions, and careful reading of the class notes and biblical text. No makeup quizzes will be given.

**IV. Course Bibliography (omitted here)**

**V. Course Schedule: Evening School (September-November 1995)**

Session Date Subjects Reading Assignment # Pp.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 26 Sept. | Syllabus & Introduction | Class Notes, 1-17 |
|  |  | Death |  |
|  |  | Intermediate State | 17 |
| 2 | 3 Oct. | Abrahamic Covenant | Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 30:1-10; |
|  |  | Other Covenants | 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Jer. 31:31-34 |
|  |  | Dispensationalism  Quiz 1 | Class Notes, 18-32  15 |
| 3 | 10 Oct. | Areas of Agreement  Signs of the Second Coming | Class Notes, 33-66, 191-95 |
|  |  | Pretribulational Rapture | 1 Thess. 4:13-18 |
|  |  | Quiz 2 | 37 |
| 4 | 17 Oct. | Rapture: 4 Other Views | Class notes, 67-86b |
|  |  | Judgment Seat of Christ  Marriage Feast of the Lamb | Revelation 19 |
|  |  | Antichrist & Daniel 9 | 2 Thess. 2; Daniel 9 |
|  |  | Quiz 3 | 25 |
| 5 | 24 Oct. | Tribulation Van Impe Video? | Matthew 24—25 |
|  |  | Babylon | Revelation 17—18 |
|  |  | The Kingdom | Class Notes, 87-119 |
|  |  | Quiz 4 | 37 |
| 6 | 31 Oct. | Premillennialism | Class Notes, 120-49 (w/o footnotes) |
|  |  | Ezekiel’s Temple/Topography | Ezekiel 40—46 |
|  |  | “The Rule of Christ” Video by  Walvoord/Pentecost/Toussaint | Psalm 72  Revelation 20 |
|  |  | Quiz 5 | 38 |
| 7 | 7 Nov. | Postmillennialism | Class notes, 150-61, 196-207 |
|  |  | Amillennialism; Rom. 9—11 | Romans 9—11 |
|  |  | Resurrections & Judgments  Quiz 6 | 25 |
|  |  |  |  |
| 8 | 14 Nov. | Eternal States: Hell | Class Notes, 162-88 (take p. 162 quiz) |
|  |  | Eternal States: Heaven  Quiz 7 | Luke 16; Revelation 21—22  31 |

**V. Other Matters**

A. Contacting Me: I can be reached at SBC by box L22 or by phone (466-8769-ext. 220 or 466-4677). Also, my home address is 5 Jalan Keria, Singapore 588533 and my home phone number is 469-3027 (home fax 466-5517). My campus office hours this semester are: Tuesdays and Thursdays (11:00-2:30), Wednesdays and Fridays (8:00-10:00, 12:00-1:00).

B. Copying Class Notes: Permission granted until you make a lot of money publishing them. The same applies to taping class lectures. Spread the news!

C. Commentaries: Have you ever wondered *which* of the numerous commentaries you should look up when you need help with a passage? Get my newly revised study of what I believe to be the best 5-12 commentaries on every book of the Bible and the best reference books to purchase (470 books surveyed). It’s called *Reference Books and Commentaries You Should Buy* and is available for only $5.00 in the SBC Book Centre (what a bargain!). This resource may help you save a lot of money buying books for the long-term.

**Syllabus Day School**

**I. Catalogue Course Description**

This course covers the biblical doctrine of the return of Christ and the events associated with it. It is divided into two main parts: individual eschatology, dealing with subjects such as the nature of death, the immortality of the soul, and the intermediate state, and general eschatology, including subjects such as the second coming and events preceding it, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment. The course will also include a survey of the various millennial views.

**II. Course Objectives**

By the end of the course the student will be able to…

A. Defend the biblical view of personal eschatology (death, intermediate state, existence of hell, judgments, etc.).

B. Show familiarity with the various eschatological viewpoints concerning the millennium (pre-, a-, and postmillennial) and the rapture (pre-, mid-, and posttribulational).

C. Articulate the biblical covenants and their relationship to eschatology.

D. Feel acquainted with eschatology to be able to confidently preach and teach on the subject.

E. See the relevance of eschatology to personal holiness, world mission, contemporary events, and Asian culture and religions.

**III. Course Requirements**

A. Readings (20%) will be assigned for each class day. Readings total about 400 pages which works out to be 15 pages per class session. Students are required to purchase from the SBC Book Centre Robert P. Lightner’s *The Last Days Handbook* and R. Ludwigson’s *A Survey of Bible Prophecy*, both of which will be read in their entirety. Also, 91 pages of Robert G. Clouse’s *The Meaning of the Millennium* will be read so you may want to buy it too.

B. Quizzes (20%) over the reading assignments since the last quiz will be given six times. A bonus question may also be included for up to 5 points. Graduating students will be graded only on the quizzes taken up to their required class periods.

C. An Interview (10%) of a religious professional must be conducted in the area of eschatology and typed up on a single sheet of paper. One of these two options should be completed:

1. Interview a pastor to find out how often he preaches through one of the OT prophetic books and on eschatology and the reason(s) for doing so or *not* doing so.

2. Visit a Buddhist temple, Hindu temple, or Mosque and interview the person in charge on his eschatological views, asking what he believes about the afterlife. All students doing this option will receive a 100% for this assignment so as to discourage monastic living.

D. A Mid-Term Exam (20%) will cover class lectures and readings. It will be a take-home, four page combination of multiple choice, short answer, essays, and charts. An option will be given of all essay questions for those who wish to do so.

E. A Paper (30%) of 8-10 typed, double-spaced pages will be written on the kingdom of God. Explain what this term means in the OT and NT, discuss alternative views and support your decision as to what Jesus and John meant in Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 13 and other relevant texts. The paper should be written according to Campbell’s guidelines. (See the library copy of a sample paper and my Term Paper Grade Sheet on page 185.) If possible use bottom page footnoting (plagiarism will not be tolerated). The page count does not include a title page, table of contents, and bibliography of 8-10 sources (author, title, place of publication, publisher, date). The due date is Friday, 30 April.

Note that the interview and paper both have a 10% grade penalty per class day late. Also, points may be deducted for not including your full name and box number, exceeding the page limit, misspelling my name (!), and improper grammar and spelling.

F. Fun Night at my home is required of all serious and non-serious students. This goof off evening is from 6:30-8:30 PM on Saturday, 17 April. Please bring your spouse and kids!

**IV. Course Bibliography**

\* Books marked with an asterisk are on reserve in the library.

A. Recommended Reading

\*Allis, Oswald T. *Prophecy and the Church: An Examination of the Claim of Dispensationalists that the Christian Church is a Mystery Parenthesis which Interrupts the Fulfillment to Israel of the Kingdom Prophecies of the Old Testament.* N.p.; Presbyterian & Reformed, 1945.

Amillennial, posttribulational. Probably the best statement of this view and the most thorough attempt to discredit dispensationalism.

Beitzel, Barry J. *The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands.* Chicago: Moody, 1986. xviii+234 pp.

Evangelical, excellent in both physical geography (70 pp.) and historical geography (119 pp.); weak in that it lacks regional maps, often lacks Scripture references on the maps themselves (though cited in supporting material), and has few full color photographs. Cited in these notes for geographical concerns.

Berkof, Louis. *Systematic Theology.* N.p.; rev. & enlarged ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953.

Amillennial, posttribulational. p. 696 The standard systematic theology for Reformed theology though somewhat dated.

Blaising, Craig A., and Bock, Darrell L., eds. *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: The Search for Definition.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 400 pp. US$19.99.

A collection of articles which view “Israel and the church as distinct theological institutions, but also successive phases in a historically progressive and eschatologically converging redemptive program. This redemptive program accounts for both the similarities and the differences between Israel and the church. The book suggests that the similarities are greater than dispensationalists have previously thought to be the case” (Fall/Winter 1992 Zondervan Academic and Professional Catalog, 6). It is edited by Dallas Seminary faculty members and includes responses from non-dispensational scholars Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Willem A. VanGemeren, and Bruce K. Waltke. This is difficult reading.

Braun, Jon E. *Whatever Happened to Hell?* Nashville: Nelson, 1979.

A not-so-popular book on a not-so-popular subject today, but much needed.

Campbell, Donald K., and Townsend, Jeffrey L. *A Case for Premillennialism: A New Consensus.* Chicago: Moody, 1992. 290 pp.

The foreword by Kenneth Kantzer explains the Church’s recent shift back toward premillennialism as attributed to increased Bible study, a literal hermeneutic, and studies of the early church. Chapters by various scholars expound premillennial teaching in biblical order by examining evidence in Genesis, Psalm 89, Isaiah 2, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel and Amos, Matthew, Acts, Romans 9-11, 1 Corinthians 15, and Revelation 20. Helpful subject and Scripture indices. Campbell is President of Dallas Seminary and Townsend a pastor in Colorado.

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Major Bible Themes.* Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1926, 1953; Revised by John F. Walvoord, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974.

Simple and excellent introductory guide to theology, nicely outlined into 52 concise chapters (approx. 6-8 pages), includes study questions. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Systematic Theology: Abridged.* 2 vols. Abridged by John F. Walvoord. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1988.

Summarizes Chafer’s 8 volumes into 2. Premillennial, pretribulational.

Chan Kai Lok. *Who is Mystery Babylon?* Singapore: by the author, 1992. 151 pp.

Provides 13 “proofs” that the USA is the Mystery Babylon which pollutes the world and will be destroyed by a nuclear attack from Russia in 1993 (Rev. 17—18). A Singaporean with a Ph.D. in Entomology (bugs) and associated with the charismatic group called Omega Ministries.

Criswell, W. A., and Patterson, Paige. *Heaven.*  Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1991. 233 pp.

Includes personal opinions by Dr. Criswell, biblical perspectives by Dr. Patterson, and words of hymns and poems of writers through history. Premillennial, pretribulational.

Crockett, William V.; Hayes, Zachary J.; Pinnock, Clark H.; and Walvoord, John F. *Four Views on Hell.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 192 pp. US$10.99.

Presents four views on hell: literal (Walvoord, Dallas Seminary), metaphorical (Crockett, Alliance Seminary), conditional immortality/annihilation (Pinnock, McMaster Divinity College), and purgatory (Hayes, Catholic Theological Union). Each author also responds to the other views.

Crockett, William V., and Sigountos, James G., eds. *Through No Fault of Their Own? The Fate of Those Who Have Never Heard.* 278 pp. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.

A collection of chapters by those calling themselves evangelicals, one of whom (Clark Pinnock) advocates that the heathen who never heard will be saved by Christ’s blood. Much interaction with John Stott and some with Clark Pinnock and Philip Hughes—all three seeking to be called “evangelical annihilationists” (see p. 50). A helpful theological section of four articles (Part 1) but weaker (i.e., does not address implications of key passages) exegetical section of nine chapters (Part 2) and excellent missiological section (Part 3) comprising six practical articles. *BS* 596:500

Dolan, David. *Holy War for the Promised Land.* Nashville: Nelson, 1991. 252 pp.

Argues that the Arab-Israeli conflict is a religious, not a political one. Dolan is a Christian journalist who has reported for CBS in Jerusalem since 1980.

Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology.* 3 vols. in 1. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983, 1984, 1985. 1302 pp.

Nondispensational premillennial, moderate Calvinist viewpoint. Evangelical (e.g., upholds inerrancy), exhaustive, readable, good with alternate views, highly useful for preaching and teaching due to Erickson’s extensive pastoral experience. Erickson is dean and professor of theology at Bethel Theological Seminary.

Feinberg, John S., ed. *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway (Good News Pub.), 1988. 410 pp. S$28.50.

Essays in honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., former professor at Dallas Seminary. One article demonstrating continuity (Covenant Theology) and one showing discontinuity (Dispensationalism) appears for each of six basic categories: theological systems, hermeneutics, salvation, the Law of God, the people of God, and kingdom promises. Gives perspectives on whether the Church is the “new Israel” and whether believers today should follow the Ten Commandments (e.g., sabbath observance) in the context of how much the OT relates today—especially on eschatology (but not exclusively).

Gloer, W. Hulitt, ed. *Eschatology and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of George Raymond Beasley-Murray.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988. 154 pp.

Essays from a non-dispensational perspective on NT texts (teaching of Jesus, Matt. 12:28/Luke 11:20, Acts, Romans 9-11, 2 Corinthians, etc.).

Grenz, Stanley J. *The Millennial Maze: Sorting Out Evangelical Options.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992. 239 pp.

Evaluates strengths and weaknesses of the four positions: postmillennialism, dispensational premillennialism, “historic” (nondispensational) premillennialism, and amillennialism. Also addresses how dispensational and covenant theologians have recently come together in many areas of former debate. Grenz is professor of theology and ethics, Carey/Regent College in Vancouver, Canada.

Hoehner, Harold W. *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977.

Helpful, detailed chapter on Daniel’s “Seventy Weeks.” Premillennial, pretribulational.

Hubbard, David Allan. *The Second Coming: What Will Happen When Jesus Returns?* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1984. 121 pp. Paper, US$2.95.

A brief, simple, understandable work by the president of Fuller Theological Seminary. Non-dispensational premillennial, posttribulational.

James, Edgar C. *Arabs, Oil, and Armageddon.* Rev. ed. Chicago: Moody, 1991. 108 pp.

An excellent review of the history of the Arabs up to the present, the importance of the oil problem in the world today, histories of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Iraq, and history and prophecies relating to Israel. The millennium and Second Coming are also given attention. James teaches at Moody Bible Institute and is premillennial, pretribulational.

Walvoord review BS 593: 110

Jeffrey, Grant R. *Armageddon: Appointment with Destiny.* New York: Bantam Books, 1988. 249 pp.

A popular level paperback which discusses current fulfillment of prophecies relating to Israel, Russia, chronology, the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, and the location of the Ark of the Covenant in Ethiopia. Interesting reading! Some is even believable!

Lalonde, Peter. *One World Under Antichrist.* Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1991. 307 pp.

A Canadian evaluation of how current events (globalism, ecumenism, the EC, etc.) are preparing the way for the New World Order under the Antichrist. Lalonde is publisher of *The Omego-Letter* and *The Christian World Report*, newsletters with a combined circulation of over 70,000. Premillennial, pretribulational.

Lewis, Gordon, and Demarest, Bruce A. *Integrative Theology.* 3 vols. Vol. 3: *Spirit-given Life and God’s People, Present and Future.* Grand Rapids: Academie Books (Zondervan), 1994.

Watch for this amillennial work to be released in April 1994. It will address the practical areas of life which are effected by eschatology which most works omit.

Lightner, Robert P. *Evangelical Theology.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986.

Helpful summary of various theological views held by evangelicals on a variety of topics. The chapter on eschatology comprises only 34 pages and is the essence of his *The Last Days Handbook.* Premillennial, pretribulational.

Lindsey, Hal. *The Late Great Planet Earth.* New York: Batam Books, 1968?.

The most read book on eschatology in the twentieth century, with 28 million copies in print in 53 languages. Premillennial, pretribulational.

Marrs, Texe. *Millennium: Peace, Promises, and the Day They Take Our Money Away.* Austin, TX: Living Truth Pub., 1990. 272 pp.

Warnings of America’s coming economic disaster by a retired USAF officer and expert on the New Age Movement. Premillennial.

McClain, Alva J. *The Greatness of the Kingdom.* Chicago: Moody, 1959.

One of the best and most complete explanations of the coming thousand year reign of Christ on the earth. Premillennial, pretribulational.

Morey, Robert A. *Death and the Afterlife.* Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1984.

Probably the best work on proving the existence of eternal hell and punishment. He read over 1000 books on hell before writing this one! Amillennial (?). He is a M.Div. and D.Min. graduate of Westminster Seminary.

\*Pentecost, J. Dwight. *Things to Come.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1955.

The most thorough premillennial, pretribulational eschatological work to date, responding to the various views current in the 1950s (many of which are still valid today though the names have changed).

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *Thy Kingdom Come: Tracing God’s Program and Covenant Promises Throughout History.* Wheaton: SP Pub., Victor Books, 1990. 360 pp.

An inductive study of the kingdom of God chronologically from eternity past to eternity future. Premillennial (dispensational), pretribulational.

\*Reiter, Richard. *The Rapture: Pre-, Mid-, or Post-Tribulational?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Academie Books, 1984.

Presents all three of the above views by men who hold them. Reiter provides an introduction, but the bulk of the book comprises articles by three professors at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, IL: Drs. Paul D. Feinberg (Pre), Gleason L. Archer (Mid), and Douglas J. Moo (Post). Each article is followed by rebuttals written by those of the other persuasions.

Richards, Larry. *Tomorrow Today.* Wheaton, IL: SP Publications, Victor, 1986. 129 pp.

Here’s a different kind of prophecy book which applies texts in the Minor and Major Prophets and the NT to their original audience and to us today. Richards makes no attempt to support any particular view towards eschatology, looking upon such efforts with disfavor as he feels that a specific order of events is unknowable.

Rosenthal, Marvin. *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church.* Nashville: Nelson, 1990. 319 pp.

The newest interpretation of the time of the Rapture, placing it 18 months before the end of the Tribulation at the breaking of the seventh seal. Rosenthal is executive director of Zion’s Hope (a faith mission).

\*Ryrie, Charles C. *Basic Theology.* Wheaton: SP Pub., Victor Books, 1986.

An easy-to-understand introduction to all views, dispensational, helpful diagrams.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith.* Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1953.

Explains dispensationalism of the 1950s. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *Dispensationalism Today.* Chicago: Moody, 1965.

Here’s a basic text, but it doesn’t really describe present dispensationalism as much as it does the status of the view in 1965. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Final Countdown.* Wheaton: SP Pub., Victor Books, 1982.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *What You Should Know About the Rapture.* Chicago: Moody, 1981.

Definitely the simplest book on the Rapture which I have read, complete with helpful charts and easy-to-comprehend concepts. Premillennial, pretribulational.

Saucy, Robert L. “The Eschatology of the Bible.” In *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 1: Introductory Articles, pp. 103-26. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979.

Helpful emphasis on the significance of prophesied events over their chronology. Includes 6 pages on individual eschatology. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism: The Interface Between Dispensational and Non-Dispensational Theology.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993. 304 pp. US$19.99.

Helpful in identifying new trends in dispensationalism which argue for greater continuity between the Old and New Testaments, church participation in the New Covenant, etc.

See, Revelation. *The Antichrist is Now Here!* Singapore: by the author, 1992.

Provides 23 reasons why Mikhail Gorbachev is the Antichrist (Rev. 13) and the former USSR the Antichrist nation. A Singaporean associated with the charismatic group called Omega Ministries.

Stam, Cornelius R. *Things That Differ: The Fundamentals of Dispensationalism.* Chicago: Berean Bible Society. N.d. 292 pp.

Helpful charts, explanation of the “mystery,” and contrasts between Paul and the apostles as it relates to dispensationalism. Ultradispensational.

Tan, Paul Lee. *A Pictorial Guide to Bible Prophecy.* Hong Kong: Nordica Int’l, 1991. 413 pp. US$29.95.

Dispensational (premillennial, pretribulational). The most complete pictorial guide to eschatology with over 600 graphs, charts, photographs, and line drawings. Has special sections on Daniel and Revelation as well as 50 major topics. Unfortunately sources are not cited and contains several grammatical and typographical errors. Dr. Tan is a pastor, author, and adjunct professor at Dallas Theological Seminary.

Van Kampen, Robert D. *The Sign.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1992. 528 pp.

A massive volume basically following Rosenthal’s pre-wrath view and arguing that the sign of Christ’s return will be the sun darkening and the moon turning blood red.

Walvoord, John F. *Armageddon, Oil, and the Middle East Crisis.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974, 1976, 1990.

Shows how the Mid-East land will become increasingly important because of its oil which will lead to fulfilled Bible prophecy. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook.* Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1990.

Lists in order every Bible prophecy and its fulfillment (if fulfilled) in the order in which they appear in Scripture. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Millennial Kingdom*. Grand Rapids: Dunham, 1959.

A classic work on the future earthly reign of Christ. Premillennial, pretribulational.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . *The Rapture Question*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979.

Addresses various issues relating to the Rapture and explains the premillennial, pretribulational view against other views.

Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., eds. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*. 2 vols*.* Wheaton: SP Pub., Victor Books, 1983, 1985.

The best premillennial, pretribulational, commentary on the whole Bible.

Please also note the excellent bibliographies in *The Meaning of the Millennium* at the end of this syllabus which categorizes several authors by theological perspective, as well as that at the back of Robert P. Lightner’s *The Last Days Handbook* which does the same but also divides works into beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. See also p. 167.

B. Required Reading

\*Beyerhaus, Peter. “Eschatology: Does it Make a Difference in Missions?” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 26 (October 1990): 366-76.

Notes how all the various eschatological viewpoints can be a stimulus towards world evangelisation and addresses threats to our really looking to the future with confidence.

\*Clouse, Robert G., ed. *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1977.

Presents all four of the millennial views by men who hold them. Clouse provides an introduction and conclusion, but the bulk of the book comprises articles by George Eldon Ladd (nondispensational premil), Herman A. Hoyt (dispensational premil), Loraine Boettner (postmil), and Anthony Hoekema (amil). Each article is followed by rebuttals written by those of the other persuasions. Similar in format to Reiter above.

\*Crutchfield, Larry V. “Rudiments of Dispensationalism in the Anti-Nicene Period [AD 100-325].” (A two part series) “Israel and the Church in the Ante-Nicene Fathers.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 (July-September 1987): 254-76; “Ages and Dispensations in the Ante-Nicene Fathers.” 145 (October-December 1987): 377-401.

Successfully responds to the thesis promoted by non-dispensational scholars that the church in the early centuries did not distinguish between Israel and the church nor between differing economies (dispensations).

\*Enns, Paul. *The Moody Handbook of Theology.* Chicago: Moody, 1989.

An excellent premillennial, pretribulational perspective in concise form as part of a larger work on the whole study of theology.

\*Hoyt, Herman A. *The End Times.* Chicago: Moody, 1969.

A nicely outlined, concise, basic, premillennial, pretribulational Bible College text.

\*Lightner, Robert P. *The Last Days Handbook.* Nashville: Nelson, 1990.

Presents all views at a lay level without taking a stand. Very simplified approach to eschatology. Many helpful diagrams. Does not address individual eschatology.

\*Ludwigson, Raymond. *A Survey of Bible Prophecy.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1951, 1973, 1975.

Dispensational. Arranged alphabetically. A wealth of charts and maps. Brief, well written chapters. Includes research paper topics and creative ideas for group projects.

\* On reserve in the library

**V. Course Content** Name Box

Session Date (Day) Subject Assignment a

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | 30 Mar (T1) | Syllabus, Introduction, Death | Enns, 371-75 |  |
| 2 | 30 Mar (T2) | Intermediate State | Lightner, x-xiii, 17-29 |  |
| 3 | 2 Apr (F) | Abrahamic Covenant | Lightner, 92-114 |  |
| 4 | 6 Apr (T1) | Other Covenants  Quiz 1 | Lightner, 30-50, 132-51 |  |
| 5 | 6 Apr (T2) | Signs of the Second Coming | Ludwigson, 84-91, 161-66 |  |
|  | 9 Apr (F) | Good Friday | No class |  |
| 6 | 13 Apr (T1) | Rapture: Pretribulational | Ludwigson, 133-47;  Crutchfield, 254-76, 377-401 |  |
| 7 | 13 Apr (T2) | Rapture: Mid-, Partial  Quiz 2 | Ludwigson, 148-50 |  |
| 8 | 16 Apr (F) | Rapture: Pre-Wrath, Posttrib. | Ludwigson, 151-160;  Lightner, 53-71 |  |
| 9 | 20 Apr (T1) | Judgment Seat of Christ;  Marriage Feast of the Lamb | Interview Due |  |
| 10 | 20 Apr (T2) | Antichrist  No Quiz—Midterm distributed | Ludwigson, 13-26, 44-49 |  |
| 11 | 23 Apr (F) | Daniel 9 | Ludwigson, 44-49;  Take Home Midterm Exam Due |  |
| 12 | 27 Apr (T1) | Tribulation: Book of Revelation | Ludwigson, 170-78 |  |
| 13 | 27 Apr (T2) | Tribulation: Misc. Texts, Babylon  Quiz 3 | Ludwigson, 184-87, 27-39;  Lightner, 156-87 |  |
| 14 | 30 Apr (F) | The Kingdom | Ludwigson, 69-83;  Term paper due |  |
| 15 | 4 May (T1) | Millennium: Premil. Pt. I | Clouse, 63-84;  Ludwigson, 127-31 |  |
| 16 | 4 May (T2) | Millennium: Premil. Pt. II | Clouse, 84-92, 104-114;  Ludwigson, 40-43, 179-83 |  |
| 17 | 7 May (F) | Ezekiel’s Temple/Topography  Quiz 4 | Ezekiel 38—48; Lightner, 117-31; Ludwigson, 50-56 |  |
| 18 | 11 May (T1) | “The Rule of Christ” Video (Walvoord/Pentecost/Toussaint) | Psalm 72; Revelation 20 |  |
| 19 | 11 May (T2) | Millennium: Postmillennialism | Clouse, 117-41;  Lightner, 82-91 |  |
| 20 | 14 May (F) | Millennium: Amillennialism  Quiz 5 | Clouse, 155-72, 176-87;  Lightner, 72-81 |  |
| 21 | 18 May (T1) | Resurrections & Judgments | Ludwigson, 57-64, 65-68,  167-69 |  |
| 22 | 18 May (T2) | Eternal States: Hell | Beyerhaus, *EMQ*, 66-76;  Hoyt, 233-40 |  |
| 23 | 21 May (F) | Eternal States: Heaven  Quiz 6 | Revelation 21—22;  Hoyt, 223-33, 241-43 |  |

**VI. Other Matters**

A. Contacting Me: If for some reason you may need to contact me I may be reached here at SBC by box L22 or by phone (466-4677, 466-4834, 466-8769). Also, my home address is #5 Jalan Keria, Singapore 2158 and my home phone number is 469-3027. My office hours when I can be available to talk are Wednesdays (11:45-12:30) and Fridays (9:05-9:50). You can take me to lunch too!

B. Copying Class Notes: Permission granted until you make a lot of money publishing them. The same applies to taping class lectures.

**1996 Schedule**

**V. Schedule (Reading Report)** Name Box Sem. Grade

Reading totals: Pneumatology 133+ Eschatology 362 = ÷ 45 = 12.2 pp

(Please tick the final column if completed in full on time. Note if completed late and/or partially.)

Sessions continued from part 1 of this course (pneumatology)

Session Date (Day) Subject Assignment a

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 20 | 15 Feb (Th) | Eschatology  Death | Hoyt, 9-33 or Ryrie, 11-44 |  |
|  | 16-22 Feb | Chinese New Year Break | No class or assignments |  |
| 21 | 23 Feb (F) | Intermediate State | Ass. #6: Intermediate State  Hoyt, 34-48 or Ryrie, 45-60 |  |
| 22 | 28 Feb (T) | Abrahamic Covenant | Presentation #4: Abrahamic Covenant (Nature, Conditional or Unconditional)  Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 30:1-10;  2 Sam. 7:12-16; Jer. 31:31-34; Ryrie, 79-104 or Lightner, 117-55 |  |
| 23 | 29 Feb (W) | Other Covenants  Quiz 1 | Ryrie, 183-96 or Lightner, x-xiii, 17-29 |  |
| 24 | 1 Mar (F) | Signs of the Second Coming I | Ludwigson, 84-91, 161-66;=21  Ryrie, 105-45 or Lightner, 30-50 |  |
| 25 | 6 Mar (W) | Signs of the Second Coming II |  |  |
| 26 | 7 Mar (Th) | Rapture: Pretribulational | Crutchfield, 377-401 or Ryrie, 61-78; Ludwigson, 133-47=24+15 |  |
| 27 | 8 Mar (F) | Rapture: Mid-, Partial  Quiz 2 | Ludwigson, 148-50=3  Lightner, 53-67 |  |
|  | 11-16 Mar | Mid-Semester Break | No class or assignments |  |
| 28 | 20 Mar (W) | Rapture: Pre-Wrath, Posttrib. | Ludwigson, 151-160=10  Lightner, 67-91 Rapt, A-/Postmil |  |
| 29 | 21 Mar (Th) | Judgment Seat of Christ;  Marriage Feast of the Lamb | Hoyt, 103-114 |  |
| 30 | 22 Mar (F) | Antichrist  No Quiz—Midterm distributed | Ludwigson, 13-26, 44-49=20 |  |
| 31 | 27 Mar (W) | Daniel 9 | Take Home Midterm Exam Due  Ludwigson, 44-49=6 |  |
| 32 | 28 Mar (Th) | Tribulation: Book of Revelation | Hoyt, 133-50  Ludwigson, 170-78=9 |  |
| 33 | 29 Mar (F) | Tribulation: Misc. Texts, Babylon  Quiz 3 | Hoyt, 150-66  Ludwigson, 184-87, 27-39=17 |  |
| 34 | 3 Apr (W) | The Kingdom | Ryrie, 161-82, 209-13 Ludwigson, 69-83=16; notes, 112-16 |  |
|  | 4-5 Apr (ThF) | Maundy Thursday /Good Friday | No class or assignments |  |
| 35 | 10 Apr (W) | Premillennialism I | Clouse, 63-84 or Ryrie, 145-60 |  |
| 36 | 11 Apr (Th) | Premillennialism II | Clouse, 84-92, 104-114;=20 |  |
| 37 | 12 Apr (F) | Ezekiel’s Temple & Topography  Quiz 4 | Ezekiel 38—48; Ludwigson, 50-56=18 |  |
| 38 | 17 Apr (W) | “The Rule of Christ” Video (Walvoord/Pentecost/ Toussaint) | Psalm 72; Revelation 20  Clouse, 155-72=20 |  |
| 39 | 18 Apr (Th) | Postmillennialism | Clouse, 117-41 |  |
| 40 | 19 Apr (F) | Amillennialism  Quiz 5 | Clouse, 176-212 |  |
| 41 | 24 Apr (W) | Resurrections & Judgments | Ludwigson, 57-64, 65-68, 167-69=18; Lightner, 156-87 |  |
| 42 | 25 Apr (Th) | Eternal States: Hell | Hoyt, 233-40=8 |  |
| 43 | 26 Apr (F) | Eternal States: Heaven  Quiz 6 | Revelation 21—22;  Hoyt, 223-33, 241-43=14  Please turn in this reading report |  |
|  | 30 Apr-2 May | Final Exam |  |  |

**V. Schedule (1998?)** Name Box Sem. Grade

Reading totals: Pneumatology 133+ Eschatology 362 = ÷ 45 = 12.2 pp

(Tick the final column if completed in full on time. Note if completed late and/or partially.)

Sessions continued from part 1 of this course (pneumatology)

Session Date (Day) Subject Assignment a

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 19 | 25 Feb (T) | Eschatology  Death | Hoyt, 9-33 or Ryrie, 11-44 |  |
| 20 | 27 Feb (Th1) | Intermediate State | Hoyt, 34-48 or Ryrie, 45-60 |  |
| 21 | 27 Feb (Th2) | Abrahamic Covenant | Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 30:1-10;  2 Sam. 7:12-16; Jer. 31:31-34; Ryrie, 79-104 or Lightner, 117-55 |  |
| 22 | 4 Mar (T) | Other Covenants  Quiz 1 | Ryrie, 183-96 or Lightner, x-xiii, 17-29 |  |
| 23 | 6 Mar (Th1) | Pre- or Amillennialism? | Presentation #5: Millennialism  Lightner, 53-91 |  |
| 24 | 6 Mar (Th2) | Signs of the Second Coming | Ludwigson, 84-91, 161-66;=21  Ryrie, 105-45 or Lightner, 30-50 |  |
| 25 | 11 Mar (T) | Rapture: Pretribulational | Crutchfield, 254-76 or Ryrie, 61-78; Ludwigson, 133-47=24+15 |  |
| 26 | 13 Mar (Th1) | Rapture: Mid-, Partial, Pre-Wrath, Posttrib.  Quiz 2 | Ludwigson, 148-60=3  Crutchfield, 377-401 |  |
| 27 | 13 Mar (Th2) | Judgment Seat of Christ;  Marriage Feast of the Lamb | Hoyt, 103-114 |  |
|  | 17-22 Mar | Mid-Semester Break | No class or assignments |  |
| 28 | 25 Mar (T) | Antichrist & Daniel 9  No Quiz—Midterm distributed | Ludwigson, 13-26, 44-49=6 |  |
|  | 27 Mar (Th) | Maundy Thursday | No class or assignments |  |
| 29 | 1 Apr (T) | Tribulation: Book of Revelation | Take Home Midterm Exam Due  Hoyt, 133-50  Ludwigson, 170-78=9 |  |
| 30 | 3 Apr (Th1) | Tribulation: Misc. Texts, Babylon  Quiz 3 | Hoyt, 150-66  Ludwigson, 184-87, 27-39=17 |  |
| 31 | 3 Apr (Th2) | The Kingdom | Ryrie, 161-82, 209-13 Ludwigson, 69-83=16; notes, 112-16 |  |
| 32 | 8 Apr (T) | Millennialism | Clouse, 63-84 or Ryrie, 145-60 |  |
| 33 | 10 Apr (Th1) | Premillennialism | Clouse, 84-92, 104-114;=20 |  |
| 34 | 10 Apr (Th2) | Ezekiel’s Temple & Topography  Quiz 4 | Ezekiel 38—48; Ludwigson, 50-56=18 |  |
| 35 | 15 Apr (T) | “The Rule of Christ” Video (Walvoord/Pentecost/ Toussaint) | Psalm 72; Revelation 20  Clouse, 155-72 |  |
| 36 | 17 Apr (Th1) | Postmillennialism | Clouse, 117-41 |  |
| 37 | 17 Apr (Th2) | Amillennialism  Quiz 5 | Clouse, 176-212 |  |
| 38 | 22 Apr (T) | Resurrections & Judgments | Ludwigson, 57-68, 167-69=18; Lightner, 156-87 |  |
| 39 | 24 Apr (Th1) | Eternal States: Hell | Notes , 163-72=8 |  |
| 40 | 24 Apr (Th2) | Eternal States: Heaven  Quiz 6 | Revelation 21—22;  Notes, 173-88=14 |  |
|  | 29 Apr-3 May | Final Exam |  |  |

1999 Schedule

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 19 | 25 Feb (Th1) | Eschatology  Death | Benware, 293-300 |  |
| 20 | 25 Feb (Th2) | Intermediate State | Benware, 9-29 hermeneutics |  |
| 21 | 26 Feb (F) | Abrahamic Covenant | Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 30:1-10;  2 Sam. 7:12-16; Jer. 31:31-34; Benware, 31-49 |  |
|  | 4 Mar (Th) | Grace Baptist Staff Retreat | No class or assignments |  |
| 22 | 5 Mar (F) | Other Covenants  Quiz 1 | Benware, 50-74 |  |
| 23 | 11 Mar (Th1) | Pre- or Amillennialism? | Presentation #5: Millennialism  Benware, 77-89, 147-53 overview |  |
| 24 | 11 Mar (Th2) | Signs of the Second Coming | Notes, 31-34, 199-210 |  |
| 25 | 12 Mar (F) | Rapture: Pretribulational | Benware, 157-87 |  |
|  | 16-20 Mar | Mid-Semester Break | No class or assignments |  |
| 26 | 25 Mar (Th1) | Rapture: Mid-, Partial, Pre-Wrath, Posttrib.  Quiz 2 | Benware, 189-210 Posttrib |  |
| 27 | 25 Mar (Th2) | Judgment Seat of Christ;  Marriage Feast of the Lamb | Benware, 211-41 Midtrib, Partial, Pre-Wrath |  |
| 28 | 26 Mar (F) | Antichrist & Daniel 9  No Quiz—Midterm distributed | Benware, 243-54, Antichrist, Dan 9 |  |
|  | 1 Apr (Th) | Maundy Thursday | No class or assignments |  |
|  | 2 Apr (F) | Good Friday | No class or assignments |  |
| 29 | 8 Apr (Th1) | Tribulation: Book of Revelation | Take Home Midterm Exam Due  Benware, 255-68 |  |
| 30 | 8 Apr (Th2) | Tribulation: Misc. Texts, Babylon | Ludwigson, 184-87, 27-39=17 |  |
| 31 | 9 Apr (F) | The Kingdom  Quiz 3 | Benware, 135-45 |  |
| 32 | 15 Apr (Th1) | Millennialism | Ezekiel 38—48; Ludwigson, 50-56=18; Psalm 72; Revelation 20 |  |
| 33 | 15 Apr (Th2) | Premillennialism | Benware, 91-101 Premil |  |
| 34 | 16 Apr (F) | Ezekiel’s Temple & Topography  “The Rule of Christ” Video (Walvoord/Pentecost/ Toussaint)  Quiz 4 | Benware, 103-133 Amil/Postmil |  |
| 35 | 22 Apr (Th1) | Postmillennialism | Clouse, 117-41 |  |
| 36 | 22 Apr (Th2) | Amillennialism  Quiz 5 | Clouse, 176-212 |  |
| 37 | 23 Apr (F) | Resurrections & Judgments | Benware, 269-77 |  |
| 38 | 29 Apr (Th1) | Eternal States: Hell | Notes, 163-72=8 |  |
| 39 | 29 Apr (Th2) | Eternal States: Heaven  Quiz 6 | Revelation 21—22; Benware, 279-89; Notes, 173-88=14 |  |
| 40 | 3-8 May | Final Exam | Study and pray |  |

2000 Schedule

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 19 | 22 Mar (W1) | Eschatology  Death | Benware, 293-300 intermediate state |  |
| 20 | 22 Mar (W2) | Intermediate State | Benware, 9-29 hermeneutics |  |
| 21 | 23 Mar (Th1) | Abrahamic Covenant | Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 30:1-10;  2 Sam. 7:12-16; Jer. 31:31-34; Benware, 30-49 |  |
| 22 | 23 Mar (Th2) | Other Covenants  Quiz 1 | Benware, 50-74 |  |
| 23 | 29 Mar (W1) | Pre- or Amillennialism? | Presentation #5: Millennialism  Benware, 77-89, 147-53 overview |  |
| 24 | 29 Mar (W2) | Signs of the Second Coming | Notes, 31-34, 199-210 |  |
| 25 | 30 Mar (Th1) | Rapture: Pretribulational | Benware, 157-87 |  |
| 26 | 30 Mar (Th2) | Rapture: Mid-, Partial, Pre-Wrath, Posttrib.  Quiz 2 | Benware, 189-210 Posttrib |  |
| 27 | 5 Apr (W1) | Judgment Seat of Christ;  Marriage Feast of the Lamb | Benware, 211-41 Midtrib, Partial, Pre-Wrath |  |
| 28 | 5 Apr (W2) | Antichrist & Daniel 9  No Quiz—Midterm distributed | Benware, 243-54, Antichrist, Dan 9 |  |
| 29 | 6 Apr (Th1) | Tribulation: Book of Revelation | Benware, 255-68 |  |
| 30 | 6 Apr (Th2) | Tribulation: Misc. Texts, Babylon | Ludwigson, 184-87, 27-39=17 |  |
| 31 | 12 Apr (W1) | The Kingdom  Quiz 3 | Take Home Midterm Exam Due Benware, 135-45 |  |
| 32 | 12 Apr (W2) | Millennialism | Ezekiel 38—48; Ludwigson, 50-56=18; Psalm 72; Revelation 20 |  |
| 33 | 13 Apr (Th1) | Premillennialism | Clouse, 117-41 or Benware, 119-33 |  |
| 34 | 13 Apr (Th2) | Ezekiel’s Temple & Topography  “The Rule of Christ” Video (Walvoord/Pentecost/ Toussaint)  Quiz 4 | Clouse, 176-212 or Benware, 103-117 |  |
| 35 | 19 Apr (W1) | Postmillennialism | Clouse, 117-41 |  |
| 36 | 19 Apr (W2) | Amillennialism  Quiz 5 | Clouse, 176-212 |  |
|  | 20 Apr (Th) | Maundy Thursday | No class or assignments |  |
| 37 | 26 Apr (W1) | Resurrections & Judgments | Benware, 269-77 |  |
| 38 | 26 Apr (W2) | Eternal States: Hell | Notes, 163-72=8 |  |
| 39 | 27 Apr (Th1) | Eternal States: Heaven I  Quiz 6 | Revelation 21—22;  Benware, 279-89 |  |
| 40 | 27 Apr (Th2) | Eternal States: Heaven II | Notes, 173-88=14 |  |
|  | 2-6 May | Final Exam | Study and pray |  |

2002 syllabus

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Session | Date (Day) | Subject | Assignment |  |
| 18 | 27 Feb (W1) | Eschatology  Death | Benware, 293-300  intermediate state Bring $15 for Eschatology notes |  |
| 19 | 27 Feb (W2) | Intermediate State | Benware, 9-29 hermeneutics |  |
| 20 | 1 Mar (F) | Abrahamic Covenant | Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 30:1-10;  2 Sam. 7:12-16; Jer. 31:31-34; Benware, 30-49 = 4 |  |
| 21 | 6 Mar (W1) | Other Covenants  Quiz 1 | Benware, 50-74 |  |
| 22 | 6 Mar (W2) | Pre- or Amillennialism? | Presentation #5: Millennialism  Benware, 77-89, 147-53 overview |  |
| 23 | 8 Mar (F) | Signs of the Second Coming | Notes, 31-34, 199-210 = 16 |  |
|  | 11-16 Mar | Mid-Semester Break | No class or assignments |  |
| 24 | 20 Mar (W1) | Rapture: Pretribulational | Benware, 157-87 |  |
| 25 | 20 Mar (W2) | Rapture: Mid-, Partial, Prewrath, Posttrib.  Quiz 2 | Benware, 189-210 Posttrib |  |
| 26 | 22 Mar (F) | Judgment Seat of Christ;  Marriage Feast of the Lamb | Benware, 211-41 Midtrib, Partial, Prewrath |  |
| 27 | 27 Mar (W1) | Antichrist & Daniel 9  Midterm distributed | Benware, 243-54, Antichrist, Dan 9 Notes, 233 |  |
| 28 | 27 Mar (W2) | Tribulation: Book of Revelation | Benware, 255-68 |  |
|  | 29 Mar (F) | Good Friday | No class or assignments |  |
| 29 | 3 Apr (W1) | Tribulation: Misc. Texts, Babylon | Take Home Midterm Exam Due Ludwigson, 184-87, 27-39=17  Notes, 110a-m = 13 |  |
| 30 | 3 Apr (W1) | The Kingdom  Quiz 3 | Benware, 135-45 kingdom of God |  |
| 31 | 5 Apr (F) | Millennialism Ezek. 38—48; Lud., 50-56=18; Ps 72; Rev 20 | Notes, 121-121m history of millennial views |  |
| 32 | 10 Apr (W1) | Premillennialism | Benware, 91-101 premil |  |
| 33 | 10 Apr (W2) | Ezekiel’s Temple & Topography  “The Rule of Christ” Video (Walvoord/Pentecost/ Toussaint)  Quiz 4 | Ludwigson, 50-56  Ezek. 38–48  Ps. 72; Rev. 20 |  |
| 34 | 12 Apr (F) | Postmillennialism | Clouse, 117-41 = 25 postmil or Benware, 119-33 postmil |  |
|  | 15-20 Apr | Late Semester Break | No class or assignments |  |
| 35 | 24 Apr (W1) | Amillennialism  Quiz 5 | Clouse, 176-212 = 36 amil+resp or Benware, 103-117 amil |  |
| 36 | 24 Apr (W2) | Resurrections & Judgments | Benware, 269-77 |  |
| 37 | 26 Apr (F) | Eternal States: Hell | Notes, 163-72=8 |  |
|  | 1 May (W) | Labour Day | No class or assignments |  |
| 38 | 3 May (F) | Eternal States: Heaven  Quiz 6 | Revelation 21—22; = 2  Benware, 279-89  Notes, 173-88=14 |  |
| 39 | 6-11 May | Final Exam | Study and pray |  |

**VI. Schedule (2009 Reading Report)** Name Box Sem. Grade

Reading totals: Eccle ?? + Pneumatology 133+ Eschatology 362 = ???÷ 45 = ?? pp

(Tick the final column if completed in full on time. Note if completed late and/or partially.)

Sessions continued from part 1 of this course (ecclesiology/pneumatology) 2005 Schedule

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Session** | **Date (Day)** | **Subject** | **Assignment** |  |
| 19 | 24 Feb (T1) | Eschatology  Death | Benware, 11-17 intro, 345-52 interm state  Bring $20 for Eschatology notes | 15 |
| 20 | 24 Feb (T2) | Intermediate State | Presentation #5: Intermediate State  Benware, 21-33 hermeneutics  Blaising/Bock, Mystery, 127-55 = 28 | 13 |
| 21 | 26 Feb (Th) | Abrahamic Covenant | Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 30:1-10;  2 Sam. 7:12-16; Jer. 31:31-34; Benware, 35-54 = 20  Blaising/Bock, 1 Pet 2, 156-87 = 30 | 20 |
| 22 | 3 Mar (T1) | Other Covenants  Quiz 1 | Benware, 55-78  Study for quiz | 23 |
| 23 | 3 Mar (T2) | Covenant & Dispensational Views | Benware, 81-89 cov/disp  Blaising/Bock, Rom 11, 188-229 = 42 | 9 |
| 24 | 5 Mar (Th) | Pre- or Amillennialism? | Assignment #6: Millennialism  Benware, 197-203 overview | 7 |
| 25 | 10 Mar (T1) | Signs of the Second Coming | Notes, 31-34, 199-210  Blaising/Bock, Rom 10:4, 230-47 = 18 | 16 |
| 26 | 10 Mar (T2) | Rapture: Pretribulational | Benware, 207-37 | 31 |
| 27 | 12 Mar (Th) | Rapture: Mid-, Partial, Prewrath, Post-  Quiz 2 | Benware, 239-61 Posttrib  Study for quiz | 43 |
|  | **16-20 Mar** | **Mid-Semester Break** | **No class or assignments** |  |
| 28 | 24 Mar (T1) | Judgment Seat of Christ;  Marriage Feast of the Lamb | Presentation #6: Marriage & Feast  Benware, 263-91 Mid, Partial, Prewrath (No Jud Seat/Marriage read) | 29 |
| 29 | 24 Mar (T2) | Antichrist & Daniel 9  Midterm distributed | Benware, 293-320 = 28 Antichrist, Dan 9  Notes, 233 | 28 |
| 30 | 26 Mar (Th) | Tribulation: Book of Revelation | Benware, 365-76  Blaising/Bock, Fulfill Law, 248-63 =16 | 12 |
| 31 | 31 Mar (T1) | Tribulation: Misc. Texts, Babylon | Take Home Midterm Exam Due Ludwigson, 184-87, 27-39 = 17  Notes, 110a-110o = 13 | 30 |
| 32 | 31 Mar (T2) | The Kingdom & Millennialism  Quiz 3 | Benware, 185-95; Psalm 72; Revelation 20; Study for quiz | 11 |
| 33 | 2 Apr (Th) | Premillennialism: Dispensational | Benware, 91-101 = 11  Notes, 111-121b = 13 | 24 |
| 34 | 7 Apr (T1) | Israel and the Church | Benware, 103-20 Israel v. Church | 18 |
| 35 | 7 Apr (T2) | Preterism | Presentation #7: Preterism  Benware, 155-84 = 30 | 30 |
|  | **9 April** | **Maundy Thursday** | **No class or assignments** |  |
| 36 | 14 Apr (T1) | Ezekiel’s Temple & Topography | Ludwigson, 50-56 Ezekiel’s Temple  Ezek. 38-48; Notes, 133-41 | 26 |
| 37 | 14 Apr (T2) | “The Rule of Christ” Video (Walvoord/Pentecost/Toussaint)  Quiz 4 | Benware, 121-37 (Amillennialism)  Study for quiz  Blaising/Bock, Center, 293-330 = 37 | 17 |
| 38 | 16 Apr (Th) | Postmillennialism  formerly Clouse, 117-41 = 25 | Gentry, in *3 Views*, ed. Bock, 13-57 = 45  Benware, 139-54 = 16 | 61 |
| 39 | 21 Apr (T1) | Amillennialism  Quiz 5 formerly Clouse, 176-212 = 36 | Strimple, in *3 Views*, ed. Bock, 83-129  Revelation 20; Study for quiz = 47+1 | 48 |
| 40 | 21 Apr (T2) | Resurrections & Judgments | Benware, 321-29 = 9  Blaising/Bock, Responses, 331-76 = 46 | 9 |
| 41 | 23 Apr (Th) | Eternal States: Hell | Rev. 20:1-6 Research Paper Due  Benware, 353-61hell/annih = 9; Notes, 163-72 = 8 | 17 |
| 42 | 28 Apr (T1) | Eternal States: Heaven Part 1 | Revelation 21—22; = 2  Benware, 331-42 = 12  Blaising/Bock, New Jer, 264-92 = 28 | 14 |
| 43 | 28 Apr (T2) | Eternal States: Heaven Part 2  Quiz 6 | Notes, 173-88 = 14  Study for quiz | 14 |
| 44 | 30 Apr (Th) | Course review or make-up session | Blaising/Bock, Conclusion, 377-94 = 27 |  |
| 45 | 5-8 May | Final Exam | Study the study guide and pray |  |

+ 6 sessions in 2007: Role of Women, Cov Premil, Israel v. Church, Ezekiel Temple, Preterism, Heaven (2)’ + #44 in 2009

Central Issue: Who has the right to rule? (Jerry Benjamin)

A Survey of Prophecy Yet Unfulfilled (see BKC chart)

Questions:

At Christ’s second coming with his saints in the clouds (Rev. 19:11-21), his angels will gather believers from around the world (Matt. 24:30-31). If this separation of the believing from the unbelieving has already occurred, then why is the judgment of the sheep and goats needed (Matt. 25:31-46)?

**I.**

A.

1.

a.

(1)

1. This is taught by one of the most vocal critics of the pre-trib rapture in Dave MacPherson, *The Great Rapture Hoax* (Fletcher, NC: New Puritan Library, 1983), 15. For a refutation of MacPherson's charges see Thomas D. Ice, "Why the Doctrine of the Pretribulational Rapture Did Not Begin with Margaret Macdonald," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 147 (1990): 155-68. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Thomas Ice, “Is the Pre-Trib Rapture a Satanic Deception?” (<http://www.according2prophecy.org/raptures.html>). Also, “it is doubtful that Margaret Macdonald's "prophecy" contains any elements related to the pre-trib rapture… [and] no one has ever demonstrated *from actual facts of history* that Darby was influenced by Macdonald's "prophecy" even if it had (which it did not) contained pre-trib elements” (ibid., emphasis his). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See Marvin J. Rosenthal, "Is the Church in Matthew Chapter 24?" *Zion's Fire* (Nov-Dec 1994), p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See also Tracy L. Howard, “The Literary Unity of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11,” *Grace Theological Journal* 9 (Fall 1988): 163-190. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. George L. Rose, *Tribulation Till Translation* (Glendale, CA: Rose Publishing Company, 1943), 62; cited by J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955), 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Rose, 46-47; cited in Pentecost, 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Philip Mauro, *Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation*, 91-99; Walvoord has an extended and rather pointed critique of Mauro's book in "Is the Seventieth Week of Daniel Future?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 101 (January, 1944): 30-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Harold W. Hoehner's treatment of this issue (*Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, 131-33) is most helpful. The following comments summarize some of his key points. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Although the phrase "most holy" has been sometimes interpreted to mean Christ's anointing (e.g., Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 201), these are technical words always translated in the Old Testament as "holy of holies." The clear referent is the consecration of the millennial temple (cf. Ezek. 40-46). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For a dispensational interpretation of each of these six phrases see the exegetical outline of Daniel 9:24 on the preceding pages. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Robert H. Gundry, *The Church and the Tribulation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 190. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. This covenantal perspective finds recent support by Meredith G. Kline, "The Covenant of the Seventieth Week," *The Law and the Prophets. Old Testament Studies Prepared in Honor of Oswald Thompson Allis*, ed. by John H. Skilton (Nutley, NJ, 1974), 452-69, esp. 461-69; cited by Hoehner, 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The Pentateuch and historical books prior to the time of Saul contain less eschatological teaching than the era after it, for at this time Israel functioned as a theocracy. Consequently, with God abiding amidst them, the focus was on the present. However, with the rise of the monarchy and the difficulties it presented, thought shifted to a future era which would be characterized by a kingdom without the inequities Israel was currently experiencing. During the preexilic age "a distinctive phenomenon in Israelite thought was the focus of attention on the future and on the radical improvement in existence hoped for in respect to both the nation and the individual" (Harald Riesenfeld, "The Sabbath and the Lord's Day in Judaism, the Preaching of Jesus and Early Christianity," in *The Gospel Tradition: Essays by Harald Riesenfeld*, 114). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Wayne A. Meeks argues that the Messianic ideals of the intertestamental age find their biblical root not in David as much as in Moses, who was viewed as priest, prophet, and king (see his published dissertation, *The Prophet-King: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology*). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Riesenfeld, "The Sabbath and the Lord's Day in Judaism, the Preaching of Jesus and Early Christianity," 114. The specific sources in this regard are addressed in the next paragraph. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. *Mekhilta According to Rabbi Ishmael* 40 (Vayassa 5.XL:II.7.H. in Jacob Neusner, trans., 255): "R. Eleazar Hisma says, 'In this world you will not find [manna on the Sabbath], but you will find it in the world to come"; *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer* 18 (Gerald Friedlander, trans., 127); *Pirke Avot* 9 (Neusner, trans., 202); *EJ*, "Eschatology," by Haïm Z'ew Hirschberg, 6:874. For a later reference see 4 Ezra 8:52 (late first century AD), "It is for you that Paradise is opened, the tree of life is planted, the age to come is prepared, plenty is provided, a city is built, rest is appointed, goodness is established and wisdom perfected beforehand" (Charlesworth, 2:544). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Most scholars acknowledge that Jubilees is best dated in the second century before Christ (e.g., J. Daniélou, "La typologie millénariste de la semaine dans le Christianisme primitif," *VigChr* 2 [1948]: 2; O. S. Wintermute, trans., *Jubilees*, in Charlesworth, 2:35, 43-44 [152-100 BC or possibly 161-140 BC]). However, Albright represents a minority opinion that Jubilees is pre-Hellenistic, stemming from the early third century or even late fourth century BC, as almost certainly the oldest extra-biblical Jewish work (W. F. Albright, *From Stone Age to Christianity*, 266-67). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Jubilees 4.30-31 (Charlesworth, 2:63-64). The Sabbath is also perceived as indicative of the divine ordering of history in a more general sense in Jubilees 1:26, 29; 50:1-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 2:451. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Israel "will dwell in confidence in the land. And then it will not have any Satan or any evil (one). And the land will be purified from that time and forever" (Jub. 50.5). This lack of Satanic influence in the kingdom provides very early support for the suppression of his power reiterated in Revelation 20:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. "Given the relationship with the Pseudepigrapha, Josephus, rabbinic traditions, and perhaps Paul, the most natural span for the original composition would be between 100 BC and AD 200, more probably toward the end of the first century" (M. D. Johnson, trans., *Life of Adam and Eve*, in Charlesworth, 2:252). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. *Life of Adam and Eve* [*Vita*] 51.2 (ibid., 2:294). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. 2 Enoch 65:9 (late first century AD; Charlesworth, 2:192). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. While the following Talmudic references date later than the time of the New Testament, they nevertheless represent traditions which often reach even prior to the New Testament age; therefore, they can still in some sense be representative of first century thought. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. *Genesis Rabbah* Bereshith17.5 (H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, eds., *Midrash Rabbah*, 1:136, translates this source, "There are three incomplete phenomena: the incomplete experience of death is sleep; an incomplete form of prophecy is the dream; the incomplete form of the next world is the Sabbath"). This is repeated verbatim in *Genesis Rabbah* Lecha 44.17 (ibid., 1:372). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Tamid 7.4 (*Soncino*, Kodasheim, 3:37-38); cf. *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer* 18 (Gerald Friedlander, trans., 126). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *B. Sanhedrin* 97a (*Soncino*, Nezikin, 3:657). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. *'Aboth D'Rabbi Nathan* 1.7 (*The Minor Tractates*, 17b [1]). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. "The Holy One, blessed be He, created seven æons, || and of them all He chose the seventh æon only; the six æons are for the going in and coming out (of God's creatures) for war and for peace. The seventh æon is entirely Sabbath and rest in the life everlasting" (*Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer* 19 [Gerald Friedlander, trans., 137]); the Sabbath is "a reflex of the world to come" and "Sabbath is one-sixtieth part of the world to come," according to *b. Berakoth* 57b (*Soncino*, Zeraim, 356, 357); *b. Rosh Hashanah* 31a (*Soncino*, Mo'ed, 4:146); *b. Sanhedrin* 97a (*Soncino*, Nezikin, 3:657). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. *Midrash on Psalm 90:17* (William G. Braude, trans., *The Midrash on Psalms*, 2:97) affirms, among other interpretations, R. Eliezer's interpretation of Psalm 90:4 that the "day" of Messiah is one thousand years; cf. *Midrash on Psalm 25:8* (ibid., 1:352) interprets "in the day you shall eat of it you shall die" (Gen. 2:17) as indicating that Adam would not live more than one thousand years since to God "a thousand years" equals one day (Ps. 90:4). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. 4 Ezra 7:26-31 affirms a four-hundred year Messianic period, but *b. Sanhedrin* 97a divides the 6,000 years of world history into three 2,000 year segments: the first time period without the Torah, the second with the Torah, and the final Messianic time (*Soncino*, Nezikin, 3:657). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. *Midrash on Psalm 92:2* (Braude, 2:110-11); 2 Enoch 65:7-11 (Charlesworth, 1:192); cf. Testament of Abraham 19:7, "And Death said, 'Hear, righteous Abraham, for seven ages I ravage the world and I lead everyone down to Hades . . ." (ibid., 1:894) may by implication indicate an eternal eighth age. Also, the second-century Gnostic treatise, the *Gospel of Truth* (32:18-34), speaks of a perfect day above which has no night and as such depicts an eternal Sabbath (Kendrick Grobel, trans., 134-38). [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. For a survey of the Christian literature, see Daniélou, "La typologie millénariste de la semaine dans le Christianisme primitif," 1-16; Rordorf, 46-51, 282ff.; cf. also the footnotes immediately following. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. For views on the date of *Epistle of Barnabas* see pages 185-85, footnote 143 in this dissertation. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. "For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night"; this verse finds repetition in 2 Peter 3:8 with respect to the day of the Lord. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. *Epistle of Barnabas* 15.4-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Adapted from James A. Kleist, trans., 179, n. 161. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Augustine *Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons* 259.2 (Mary Sarah Muldowney, trans., FC, 38:368); id., *City of God* 20.7 (Marcus Dods, trans., NPF, 2:426-27). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Tertullian *The Five Books Against Marcion* 3.25 (Peter Holmes, trans., ANF, 3:342-43). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Hippolytus *Fragments on Daniel* 2.4 (in *The Extant Works and Fragments of Hippolytus*, S. D. F. Salmond, trans., ANF, 5:179). While Hippolytus erroneously attributes the final quote (Psalm 90:4) to John rather than Peter (2 Peter 3:8), a chiliastic view is nevertheless maintained. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Lactantius *The Divine Institutes* 7.14, declares, "Since God, having finished His works, rested the seventh day and blessed it, at the end of the six thousandth year all wickedness must be abolished from the earth, and righteousness reign for a thousand years; and there must be tranquillity and rest from the labours which the world has long endured" (William Fletcher, trans., ANF, 7:211); cf. Justin Martyr *Dialogue with Trypho* 80-81 (Thomas B. Falls, trans., FC, 6:276-77). Congdon, 439-45, briefly summarizes the chiliastic teaching from *The Epistle of Barnabas* to John Bunyan. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. A minority view among dispensationalists teaches that the “kingdom” in the NT “always refers to the promised, yet future fulfillment of Israel’s Old Testament covenants, promises, and prophecies” (Stanley Toussaint, “The Church and Israel,” *Conservative Theological Journal* 2 [December 1998]: 354). [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. For support of premillennialism in the first eight centuries, see Larry V. Crutchfield, “Rudiments of Dispensationalism in the Anti-Nicene Period,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 (July-September 1987): 272-76; cf. 19th century, see Reese, *Advent…*, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. J. Marcellus Kik, *The Eschatology of Victory*, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. For example, see George Ricker Berry, "The Authorship of Ezekiel, 40—48" *JBL* 34 (1915): 17-40. Arguing to the contrary is Moshe Greenberg, "The Design and Themes of Ezekiel's Program of Restoration," *Int* 38 (1984): 181-208. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. G. A. Cooke, "Some Considerations on the Text and Teaching of Ezekiel 40—48," *ZAW* 42 (1924): 105-15; Peter C. Craigie notes that the chapters express "in a profoundly symbolic manner the nature of the restored Israel that God would establish in the future," but then he never explains whether such a restoration has ever occurred (*Ezekiel*, 275). [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Adam Clarke, "Ezekiel," in *Clarke's Commentary*, 4:535. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Solomon's temple measurements in 1 Kings 6:2 are noted at 60, 20, and 30 cubits; the above measurements in feet were obtained by multiplying these three lengths by the standard 18 inches per cubit. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. This is the minimum measurement based upon Ezekiel 41:13 using Ezekiel's long (21 inch) cubit explained in 40:5 (cf. 43:13) where a rod is equal to 6 long cubits, each of which is an 18 inch cubit plus a 3 inch handbreadth; therefore, a rod must be 10.5 feet long since 6 cubits at 21 inches equals 126 inches, or 10.5 feet. Nowhere does the account provide the height of the temple although the entire temple area is enclosed by a wall one rod (hn<q;, "stalk, reed" BDB 889d) in height (40:5), or 10.5 feet. (If the measurement is with the normal, or shorter [18 inch] cubit, the temple dimensions must be adjusted slightly to 150 feet by 75 feet.) This issue becomes even more confusing as the temple area measurements in 42:16-19 are plagued with textual difficulties. In each verse the MT measures in "rods" (µynIq;; cf. NASB, NIV margin, KJV, NKJV, Ampl), but the LXX follows the Qere which reads the transposed "cubits" (twam; cf. NIV, RSV, GNB). Therefore, a single temple court side in the MT is "500 rods" (µynIq; t/maeAvmej}) or 5250 feet, but in the LXX it is "500 cubits" (pentakosivou") or 875 feet (using the long cubit). Furthermore, the situation is complicated by the fact that Ezekiel uses the cubit (40:5b, 9, 11—42:20; etc.), the rod (40:3, 5a-7; 42:16-19), and an ellipsis (45:1-6; 48:8-21, 30-35) for measurement. Most commentators agree that the cubit is the proper unit since use of the rod would make four sides of the temple area nearly one mile in length, an unlikely size. For further study on the measurements of the temple in cubits see Theo G. Soares, "Ezekiel's Temple," *BW* 14 (1899): 93-103. Adhering to the rod view is Cameron M. MacKay, "The City and the Sanctuary: Ezekiel 48," *PTR* 20 (1922): 399-417 (cf. id., "Prolegomena to Ezekiel 40—48," *ET* 55 (1943/44): 292-95), who advocates an enormous temple situated in the Valley of Shechem (cf. id., "Ezekiel's Sanctuary and Wellhausen's Theory," *PTR* 20 [1922]: 661-65, which argues against the documentary hypothesis). MacKay's first article (pp. 399-417) is critiqued by W. F. Lofthouse, "The City and the Sanctuary," *ET* 34 (1922/23): 198-202 and rebutted by MacKay in "The City and the Sanctuary," *ET* 34 (1922/23): 475-76. In either case, whether rods or cubits is used, the temple is one which has never been constructed in Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*, 313. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2*, Herm, 345. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Haggai's prophecy notes that the postexilic temple failed to compare with Solomon's *in glory* and makes no mention of size differences. However, since Ezekiel's temple necessitates topographical changes to fit into Jerusalem (explained later in this section) it exceeds both of these other temples in both size and glory. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. See the paragraph immediately above for size comparisons. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. It is difficult to determine the exact location of the temple, whether outside of the city (45:1-6) just north of Jerusalem (40:2) and outside Judah (48:8, 15), or within the city itself (40:1-2; cf. Isa. 2:2-3). In any case, other descriptions of topographical changes indicate that this is a vastly altered city from that of Zerubbabel's time. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. The temple lies within a sacred area five hundred cubits square (45:2). [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. M.-Jos. Lagrange, "Topographie de Jérusalem," *RevBib* 1 (1892): 4; Yohanan Aharoni and Michael Avi-Yonah, *The MacMillan Bible Atlas*, 127. This comparison assumes the smaller temple size. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Keith W. Carley, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, 267; John W. Wevers, *Ezekiel*, NCBC, 207; E. W. Hengstenberg, *The Prophecies of the Prophet Ezekiel Elucidated*, 353; Crawford Howell Toy, *The Book of Ezekiel*, SBOT, 177, n. 3 ("the *vision* is here a literary device . . . the work of reflection," italics his); G. C. M. Douglas, "Ezekiel's Temple," *ET* 9 [1897/98]: 517; F. W. Farrar, "The Last Nine Chapters of Ezekiel," *Exp* 3d series 9 (1899): 7-9; Toni Craven, *Ezekiel, Daniel*, CoBC, 83. A modification of this view is that the temple in view is a hybrid structure resembling both Solomon's temple and the "walled and fortified sanctuaries in Babylonia" (G. A. Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel*, ICC, 425); Walther Eichrodt maintains that "the temple makes its appearance as a heavenly reality created by Yahweh himself and transplanted to earth," with the implication that such a transfer to earth never occurred (*Ezekiel*, OTL, 542). [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Moshe Greenberg, "The Design and Themes of Ezekiel's Program of Restoration," *Interpretation* 38 (1984): 181-208; John B. Taylor, *Ezekiel*, TOTC, 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Nichol *et al.*, eds., *SDABC*, 4:715. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. The Adventist response to this question is: "God left no method untried to induce Israel to accept the high destiny originally planned for them. Up to this point their history had been one of repeated failures. God was now offering them another opportunity to begin again" (Nichol *et al.*, eds., *SDABC*, 4:717). This answer fails to address how the post-exilic community was to initiate the topographical alterations necessary for the temple construction. Ezekiel's temple is to be built upon a high mountain (40:3) with a river flowing from it which extends to the Dead Sea (47:1, 7; cf. Joel 3:18) and supernaturally makes it fresh (47:8). The miraculous trees which bear fruit monthly (47:12) and several other supernatural descriptions in the prophecy indicate that its fulfillment was not possible during the post-exilic age. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. *ISBE*, s.v. "Temple," by T. Whitelaw, 5:2935, notes of Ezekiel's temple "that in important respects it forecasts the plans of the second (Zerubbabel's) and of Herod's temples." [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Carl Friedrich Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Ezekiel*, K&D, 2:180, applies the vision to "the new kingdom of God . . . in which the announcement of salvation for Israel is brought to its full completion," then explains this "Israel" to be the church (2:425); Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 437; William Greenhill, *An Exposition of the Prophet Ezekiel*, 774-75. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Greenhill, 774. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. The passage includes a description of a river (47:1-12) with fishermen (47:10) and salty swamps (47:11) which "lend a touch of realism to the passage. These details become meaningless if the passage is only symbolic of spiritual blessing" (Charles H. Dyer, "Ezekiel," *BKC*, 1:1313). [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. James Martin Gray, *Christian Worker's Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*, 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Dyer, 1:1304. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Keil holds a modification of this view in which the vision is a symbolic representation of the entrance of spiritual Israel (the church) into the heavenly Canaan, i.e., it "sets forth the kingdom of God established by Christ in its perfect form" (Carl Friedrich Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Ezekiel*, K&D, 2:417). [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, 238 (cf. 50, 325-26). [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Alexander, 6:945. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Rabbi Fisch acknowledges that the coming invasion of Gog (Ezek. 38—39) "is apocalyptic and relates to the indefinite future, the advent of the Messiah, indicated by the phrase *the end of days,"* followed in chapters 40—48 by "a design of the Temple, the sacrificial worship, the people and the land in the new era which follows the overthrow of Gog" (S. Fisch, *Ezekiel*, SBB, 253, 265, italics his). [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Alexander, 6:942-46; Gleason L. Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, 280-81; Dyer, 1:1302-1304; Paul P. Enns, *Ezekiel*, BSC, 180; Charles Lee Feinberg, *The Prophecy of Ezekiel*, 233-39, 267-68; Walter DeMotte Forsythe, "The Restoration of Ezekiel's Temple," Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1957, 40-54; Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*, 312; Arno C. Gaebelein, *The Prophet Ezekiel*, 271, 273; Gray, 265-67; Ironside, *Expository Notes on Ezekiel the Prophet*, 289, 314-15; Raymond Norman Ohman, "The Biblical Doctrine of the Millennium," Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1949, 151-163; Soares, "Ezekiel's Temple," 93; Henry Sulley, *The Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy*, 13; Merrill F. Unger, "The Temple Vision of Ezekiel," *BS* 106 (January-March 1949): 60, 169-77. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, 248. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Ezekiel's premillennial argument is traced in further detail by Alexander, 6:943-44, 952. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Homer Heater, Jr., *Zechariah*, BSC, 114; F. Duane Lindsey, "Zechariah," *BKC*, 1:1570. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Ohman, "The Biblical Doctrine of the Millennium," 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. It also includes a large (180 feet by 105 feet) and mysterious extra building (41:12, 15) which appears along with no other known temple in Jerusalem. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Eichrodt suggests that the city is the Zion of Ezekiel's time and that "the assertion of its great height is a strange piece of *poetic license.* To be sure, we have here the influence of the idea, widespread in the ancient East, including Israel, that the mountain of God is the highest of all mountains (cf. Isa. 2.2; Ps. 48.2; Zech. 14.10) and that the river of paradise had its source in it (Zech. 14.8; Ps. 46.4; Ezek. 47.1ff.)" (*Ezekiel*, 541; emphasis mine). This "poetic license" does not fit the general context which is not given to exaggeration but rather to minute detail. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. A renewed Jerusalem was commonly taught in extra-biblical literature (e.g., 2 Baruch 4.1-6; for other references see Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum neuen Testament*, 3:531-32, 573). [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Ezekiel 48:15b-16 notes that each of the city's four sides stretch 4,500 cubits. With the standard cubit equal to 18 inches (1.5 feet), this yields a measurement of 1.5 X 4500=6,750 linear feet. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Terry, 345, describes this depiction as one of the "insuperable difficulties in the way of any literal exposition of the vision," but the miraculous will be commonplace in the Millennium (Paul Lee Tan, *The Interpretation of Prophecy*, 322). [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. The divisions for each tribe stretch from east to west in regular portions which seem to ignore topographical differences, or, more likely, seem to indicate a regular contour. "We may well question whether Ezekiel's arrangement ever could be carried out in actual life until that day when Jehovah was to return in glory, and every mountain and hill was to be brought low; see Isa. 40:3-5; Zech. 14:10" (G. C. M. Douglas, "Ezekiel's Vision of the Temple," *ET* 14 [1902/03]: 425). [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. For a fuller discussion of topographical changes in the Millennium, see Carl Eugene Bollinger, "The Land of Palestine in the Millennium," Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1949. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. E. Isaac, trans., *1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch*, in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:71. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Eth. En. 89:73 (135 BC); 91:13 (prior to 167 BC); Tob. 14:5 (2nd/1st cent. BC); Jub. 1:17, 27 (Maccabean). That the temple will function as a universal sanctuary of the nations is seen in Eth. En. 90:33; Tob. 13:13; Jub. 4:26. A few sources advocate a heavenly temple and heavenly Jerusalem (Wis. 9:8; Slav. En. 55:2), but the exegesis for such is questionable as it is based largely upon texts which supposedly indicate that the earthly temple and Jerusalem serve as a copy of the heavenly (e.g., Exod. 25:9, 40; 26:30; 27:8; Ps. 122:3). For further study see *TDNT*, s.v. to; iJerovn, by Gottlob Schrenk, 3:239-40; s.v. naov", by Otto Michel, 4:882. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. The fragmentary *1 Enoch* dates from various sources in the second century BC to the first century AD (ibid., 2:5-7), with chapter 90 dating probably from about 165-161 BC (ibid., 2:7). [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. The following factors are explained by Douglas, "Ezekiel's Temple," 365-67, 420-22, 468-70, 515-18; ibid., "Ezekiel's Vision of the Temple," 365-68, 424-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. The work of the high priest has already been completed in the once-and-for-all death of Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:11-12), who is the high priest now (Heb. 4:14; 7:26—8:6) and presumably will continue to act as such in the Millennium. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Serving in the temple are not just anyone in the Aaronic line, but only priests who were Levites and sons of Zadok (40:46; 43:19; 44:15; cf. Mal. 3:3) because of their faithfulness during Israel's apostasy (48:11). [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Decisions will not need to be settled through this ancient method as the omnipotent Lord will be reigning personally and available for counsel. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. The glory of God will not be confined to a particular place within the temple. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. These are unneeded as God's glory has returned to the house (43:6f.). In heaven the situation is even more significant as there will be no need for even the temple itself (Rev. 21:22-23). [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. These items will be replaced with a river of living water flowing from Jerusalem (47:1-13; cf. Zech. 14:8). By "living water" perhaps that which has no natural source is meant. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. "The atonement is already complete, the most holy place stands open, and perhaps all priests appear habitually clothed as the high priest used to be on that great day" (Douglas, "Ezekiel's Temple," 421). [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. That the sacrifices play an important part in Ezekiel's description is evident in that he gives a more detailed account of the altar than of anything else in the temple, and in its enormous size in comparison to the altar associated with Solomon's temple (43:13-17). [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Oswald T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, 247; cf. Nichol *et al.*, eds., *SDABC*, 4:715, "It is impossible to conceive that animal sacrifices could ever again be restored by divine command and find acceptance with God." [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Tan, 293-98, elaborates on the legitimacy of a reinstitution of the sacrificial system (cf. Alexander, 6:946-52). [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. This formula is used of both the Mosaic Covenant (Lev. 26:12; Exod. 19:5-6; Deut. 26:18-19) and the New Covenant (Jer. 30:22; 31:33; 32:38). [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Similarly, Malachi explains that after the coming in judgment of the messenger of the covenant (Christ), grain offerings will be presented to God: "The LORD will have men who will bring [grain] offerings in righteousness, and the [grain] offerings of Jerusalem and Judah will be acceptable to the LORD, as in former years" (Mal. 3:3b-4). While some consider these to be *animal* sacrifices (e.g., Beth Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi*, SBL 98, 155), they are actually grain offerings (BDB, s.v. "hj;n“mi," 585b 4). Instead of viewing Malachi's description as depicting Christ's judgment associated with His second coming, some commentators suggest that it portrays the Mosaic period as the ideal era (Joyce G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 244) or that it is "symbolic of a cleansed and sanctified church" (Robert L. Alden, "Malachi," EBC, 7:719). However, neither of these views adequately considers the judging nature of the arrival of the messenger (Mal. 3:2-3a). [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, 247. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Hughes responds sarcastically to this argument: "To restore all these today, under the New Covenant, would be apostasy. But, in a millennium, under the same New Covenant, it is supposed to be according to prophecy!" (Archibald Hughes, *A New Heaven and a New Earth*, 157). [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Jerry Hullinger, "The Problem of Sacrifices in Ezekiel's Temple," doctoral seminar paper for the course 375 Seminar in the Exilic and Postexilic Prophets, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1989, 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Alexander, 6:949; Alva McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, 250; Feinberg, *The Prophecy of Ezekiel*, 234; John Mitchell, "The Question of Millennial Sacrifices," *BS* 110 (1953): 344. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Hobart E. Freeman, "The Problem of Efficacy of Old Testament Sacrifices," *BETS* 5 (Summer 1962): 73-79; John C. Whitcomb, "Christ's Atonement and Animal Sacrifices in Israel," *GTJ* 6 (1985): 208-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Whitcomb, "Christ's Atonement and Animal Sacrifices in Israel," 201-17; Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Gaebelein, *The Prophet Ezekiel*, 312; Mitchell, "The Question of Millennial Sacrifices," 267; Merrill F. Unger, "The Temple Vision of Ezekiel," *BS* 106 (January-March 1949): 60; Clive A. Thomson, "The Necessity of Blood Sacrifices in Ezekiel's Temple," *BS* 123 (July-September 1966): 237-48. Archer seeks to explain the view as such: "It is true that the same Hebrew terms are used in Ezekiel 43 as were employed in the law of Moses [e.g., "sin offering"], but they will have a new meaning. They were used by the Old Testament prophet because they furnished the closest analogy to the millennial offerings that the Hebrew believer had any acquaintance with. But like so many other terms employed in connection with the end times, so these designations of sacrifice were sublimated and altered to fit the new conditions of the new age yet to come" (Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, 280-81). [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Debate remains whether the Lord's Supper will be celebrated in the Millennium. It is claimed that the celebration will continue since Jesus said He would not "drink of the fruit of the vine again until the kingdom of God comes" (Luke 22:18; cf. Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Alexander, 6:951). However, it is also argued that there will be no more need for the Lord's Supper in the Millennium since it "proclaims the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26; Dyer, 1:1305; cf. Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, 280). It appears to the present writer that the latter view is correct since Christ's statement in the gospels relates to His celebration of the Passover (Luke 22:15-16), not the Lord's Supper. In either case, nothing prohibits the coexistence of the memorial sacrifices and memorial Supper in the future age. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Alexander, 6:951, "Consequently, the sacrifices in the millennial sacrificial system of Ezekiel appear to be only memorials of Christ's finished work and pictorial reminders that mankind by nature is sinful and in need of redemption from sin." [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Ibid., 6:986. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. An attempt at this problem by one amillennial interpreter is to have the Sabbath signify Christian worship on the Lord's day, the open gate signify the gate of heaven open to believers for blessing, the prince's worship as representative of civil officials' need for worship without meddling in church affairs (or symbolic of Christ's incarnation and intercession), and the six working days as the term of man's life with its labor and sorrow (Greenhill, 810-11). Such is the imaginative exegesis of those who abandon the normal, literal hermeneutic. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. One premillenarian sees a typical (n.b., not allegorical) significance to this account: "The six working days (typical of 6,000 years) are forever gone, the seventh day, the seventh thousand, the Day of the Lord, has come. And when the Millennium ends, the complete, eternal rest comes for all the people of God. The new moon is typical of Israel's re-establishment as a nation. The nation, like the moon, had waned and disappeared, but now she shines again like the new moon" (Gaebelein, 326-27). [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Alexander suggests that the Feast of Firstfruits is included by implication but does not present his evidence (6:947). [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. George N. H. Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 2:524-34, claims that Isaiah's "new heavens and new earth" refers to the eternal state because of the usage by Peter and John. However, he marshalls patristic and scriptural "evidence" but never discusses the passage at hand in Isaiah (this context is addressed in the next paragraph above). [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Scholars who see the eternal state in view here include Rordorf, 46, n. 3; John L. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah*, AB, 200-201, 208, n. 22; Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, NICOT, 3:536; Herbert Carl Leupold, *Exposition of Isaiah*, 2:378; Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40—66*, 426-29. Nichol *et al.*, eds., *SDABC*, 4:332, 338, uses this text in an attempt to establish the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, even in eternity. Sakae Kubo, *God Meets Man*, 65, agrees by stating that glorified believers in heaven will still meet every seventh day for worship. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. John A. Martin, "Isaiah," *BKC*, 1:1120-1121; Feinberg, "The Sabbath and the Lord's Day," *BS* 95 (April-June 1938): 188-89; Unger, "The Significance of the Sabbath," *BS* 123 (January-March 1966): 59; Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:111-12; id., *Grace*, 263; id., *Major Bible Themes*, rev. ed., 291. Bacchiocchi cites the verse as referring to "the Messianic age of the ingathering of all the nations" (*From Sabbath to Sunday*, 23). However, the official Adventist perspective on the Millennium sees it as a literal one thousand year period in which the righteous are in *heaven* judging angels and investigating the wicked deeds of the unrighteous in preparation for the Great White Throne Judgment. Simultaneously, Satan is bound *on earth* (not in the Abyss as in Rev. 20:3) which is unpopulated (*Questions on Doctrine*, 489-508). Ironically, though the major dispensational works neglect to mention the role of the Sabbath in the Millennium, many dispensationalists believe in a millennial Sabbath while Seventh-day Adventists do not. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Peters, 2:499-505, advocates that by "new" Isaiah refers to an eternal and renewed earthly kingdom, also spoken of in Revelation 21 (2:499). [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40—66*, NCBC, 276, suggests that the prophecy "marks the beginning of a new radical theology, born of the despair of post-exilic life, which the apocalyptic writers later adopted and developed in even more critical times." This teaching dates chapters 40—66 many generations after Isaiah's time during the reign of Cyrus (*ca.* 538 BC; ibid., 20-22), and thus focuses on the time the prophecy rather than on its content. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Isaiah 66:22 makes a comparison between the endurance of new heavens and earth and the endurance of Israel, which may indicate that a specific time period is not in view here at all. However, if a time period is indeed envisioned, it certainly cannot be the eternal state for Israel will see bodies just slain by the LORD (66:17) and this will occur at the time of the celebration of the Sabbath and New Moon. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Sabbath observance will be true of both Jews (Isa. 56:2, 4-5, 8) and Gentiles (Isa. 56:3, 6-7; 66: 23; cf. Zech. 8:20-23). As uncomfortable as this may seem to the modern Sunday observer, this is what the authoritative text indicates. The Sabbath, although not in effect in the present dispensation, will again find divine approval in the next. This teaching also supports a premillennial view of Scripture, for Isaiah affirms that Israel has a future. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Nevertheless, Young suggests that worship in the new heavens and new earth (which he sees as heaven) "will be in accordance with and in observance of the prescribed seasons of the Old Testament dispensation” (Young, *Isaiah*, 3:536). Similarly, the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* notes that "the Sabbath is an eternal institution” (Nichol *et al.*, eds., *SDABC*, 4:338). Kubo agrees by stating that glorified believers in heaven will still meet every seventh day for worship (Sakae Kubo, *God Meets Man*, 65). [↑](#footnote-ref-120)