

ESCHATOLOGY: The doctrine of end times

(PP#1)

INTRODUCTION

1. Eschatology deals with as yet unfulfilled prophecies and accounts of future events.
2. Scripture is full of prophecy.
 - Sixty-two out of 66 books contain predictive information (only Ruth, Song of Solomon, Philemon and Third John do not).
 - All nine authors of the New Testament mention Christ's second coming.
 - Twenty seven percent (8,352) of all verses (31,124) refer to prophetic issues (*Christ's Prophetic Plans*, p. 14).
3. Why Christians should study Bible prophecy (PP#2 & 3)

I. PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

- A. Eschatology gives insight into the character of God.
 1. His attributes seen:
 - a. Sovereignty – Daniel 4:17; Revelation 1:8. At the end of Revelation we see God reigning over all things presently in existence.
 - b. Justice – 2 Peter 2:1-3; Romans 3:24-26; Revelation 19:1-2
 - c. Wisdom – Ephesians 3:10, 11; Romans 11:31-33
 - d. Grace – Ephesians 2:7
 2. His Son appreciated:
 - a. Center of God's program – Ephesians 1:10
 - b. Revelation 1:1-3 is a revelation of Christ.
- B. Practical – gives impetus to the development of character in the Christian.
 - There is no teaching of the Word of God about the future that is not related in practical fashion to our present life:

Paul – Titus 2:11-14

Peter – 2 Peter 3 (especially verse 14)

John – 1 John 2:28; 3:1-8

II. MAJOR SCHOOLS OF INTERPRETATION – our understanding of eschatology will largely depend upon our view of the millennium.

A. Various views of the millennium defined **(PP#4)**

1. Postmillennialism **(PP#5)**

- a. "Through the preaching of the gospel in all the world, the kingdom of Christ is steadily to enlarge its boundaries, until Jews and Gentiles alike become possessed of its blessings, and a millennial period is introduced in which Christianity generally prevails throughout the earth" (A.H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 1008). This view holds that Christ will return after (post) the millennium.
- b. "Postmillennialism conceives of the unfilled Abrahamic promises as being fulfilled by the church and, of course, not in any literal sense. Its method of interpretation is generally to spiritualize prophecy" (Charles Ryrie).
- c. Sees no distinction between the church and Israel. The church is spiritual Israel.

2. Amillennialism **(PP#6)**

- a. "No millennium at all in the future. Whatever kingdom there is – is now – it is Heaven's rule over the church. Conditions in this present age will become increasingly worse until the second coming of Christ at the end of this church age, and the return of the Lord will be immediately followed by a general resurrection and judgment and the commencement of the eternal state." — Charles Ryrie
- b. A slightly different understanding of amillennialism is that "The Bible predicts a continuous parallel growth of good and evil in the world between the first coming of Christ and the second coming of Christ. The kingdom of God is now present in the world through His word, His Spirit, His Church" (H. Wayne House, *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*).

- c. Sees no distinction between the church and Israel. The church is spiritual Israel.
 - d. Preterism **(PP#7)**
3. Premillennialism (Dispensationalism) **(PP#8)**
- a. "Holds that the second coming of Christ will occur before (pre-) the millennium and that Christ, not the church (as in post) will be the one to establish the kingdom. Christ will actually reign over the earth as King, and during the millennium the Jewish people will experience the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham and David. According to premillennialism the present church age will see increasing apostasy which will climax in the time of tribulation before the second coming of Christ. When He returns He will set up His kingdom for 1,000 years after which will occur the resurrection and judgment of the unsaved and the ushering in of eternity" (Charles Ryrie).
 - b. The premillennial scheme is a result of interpreting the promises and prophecies of Scripture in a plain, normal or literal way. This is the strength of premillennialism.
 - c. Premillennialism takes several forms due to disagreement over the timing of the Rapture (See section IV "Rapture of The Church" for details).
4. Premillennialism (Historic)
- There is also a nondispensational form of premillennialism called historical premillennialism. This view is similar to dispensational premillennialism in many ways, but differs in the following:
 - a) The rapture and second coming are simultaneous (Post-Trib).
 - b) The millennium is both present and future. "The kingdom is **now**, but **not yet**." Christ is reigning over His kingdom from heaven now, but will reign over His kingdom on the earth in the future.
 - c) Sees some distinction between Israel and the church, but also sees the church as spiritual Israel.

- d) Interprets Revelation 6-18 in a “historic” sense, i.e. this is a description of past events in church history—thus the name.

B. Views discussed

1. Postmillennialism

- a. Description – The second coming is after the millennium. A reaction against the amillennialism of post-Reformation era. The millennium is not a literal thousand years. Some believe that the millennium is the entire period between the two advents of Christ. Others think it refers to a golden era that will be brought in by the preaching of the gospel. This golden era will be followed by the return of Christ. Christ’s reign is not from an earthly throne; it is a spiritual reign within believer’s hearts.
- b. Teachings
 - 1) Ultimately there will be worldwide acceptance of the gospel which will usher in the millennial kingdom. Entire countries and civilizations will change.
 - 2) The “first resurrection” (Rev 20:4-5) is not physical, but defined as spiritual regeneration at conversion.
 - 3) The church has replaced Israel as the recipient of God’s covenant blessings.
- c. Types
 - 1) Conservative – millennium introduced by preaching the gospel.
Representatives:
 - Augustus Strong (Baptist)
 - Charles Hodge (Presbyterian)
 - Benjamin Warfield & Loraine Boettner (Reformed)
 - Jonathan Edwards

*Hodge held to a literal restoration of Israel just before the second coming.
 - 2) Liberal – millennium is golden age introduced by the advancing culture and the achievements of mankind – part of evolutionary concept.

The mission of the church is to liberate mankind from social and physical problems.

Views mankind as inherently good.

- 3) Christian Reconstructionists combine the conservative and liberal concepts.

d. Organization

Daniel Whitby (1638-1726), was the first systematizer. He was a liberal Unitarian.

- e. Present status – Classical postmillennialism had passed from popularity due to World War I and II. However, it has recently been revived through the emergence of new varieties of postmillennialism. Three overlapping names describe this revived form:

- 1) Theonomy – “The entire Mosaic Law code is operative today in both its standard and its penalties...It is through the Law of God that the world will become Christianized and prepared for the return of Jesus Christ” (Paul Benware).
- 2) Reconstructionism – “Both the church and society at large will be changed by means of God’s law and the resulting Lordship of Jesus Christ” (Paul Benware).
- 3) Dominion Theology – “It is the clear responsibility of the church to move beyond the matter of individual salvation and holiness and actively enter into the realm of public and social responsibility” (Paul Benware).

There are many modern Christian leaders and organizations who do not ascribe to postmillennial theology but who function as practical postmillennialists: Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, James Dobson, The Christian Coalition, Promise Keepers, Evangelicals and Catholics Together, and Rick Warren would be some examples.

f. Arguments Against

- 1) Uses an allegorical approach to many prophetic passages especially Revelation 20. The numbers in Revelation 20 are symbols, not statistics. The “thousand years” symbolizes the greatness of Christ’s present kingdom.
- 2) Ignores Scripture that teaches spiritual decline and apostasy in the end times (Matt 24:3-14; 1 Tim 4:1-5; 2 Tim 3:1-7).
- 3) The New Testament does not teach that the gospel is designed to improve the world’s social conditions.

2. Preterism (PP#7)

- a. Definition: Sees most or all of Bible prophecy as being fulfilled in the past. In particular the Tribulation prophecies occurred in the first century at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.
- b. Forms
 - 1) Radical – all prophecies of the New Testament have already taken place, including the Second Coming.
 - 2) Moderate – Some events prophesied in the New Testament are still future, such as the Second Coming of Christ, the bodily resurrection, and the final judgments.
- c. Basic positions
 - 1) Preterists are postmillennialists who use an allegorical hermeneutic with regard to prophecy.
 - 2) Because preterists have determined that the world will ultimately be Christianized, they believe the teachings of Revelation, the Olivet Discourse and Zechariah must have already been fulfilled.
 - 3) The key preterist text is Matthew 24:34. “This generation” demands a first century fulfillment of the Olivet Discourse, in their view.
 - 4) The book of Revelation was written about 65 AD and fulfilled by 70 AD. If it was written in the 90s, as is traditionally held, the preterist position is untenable.

- 5) The mark of the beast: 666 refers to Nero.
- 6) "Timing texts" that speak of events that must take place shortly (e.g. Matt 10:23; 16:28; 24:14; Rev 2:16; 3:11; 22:7, 12, 20) mean that those events must take place very soon.
- 7) The Olivet Discourse (Matt 24:4-34) was fulfilled in 70 AD.

d. Representatives: R. C. Sproul and Hank Hanegraaff

3. Amillennialism

a. Description: No literal kingdom on earth. The return of Christ introduces the eternal state. The kingdom of God, in its spiritual form, is now present in the world.

b. Teachings

- 1) Christ's kingdom is already here, but not yet complete ("already" and "not yet").
- 2) Satan is already bound and the saints are already reigning. Satan is bound in the sense that he can no longer deceive the nations as before.
- 3) Even though Christ is reigning over His kingdom now, a kingdom of darkness is present as well (Matt 13:24-30, 36-43).
- 4) When Christians die they experience "the first resurrection" of Revelation 20:4.
- 5) The next item on God's eschatological agenda is the return of Christ. At that point the second resurrection of the unbeliever will take place (Rev 20:4-5).
- 6) "The tribulations and judgments described [in the book of Revelation] will not occur consecutively near the end of time; they are happening simultaneously throughout human history" (Timothy Paul Jones).

c. Types

- 1) Augustinian (4-5th century) – first accepted advocate

of amillennialism: The church is the kingdom; no future kingdom for Israel; church age is the millennium; no future millennium; Satan was bound at Jesus' first coming; Christ is today reigning in the church in the heart of believers and over the souls of believers in heaven; the thousand years (Rev 20) is to be taken figuratively and is an uncertain amount of time.

Representatives: Roman Catholic Church
 Liberal Protestants
 Conservatives - Louis Berkhof
 William Hendriksen
 J. R. W. Stott
 J. I. Packer
 Jay Adams
 Michael Horton

- 2) Some amillennialists believe the kingdom is found in the church in heaven.
 - "The kingdom is God's reign over the saints which are in heaven, thus it is a heavenly kingdom" (Benjamin B. Warfield).
 - Others believe it is being fulfilled now on the earth in the church (Augustine).

d. Arguments against

- 1) The Abrahamic Covenant, being unconditional must be literally fulfilled by Israel.
- 2) Must allegorize many prophecies and promises to Israel. Employs a dual method of hermeneutics in which most Scripture is interpreted literally while the prophetic portions are interpreted allegorically.
- 3) Must reinterpret the clear teachings of passages such as Romans 11 and Revelation 20 (especially the binding of Satan, the meaning of 1000 years, and two resurrections).
- 4) Ignores the distinctions between the church and Israel

found in the New Testament (Acts 3:12; 4:8-10; 21:28; Rom 9:3-4; 10:1; and 11; Eph 2:12).

4. Premillennialism (historical) **(PP#8)**

a. Description: It “interprets Revelation 6-18 in a ‘historic’ sense, i.e., that Revelation 6-18 should be interpreted as past events in church history rather than future ones—thus the name ‘historic premillennialism’” (Richard Mayhue, *Christ’s Prophetic Plans*, p. 61). Others claimed this name is derived from the fact that this was the earliest Christian view of end times (see *Rose Guide to End-Times Prophecy*, Timothy Paul Jones, p. 326).

b. Teachings

- 1) Most believe that the millennium is a literal 1000 year period which is established when Christ returns to earth and over which He reigns as King.
- 2) Believe Revelation 20:6 teaches that there are only two resurrections in history. The first, at the end of the tribulation, is the rapture of the church.
- 3) It is based on the New Testament, especially an allegorical interpretation of Revelation 20:1-6.
- 4) Does not keep a sharp distinction between the church and Israel. God has only one people.
- 5) Believes the church will go through the tribulation. Some believe the tribulation is between 3 ½ and 7 years long; others view these dates symbolically and see the church age as the tribulation.
- 6) Evaluation
 - It spiritualizes the prophecies of the Old Testament and applies them to the church which is viewed as spiritual Israel.
 - Believes God’s physical promises (e.g. land) to Abraham are fulfilled in Jesus. “The restoration of the modern nation of Israel [is not] to their land but a turning of Jewish people to Jesus” (Timothy Paul Jones).

c. Representatives

- 1) Early church – admittedly premillennial
- 2) Middle ages – The church as largely under the influence of Roman Catholicism and was therefore mostly amillennial. Yet, some such as Wycliffe and Huss held to premillennialism.
- 3) Reformation period – was not concerned with eschatology but with soteriology. However, their return to a literal interpretation of Scripture set the stage.
- 4) Modern – Charles Spurgeon, George Ladd, R. Albert Mohler, Wayne Grudem.

5. Premillennialism (dispensational) **(PP#9)**

- a. Description: Second Coming precedes millennium. Christ comes to set up the kingdom for Israel which rules over the world.

b. Teachings

- 1) The church is raptured prior to the tribulation. The church is not the kingdom.
- 2) A literal kingdom is established at the return of Christ after the tribulation and will last 1000 years.
- 3) There will be three literal bodily resurrections in the future: **(PP#10)**
 - The church at the rapture (1 Thess 4:13-18).
 - The tribulation (and most likely Old Testament) saints just prior to the millennium (Rev 20:4)
 - The unrighteous of all ages at the end of the millennium (Rev 20:12)
- 4) The Abrahamic Covenant will be fulfilled with ethnic Israel. **(PP#11)**

5) Uses a consistent, historical-grammatical hermeneutic. When a literal hermeneutic is used consistently in both Testaments it leads to premillennialism.

- c. Representatives **(PP#12)**
- J. Dwight Pentecost
 - John Walvoord
 - Charles Ryrie
 - John MacArthur
 - Paul Benware
- d. Support for: Nine pieces of evidence to support futuristic premillennialism (taken from Richard Mayhue, pp. 62-84). **(PP#13)**
- 1) A consistent hermeneutic
 - All other eschatological views are based on dual-hermeneutics. That is, only premillennialism uses historical-grammatical hermeneutics consistently throughout the Bible, including prophetic sections.
 - Postmillennialist Loraine Boettner admits, “It is generally agreed that if the prophecies are taken literally, they do foretell a restoration of Israel in the Land of Palestine.”
 - 2) An impartial exegesis
 - “To any unbiased student of Scripture, Revelation 20 could not refer to the present time in light of these abundant testimonies of Satan’s present, frenetic pace.”
 - 3) God’s unconditional covenants
 - The Lord made eight distinct covenants to Israel, five of which are unconditional.
 - “Only futuristic premillennialism takes the unconditional nature of God’s eternal covenants and their irreversibility seriously.”
 - Cf. Romans 11:25-29

- 4) God's uncompromising promises (Ezek 34:28-29; 37:25; Joel 3:18-20; Zech 14:1, 9, 11)

"The Old Testament describes the kingdom as a literal on-earth reign of Messiah over the whole world" (Wayne House).

- 5) Israel's preservation.

- Israel's survival in light of God's unconditional promises is evidence that the literal interpretation of these texts is correct.

- 6) Israel's exclusivity in Deuteronomy 28 (vv. 2ff and 15ff)

- The curses and blessing found in such passages are written to Israel, not to the church. All curses are ultimately abolished (Zech 14:9-11; Rev 22:3).

- 7) Israel's fixed identity

- Never in the entire New Testament is the church called "spiritual Israel" or the "new Israel." And Israel is never called the church in the New Testament (Rom 9:1-5).

- 8) Christ's coming and reigning sequence.

- In Scripture Christ always comes first and then reigns afterward: Daniel 2:34-35 with Daniel 2:44-45; Zechariah 14:5 with Zechariah 14:9; Matthew 24:27, 30, 37, 39, 42, 44 with Matthew 25:31, 32; Revelation 19:11-16 with Revelation 20:4.

- 9) The early church was predominantly premillennial until the time of Augustine in the fifth century

- What the early church believes is not authoritative but it is worthy of note and reflection.
- "There is general agreement among scholars that the view of the early church was premillennial...no

church fathers of the first two centuries are known to have disagreed with this view” (Leon J. Wood as quoted in *Christ’s Prophetic Plans*, p. 179).

- The rise of amillennialism was due to several factors (ibid, pp. 186-189):
 1. The acceptance of Greek philosophy (platonic) and allegorical hermeneutics. “The rabbis of Alexandria, Egypt, began to teach allegorically in order to counter Gentile criticism of the Old Testament. This rabbinic approach had a major impact on the church” (ibid, pp. 186). Clement (150-215) and especially Origen (185-254), both of Alexandria, adopted the allegorical hermeneutic and began to spiritualize the teachings of Scripture, including eschatology. They rejected premillennialism.
 2. The growing opposition by Christians toward the Jews. The church began to reject Israel as God’s chosen people. This was the beginning of replacement theology (the church replaces Israel).
 3. The “Christianization” of the Roman Empire under Constantine was interpreted as the fulfillment of millennial promises.
- But it was Augustine (354-430) who established amillennialism as the dominate position of the medieval church. In his book, *The City of God*, he developed his amillennialism which will later be adopted by the Reformers and continues to be the majority view throughout Christendom.

Note: The basic reason for misunderstanding eschatology is that many who interpret the rest of the Bible literally turn to allegorizing when they come to the doctrine of last things. The premillennial view is the only view supported by a consistent system of literal interpretation and, therefore, is the only system in accord with a true biblical system of hermeneutics, i.e., the literal – historical grammatical method.

Literal Interpretation: **(PP#14)**

- Embraces the normal, everyday, common understanding of words.
- The literal method does not eliminate figures of speech. Text could be taken figuratively when...
 - It is obviously figurative
 - The text itself authorizes the figurative sense
 - When a literal interpretation would contradict other truths inside or outside the Bible
- The literal method does not eliminate the use of symbols. **(PP#15)**
- The literal method does not eliminate the use of parables.

Reasons to use a literal approach: **(PP#16 & 17)**

1. A literal interpretation is the normal approach in all languages.
2. The greater part of the Bible makes good sense when taken literally.
3. A literal approach allows for allegorical or symbolic meanings when indicated in the context.
4. All allegorical or symbolic meanings actually depend on the literal meaning.
5. The literal method is the only sane and safe check on subjective imaginations.
6. The literal method is the only approach that is consistently in line with the nature of inspiration.

Charles C. Ryrie: In the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, fulfilled prophecy forms the pattern...The logical way to discover how God will fulfill prophecy in the future is to discover how He fulfilled it in the past. If the hundreds of prophecies concerning Christ's first coming were fulfilled literally, how can anyone reject the literal fulfillment of the numerous prophecies concerning His second coming and reign on the earth?
(PP#18)

6. An examination of Revelation 20 **(PP#19)**
 - a. A great deal of eschatological disagreement centers on different understanding of this important passage. Major views include:
 - 1) Amillennialism believes that Satan is already bound and the saints are reigning now. The abyss and binding of the devil (20:1-3) are seen as metaphors for the shattering of Satan's power through the ministry of Jesus. Satan can still deceive but he is no longer able to deceive the nations as before. When Christians die they experience the "first resurrection" (20:4). When Christ returns they, along with all humanity, will experience the second resurrection (Timothy Paul Jones, pp. 283-289). Both the millennial kingdom and the tribulation are taking place now (ibid, Jones, p. 300).

- 2) **(PP#20)** Postmillennialism teaches that we are in the tribulation now (a few see it as future) but it will give way as the world accepts the gospel and ushers in the millennial kingdom. At that time Satan will be bound and Jesus, who will not return to earth at this time, will reign through His saints on earth. The “first resurrection” (20:5) is the spiritual regeneration which occurs at the moment of salvation. Jesus returns after the millennium, at which time a physical resurrection of all people will take place (ibid, Jones, pp. 294-299).
- 3) **(PP#21)** Historical premillennialism agrees with dispensationalists on many issues (see below) but sees the church enduring the tribulation. The “first resurrection” takes place before the millennium at the return of Christ and is of the righteous only. The second resurrection will be of the unrighteous and occur at the end of the millennium (ibid., Jones, p. 326).
- 4) **(PP#22)** Dispensational (or futuristic) premillennialism takes Revelation 20 literally. When Christ comes at the end of the tribulation Satan will be bound and out of commission during the physical reign of Christ on earth (the millennium). The first resurrection is of the tribulation saints who have died during that time, while the second resurrection is of the unrighteous of all ages. At the end of the millennium, Satan will be released for a short time to lead a rebellion against the Lord. That rebellion will be squashed and Satan thrown into the lake of fire.

b. Further support for the Dispensational view

- 1) The timing of Satan’s binding; i.e. Satan’s imprisonment cannot be considered a present reality.
 - If Satan is prevented from deceiving the nations during the millennial reign, and as he is currently deceiving the nations in the present age, the thousand years of Revelation 20 cannot be taking place right now. The binding of Satan must be future.
 - In contrast, the New Testament makes it quite clear that Satan—who is described as “the god of this world” (2 Cor 4:4) and “the ruler of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; cf. 1 John 4:4)—is extremely active on earth

during the present age. He not only “prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8) but is also involved in a host of other activities: he tells lies (John 8:44); he tempts believers to sin (1 Cor 7:5; Eph 4:27); he disguises himself as an angel of light (1 Cor 11:13-15); he seeks to deceive the children of God (2 Cor 11:3); he snatches the gospel from unbelieving hearts (Matt 13:19; Mark 4:15; Luke 8:12; cf. 1 Thess 3:5); he takes advantage of believers (2 Cor 2:11); he influences people to lie (Acts 5:3); he holds unbelievers under his power (Acts 26:18; Eph 2:2; 1 John 5:19); he buffets the servants of God (2 Cor 12:7); he thwarts the progress of ministry (1 Thess 2:18); he seeks to destroy the faith of believers (Luke 22:31); he wages war against the church (Eph 6:11-17); and he traps and deceives people, holding them captive to do his will (2 Tim 2:26). It is impossible to reconcile this portrayal of Satan’s activities with the view that he is currently sealed in the abyss (John MacArthur, *Christ’s Prophetic Plans*, pp. 126-127).

2) The nature of the “first resurrection”

- The word “resurrection” is never used in the New Testament to refer to regeneration.
- Interpreters agree that the “second resurrection” is physical so why would the same word in the same context refer to two different things?
- Those resurrected at the first resurrection are resurrected together at the same time, not over the course of time.
- At the first resurrection the souls do not come to life until after they had died (“beheaded”).

3) The duration of the 1000 years. The 1000 years should be taken literally for a number of reasons:

- The vast majority of the 254 numbers in the book of Revelation are literal.
- The numbers do not meet the three tests for interpreting something symbolically:

- a) Does it possess a degree of absurdity (obscenity, immorality) when taken literally?
 - b) Does it possess a degree of clarity when taken symbolically?
 - c) Does it fall into an established category of symbolic language? (example Isa 55:12)
- 4) The chronology of John's visions
- The amillennialist and postmillennialist contend that Revelation 20:1 recapitulates and takes the reader back to the beginning of the present age.
 - But this does not explain the words "any longer" in verse three.
 - Also Revelation 20:1-6 is simply incompatible with the view that this passage is a description of the current age (for this section see Matthew Waymeyer in *Christ's Prophetic Plans*, pp. 123-138).

III. COVENANTS AND DISPENSATIONS

A. Covenants -- (see *Bibliology booklet*) **(PP#23)**

B. Dispensations -- (see *Bibliology booklet*)

(PP#24-37)

- Michael Vlach expands Ryrie's dispensational essentials to six (*Christ's Prophetic Plans*, pp. 24-35).

(PP#38-39)

1. Progressive revelation from the New Testament does not cancel the original authorial intent of the Old Testament.
2. National Israel is not a type that is superseded by the church.
3. Israel and the church are distinct, thus the church cannot be identified as the new or true Israel.
 - The title "Israel" is used 73 times in the New Testament and always of ethnic Jews.

4. There is both spiritual unity in salvation between Jews and Gentiles and a future role for Israel as a nation.
5. The nation Israel will be saved and restored with a unique identity and function in a future millennial kingdom upon the earth.
 - Israel will be saved and restored as a nation in her land, i.e. in a literal, earthly kingdom—a millennium.
6. There are multiple senses of “seed of Abraham;” the church’s identification as “seed of Abraham” does not cancel God’s promises to the believing Jewish “seed of Abraham.”
 - There are four senses in which the “seed of Abraham” is used in Scripture:
 - 1) The biological descendants
 - 2) The Messiah (Heb 2:16-17).
 - 3) The righteous remnant of Israel (Isa 41:8 with Rom 9:6)
 - 4) A spiritual sense for believing Jews and Gentiles (Gal 3:29) (*Israelology*, p. 702)

IV. RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH (1 Thess 4:13-18) **(PP#40)**

- A. Definition – that event at which Christ returns to catch up His true church in the air so that they may always be with Him.

The word "rapture" comes from the Latin word used in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 which is translated in English as "caught up."

B. Description of the rapture **(PP #41 & 42)**

1. Christ returns in the air, personally, bodily –1 Thessalonians 4:17.
2. The dead in Christ are raised – verse 16.
3. The living are transformed – verse 17 and 1 Corinthians 15:51 and Philippians 3:20.
4. Reunions – the two groups are caught up together to be with the Lord forever – 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and John 14:1-3.

5. Accomplished "in a moment" – 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52.
6. Called a mystery – not revealed as part of God's program for His people in the Old Testament – 1 Corinthians 15:51.

C. Time of the rapture

1. Views - All who take a premillennial approach to Scripture believe in a rapture but often differ over details, principally the timing. Also amillennialism and postmillennialism teach that the rapture and return of Christ happen at the same time at the end of the millennium. Historic premillennialism agrees but sees the rapture immediately before the millennium. Following are the primary views: **(PP#43 thru #46)**

2. Posttribulation - The church will be present on earth during the tribulation period and Christ's coming for and with His saints occur in quick succession at the close of that period.

Support given:

- A. The rapture and the second coming are described in the Scriptures by the same word, which indicates that they occur at the same time – 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and Matthew 24:27.

Oppose: The descriptions of the rapture and the second coming are not the same – compare 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 with 5:1-11 or Matthew 24:29-31; Zechariah 14:3-5.

- B. Since saints and the "elect" are mentioned as present during the tribulation days, the church is present on earth during that time – Matthew 24:22.

Oppose: "Saints" and "elect" are terms that can be used to describe believers from any dispensation. It is instructive to note that the word "Christian" is never found in the tribulation, nor is the church mentioned in Revelation 4-18 (the passage describing the tribulation).

- C. Since a resurrection will occur at the beginning of the millennium, it is assumed that this is the rapture – Revelation 20:4.

Oppose: This passage describes the resurrection of tribulation (and possible Old Testament) saints.

- D. The church can be preserved from the wrath of the tribulation by supernatural protection – 1 Thessalonians 1:10.

Oppose: It could also be preserved by being removed.

- E. The Scriptures do not teach imminency; therefore, the rapture can be after the known events of the tribulation.

Oppose: There is confusion between the signs that precede Christ's second coming (Matt 24:3-31) with the imminency of the rapture. "Scripture teaches us to wait and watch, not for preparatory signs of Christ's coming, but for the blessed hope of His return (Titus 2:13)." – Wayne House

- F. This was the position of the early church during the first three centuries.

Oppose: What is taught by posttribulationists is not the same as what the early church believed. Even so, the Scriptures, not the early church, are our basis for truth.

3. Midtribulation (PP#47)

Christ's coming for His people will occur at the middle point of the tribulation period. A recent variation on the Midtribulation view is known as the "*Pre-wrath Rapture*."

Support given:

- a. The last trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the same as the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15 and it is sounded at the middle of the tribulation – this is the position's strongest argument.

Oppose: The trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the "trumpet of God" (see 1 Thess 4:16), while the trumpets of Revelation 11 are sounded by angels. Also, according to Matthew 24:31, there will be a trumpet call at the end of the tribulation as well. These are all different trumpets.

- b. Actually the Great Tribulation (Matt 24:21) is only the last half of Daniel's 70th week (Dan 9:24-27) and the church is promised deliverance only from that – Revelation 3:10.

Oppose: This view assumes that the first half of the tribulation does not involve the wrath of God, however, see Revelation 6:16.

- c. The resurrection of the two witnesses pictures the rapture of the church and their resurrection occurs at the middle of the tribulation – Revelation 11:11.

Oppose: This is conjectural. Even if their resurrection takes place at the mid-point there is no reason to believe the witnesses represent the church.

4. Partial rapture

Only those believers who are worthy will be taken out of the world before the tribulation begins, while others will be left to endure its wrath. For those left on earth, that time will serve as a time of purging.

Support – Hebrews 9:28 which seems to require preparedness as a pre-requisite for meeting the Lord.

Oppose – The viewpoint is based on the idea that good works are necessary in order to qualify to be raptured, but the unanswered question is how many good works? Also, it seems to ignore the fact that 1 Corinthians 15:51 says plainly that "we shall **all** be changed" in the rapture (emphasis mine).

5. Pretribulation (PP#48-49)

The rapture of the church will take place before the entire seven year tribulation period begins. Then seven years later, after the conclusion of the tribulation, the Lord will return to earth with His people to set up His millennial kingdom.

Support (PP#50)

a. Revelation 3:10:

- This church will be kept from the hour of testing.
- "The hour of testing" – they will not only not be tested but they will be kept from the hour or period of testing.
- "The hour which is to come upon the whole world" – this testing is worldwide in scope and it is pictured as coming at any moment in the future.

- "To test those who dwell on the earth" – whenever this term is used in Revelation it is describing earthbound rebels who follow the Antichrist in the period of tribulation (Rev 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:12; 17:2).

b. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10:

- "The coming of the Lord and our gathering together to Him" – Those two events connected by "and" would point to the fact that they happen at the same time (2:1).
- Three events must take place before the day of the Lord will come (v. 2)
 - 1) Apostasy (v. 3)
 - 2) Antichrist revealed (vv. 3-5)
 - 3) The restrainer removed (vv. 6-7)
- The removal of the restrainer (2:6, 7).
 - 1) The Antichrist cannot be revealed until the restrainer is removed.
 - 2) Notes about the restrainer.
 - The restrainer is referred to as neuter in verse 6 and as masculine in verse 7.
 - This restrainer is now at work and is a well-known restrainer. The Thessalonians apparently knew who this was.
 - The restrainer is greater in power than Satan who empowers the Antichrist.

Many believe that this restrainer is the Holy Spirit in the agency of the church. When the church is removed the Antichrist will be free to come on the scene. The Holy Spirit Himself must be present during the tribulation period to convict and regenerate.

- The Lord will slay the antichrist when He comes (v. 8; Rev 19:19-21). Contrast with 1 Thess 4:13-18.

c. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11:

- The day of the Lord is a technical phrase which in Old and New Testament usage refers to a day of judgment followed by a period of great blessing (the tribulation and the millennial kingdom) (Amos 5:18; Joel 2:30-31, 3:2; Zeph 1:14- 18; 3:12-20; Malachi 4:5; 2 Thess 2:2; Acts 2:20; 2 Peter 3:10).
- Notice, too, the distinction between the events of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 5:1, 2. In 4:13 they needed to be informed about the rapture, while in 5:1, 2 they were fully informed about the day of the Lord.
- The deliverance of the church from the day of the Lord.
 - 1) The day will not overtake believers unexpectedly (5:4). The change in pronouns – third person to second and first (5:3-6) and back to third (5:7) - indicates distinction between those caught in the day of wrath and those not caught.
 - 2) The reason for that day not overtaking believers is not given in the same manner as previous warnings by signs, but as due to their position. They are not in darkness, but are sons of light. Those of light – saved ones – shall not be present at that day (5:4, 5).
 - 3) The reason that the saved shall not be in that day of wrath is presented as the purpose and plan of God for them (5:9). (See also Rev 6:16, 17)

Support: The contrast between the Second Coming and the rapture is seen in the charts at the end of the study.

- d. **(PP#51)** The church is not mentioned in Revelation 6-19 as being on earth.
- e. The epistles contain no preparatory warnings of an impending tribulation for church age believers.

- f. First Thessalonians 4:13-18 demands a pretribulational rapture. We are to comfort one another with these words.
- g. John 14:1-3 parallels 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.
- h. The events of the rapture and the Second Coming radically differ (see Richard Mayhue, pp. 89-102) and chart following. **(PP#52 & 53)**

POINT	SECOND COMING	RAPTURE
Prediction	Preceded by predicted signs of general indication (Matt 24:33)	Any moment expectation (1 John 2:28; 3:2)
Purpose	Christ defeats Israel's enemies and establishes His kingdom on earth (Zech 14:1-3; Rev 19:15-16)	Christ catches up those "in Christ" and returns to heaven (1 Thess 4:17; John 14:3)
Association	Christ comes WITH His saints (Rev 19:8, 14)	Christ comes FOR His saints (1 Thess 4)
Place	His feet touch the Mt. of Olives (Zech 14:4, 9, 11)	He meets saints in the air (1 Thess 4:17; John 14:3)
Result	Living saints are ushered into the kingdom (Matt 25:34, 46) without transformation	Living saints are all transformed (1 Cor 15:51)

V. TRIBULATION PERIOD **(PP#54)**

A. Its character

1. Terms of description

- a. "The day of the Lord" (J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things To Come*, pp. 229-235). – This period includes the tribulation (judgment) and the Messianic Kingdom (blessing).

Old Testament references: Isaiah 13:6, 9; Joel 1:15 (past judgments); Joel 2:28-32 with Acts 2:17-21 (future).

New Testament references: 2 Thessalonians 2:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10.

- b. The great day of their wrath (Rev 6:17).

- c. The time of Jacob's trouble (Jere 30:7). Comes before restoration (30:1-3).
- d. The great tribulation (Rev 7:14 and Matt 24:21, 22).

General definition: A period of unprecedented, unparalleled tribulation upon the earth affecting Jews and Gentiles which finds its source in the wrath of God.

1. Time and duration **(PP#55)**

–Time: The tribulation is a future event.

- a. It was future from Christ's day (Matt 24:3-15; esp. 3, 6, 14, 15).
- b. It was future from Paul's day (2 Thess 2:1-12).
- c. It was future from John's day (Rev 6:1).
- d. It immediately precedes the Second Coming of Christ in glory (Matt 24:15-31; Dan 12:1).

–Duration – **(PP#56)**

- a. It lasts for seven years (Dan 9:24-27; Matt 24:15).
- b. It involves two divisions of three-and-a-half years (forty-two months) (twelve hundred sixty days) (Dan 7:25; 9:27 and 12:7; Rev 11:2, 3 and 12:6, 14 and 13:5).
- c. Daniel's 70 weeks (Chart, **PP#57**)

B. Its purpose **(PP#58)**

- a. To prepare the nation of Israel for Messiah's Second Coming.
 - 1) Chastisement – preparing them for Christ – Deuteronomy 4:27-31.
 - 2) Conversion – bringing them to Christ – Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1 and Revelation 7:1-8.
- b. To pour out judgment on unbelieving men and nations –

Revelation 3:10; 6:16, 17; 11:18; 9:20-21; 4:10; 16:1 and 19:1-2;
Isaiah 26:20, 21.

- C. **(PP#59 & 60)** Its course – "The tribulation actually begins when the man of sin, the leader of the western federation of nations, signs a treaty with the Jewish people (Dan 9:27). The rapture of the church will have occurred just before this, though there may be a short interval of time between the rapture and the signing. . . . At the same early part of the period the great ecumenical apostate church will rise to power (Rev 17:3), exerting tremendous political influence among the nations of the world. In addition there will be many converted by the witness of the group that will be sealed (Rev 7) for this purpose. Some will apparently be martyred almost immediately for their faith (Rev 6:9-11). . . . **(PP#59)**. As the middle of the tribulation approaches, certain important events will occur. Egypt will be defeated by the armies of the man of sin (Dan 11:40-43). The nations of the Far East will be forming into a coalition and will at the end of the tribulation move into Palestine. The power bloc to the north of Palestine known as Gog and Magog will invade Palestine but will be wiped out by God's supernatural intervention (Ezek 38-39). Exactly at the middle point the man of sin will break his treaty, cease to be Israel's protector, demand to be worshiped himself (2 Thess 2:4), and seek to conquer the world. In the meantime, as the latter part of the tribulation progresses, God will be pouring out additional judgments on the world. . . . As the man of sin continues his march to world power, he will face his enemies from the east at Armageddon in northern Palestine. In the midst of the war the Lord will return and defeat all His enemies. The man of sin and his false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire to be tormented forever." —Charles Ryrie (*A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, pp. 173,174).

I disagree with Ryrie's view of the timing of the battle of Ezekiel 38-39. There are a number of theories as to when this battle will take place. If interpreted literally, a coming northern confederacy of nations around the Black and Caspian seas with Persia and North Africa will invade the Promised Land after Israel's restoration to it (*Ezekiel* by Feinberg). The most defensible positions hold that this Battle of Gog and Magog takes place at some point during the seven year Tribulation period. If so:

- Could the battle be at the beginning, after the rapture of the church? Some believe that it is in the aftermath of this battle that the Anti-Christ will raise to power. This is the position of the *Left Behind* series. The problem with this theory is that the purpose of the whole battle is to magnify the Lord and draw the world after Him. But when the Anti-Christ appears the whole world follows him for a time, not God.

- Could the battle be at the mid-point of the tribulation? Some (e.g. Ryrie) have noted that the Anti-Christ makes a peace treaty with Israel at the beginning of the tribulation but breaks it at the mid-point and attacks Israel. The problem with this view is that the prophecy of Ezekiel shows the utter destruction of the leader and nations that come against Israel. That does not happen at the mid-point of the tribulation, nor does God receive glory.
- That leaves the end of the tribulation. Israel has to be in the land for the battle to take place, something we know is true during the tribulation. The armies of Gog and Magog, which could be symbols for the world at large, will be destroyed when they come against Israel – which is exactly what takes place at the Second Coming (Rev 19:11-21). The description of this battle is virtually identical to the Battle of Armageddon when Christ returns. We see the exact same picture in Zechariah 14:1-4.

D. Its culmination – Revelation 19 **(PP#61)**

- The tribulation is brought to a completion by the Second Coming of Christ – (Matt 24:15-31; Rev 19:11-21).

VI. THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM **(PP#62)**

A. Definition: **(PP#63)** That period of one thousand years during which our Lord Jesus Christ will rule the earth in righteousness and will fulfill to the Jews and the world those promises of the Old Testament covenants (Rev 20).

B. Prediction: Isaiah 2:1-4; 9:6, 7; Zechariah 14; Daniel 2:44; 2 Samuel 7 (Davidic Covenant); Matthew 24, 25; Revelation 20.

C. Character **(PP#64)**

1. Government **(PP#65)**

- God's covenant with David guaranteed David's dynasty, tribe, and kingdom would continue forever. When Jesus returns at the end of the tribulation, He will re-establish the Davidic throne. The government and politics of the millennial kingdom will focus on the benevolent reign of Jesus Christ as Israel's Messiah-King (Jere 23:5-8; Isa 9:6-7).
- a. The government will be set up on earth (Zech 14:9) with Jerusalem as the capital (Isa 2:3).

- b. The Lord will be the king of the millennial theocracy (Dan 7:14). He will enforce peace righteously (Isa 11:3-5; 65:20).
 - c. The subjects of this earthly kingdom will be the people, Jews and Gentiles, who survive the tribulation period and enter the millennium in earthly bodies. It would appear that at the beginning there will not be a single unsaved person in the kingdom (Matt 25:1-13, 30, 41). However, those born during this time will have to choose whether they will receive Christ, although all will be required to give outward allegiance (Isa 11:4).
 - d. The church and Tribulation saints will rule with Christ and Christians will have resurrected bodies (Matt 19:28; 25:21; Rev 2:26, 3:21, 20:4). The actual residence of the church during the millennium will be the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:2, 9, 10).
 - e. Christ will rule with a rod of iron (Isa 9:6, 7; Psalm 2:9, 12; see Isa 11:3-5; Rev 19:15; Rev 2:27).
 - f. War will be eliminated and peace established (Isa 2:4).
 - g. Man's energies will be turned to the blessing of mankind (Isa 2:4).
2. Spiritual (**PP#66 & 67**)
- a. Righteousness will flourish (Isa 11:3-5).
 - b. Peace will be universal (Isa 2:4).
 - c. The Holy Spirit will be manifest in unusual ways (Joel 2:28, 29).
 - d. Satan will be bound (Rev 20:2, 3).
 - e. Humanity will have a personal, internal relationship with God (Jere 31:31-33).
 - f. Humanity will be Spirit-taught (Isa 11:9; Jere 31:31-34).
 - g. Believers will receive eternal forgiveness (Jere 31:34b).
 - h. The manifest presence of God (Ezek 37:24-28).

- i. Holiness (Isa 35:8-9).
- j. Peace (Isa 35:10; 65:25).
- k. Joy (Isa 35:10; 51:11; 65:18, 19).
- l. Justice (Isa 65:20-23; Zech 14:17-19) (immediate judgment of sin).

3. Nature **(PP#68 & 69)**

- “Ever since the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, humanity and the rest of creation have been under the judgment and ramification of original sin. The pollution of sin has affected all of humanity and creation. The Apostle Paul reminds us of that which we experience daily when he declares in Romans 8:22, *For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pain of childbirth together until now*. However, during the millennium there will be a partial lifting of the curse and the ramifications of original sin” (Thomas Ice, *The Truth about the Millennium*, p. 26).
- a. Productivity will increase (Isa 35:1, 2 and Amos 9:13).
- b. The curse on the earth will be reversed (Gen 3:17 and Isa 11:6-8), although not entirely lifted until the end of the millennium.
- c. Longevity (Isa 65:20).
- d. Healing of physical ills (Isa 35:5, 6a). This text is quoted to John the Baptist when he questions who Jesus was (Luke 7:21-22).
- e. Changes of climate (Isa 35:7).
- f. Great geological changes (Zech 14:3, 4).
- g. Increased fertility (Isa 35:1). Creation is loosed from the curse.
- h. Reproduction (Isa 65:20a, 23a).
- i. People will labor (Isa 65:21-23) but not in vain (vv. 21, 22 – contrast John 14:2).

- j. Changes in the animal world (Isa 65:25; 11:6-8).

D. Conclusion

1. Only the redeemed will enter the millennium. All the unbelievers will be destroyed at the Second Coming of Christ (Rev 19:19 and later judged – Matt 25:31-46). During the next 1000 years millions will be born and many of them will reject the King.
2. A final rebellion takes place after Satan is allowed to go free. In Revelation 20:7-9 this rebellion is crushed.
3. The end of the millennium will see the last and final revolt of man and Satan against God and His rule. For a thousand years God will have given all mankind the most ideal conditions under which to live and will have spread the knowledge of the Lord throughout the world.
4. The fact that man will openly oppose God after such benefits will serve to prove that change in outward conditions does not meet man's basic need. Inside he still will be a rebel unless he has had a change of heart through regeneration. The evidence of the rebellion is found in Old Testament passages such as Zechariah 14:17-19. Those who resist the King will suffer immediate consequences.
5. The opportunity to revolt against Christ will come when Satan is set free (Rev 20:7-9). "Reformation is not the same as regeneration and betterment is not conversion; this last revolt will prove once again that it is the heart of man that needs a work of supernatural grace" (Charles Ryrie).

VII. THE ETERNAL STATE **(PP#70)**

- A. Final accomplishments – Revelation 20 – the state following the millennium, in which eternity begins and sin and death are no more.
 1. Final victories (preparing for eternal state): **(PP#71)**
 - a. Over Satan – Revelation 20:7-10
 - b. Over world powers – Revelation 20:7-10
 - c. Over death – Revelation 20:13 and 1 Corinthians 15:25, 26
 2. Final judgment of men – Great White Throne: **(PP#72)**

- a. Resurrection of the wicked – Revelation 20:5, 13
 - b. Judgment of all works – Revelation 20:13
 - c. Casting into the lake of fire – Revelation 20:14, 15 and Matthew 25:41
3. Final judgment of the world – 2 Peter 3:10-13 **(PP#73)**
- B. Final submission to the Father – 1 Corinthians 15:24-26 **(PP#74)**
- C. Final manifestation – Revelation 21 and 22 **(PP#75)**
1. In the new heavens and the new earth – 2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 51:6 and 66:22; Revelation 21:1
 2. In New Jerusalem – Revelation 21:2, 3 and 21:9-27
 3. In new mercies: **(PP#76)**
 - a. Provisions (Rev 22:1, 2)
 - b. Removal of curse (Rev 22:3)
 - c. Presence of God (Rev 22:3-5)
 - d. Service (Rev 22:3)
 - e. Life and health (Rev 21:4 and 22:1-5)

VIII. JUDGMENTS

- There are at least five future judgments to come. **(PP#77)**
- A. Judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor 3:10-15) **(PP#78)**
1. The purpose is not to determine whether individuals are saved or lost; it determines the reward or loss of reward for service which will be due each individual believer (Rev 11:18).
 2. The judgment seat of Christ is mentioned in 2 Corinthians 5:10 and Romans 14:10. In Romans, however, it is called the judgment seat of God. The event is explained in more detail in 1 Corinthians 3:9-15.

3. The meaning of judgment seat **(PP#79)**
 - a. There are two different words translated "judgment seat" in the New Testament:
 - 1) "Criterion" used in James 2:6 and 1 Corinthians 6:2, 4. It means the place where judgment is given, the bench of judges.
 - 2) "Bema" – "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." –J. Dwight Pentecost
 - Not all agree that the bema is never used as a judicial bench, but bema is the word used for reward seat.
 - b. Associated with this word are the ideas of prominence, dignity, authority, honor and reward, rather than the idea of justice and judgment.
4. The time of the judgment seat of Christ – between the rapture and the second coming of Christ. **(PP#80)**
 - a. In Luke 14:14 reward is associated with the resurrection of the righteous, since the resurrection of the church age will take place at the rapture (1 Thess 4:13-17) reward must be a part of that program.
 - b. When the Lord returns to earth with His bride (the church), to reign, the bride is seen to be already rewarded (Rev 19:8).
 - c. Notice 1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Timothy 4:8 and Revelation 22:12. When Christ comes for His own (at the rapture) He will bring with Him their reward.
5. The place of the bema of Christ – in the heavenlies – 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and 2 Corinthians 5:1-8. **(PP#81)**
6. The Judge will be Christ – 2 Corinthians 5:10.
7. The subjects will be the believers only – 2 Corinthians 5:1-10.

(PP#82)

8. The basis of the examination: **(PP#83)**
 - a. The Christian is not being judged for sin. The salvation given the believer has perfectly delivered him from all judgment – Romans 8:1, John 5:24 and 1 John 4:17.
 - b. "The word translated 'appear' in 2 Corinthians 5:10 might better be rendered 'to be made manifest' so that the verse reads, 'For it is necessary for all of us to be made manifest.' This suggests that the purpose of the bema is to make a public manifestation, demonstration or revelation of the essential character and motives of the individual" (J. Dwight Pentecost).
 - c. 2 Corinthians 5:10 says that we will be rewarded according to whether our deeds have been "good" or "bad." The word "bad" is "phaulos." The usual words for "bad" in the New Testament are "kakos" or "poneral" which mean evil and therefore something sinful. However, the word "phaulos" used in 2 Corinthians 5:10 is not talking about evil but about something that is worthless. So, we are not judged here concerning good and evil, rather concerning our worthfulness for the Lord. The purpose of this judgment is to reward Christians for things that they have done of worth for the Lord – 1 Corinthians 3:10-15.
9. Results – 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 **(PP#84-89)**
 - a. Rewards based on human strength or man's glory will be lost.
 - b. Rewards won – There are five crowns mentioned in Scripture. These crowns are representative, but surely not exhaustive, of the believer's rewards.
 - 1) Incorruptible crown – for those who get mastery over the flesh – 1 Corinthians 9:25.
 - 2) Crown of rejoicing for introducing people to Christ – 1 Thessalonians 2:19, and joy – Philippians 4:1.
 - 3) Crown of life for those enduring trials – James 1:12.

- 4) Crown of righteousness for loving His appearing – 2 Timothy 4:8.
- 5) Crown of glory for being willing to feed the flock of God – 1 Peter 5:4.

c. Revelation 4:10 makes it clear that the crowns will not be for the eternal glory of the recipient, but for the glory of the Giver (Note 1 Corinthians 6:20 where we are told that the believer was redeemed in order that he might bring glory to God).

B. Judgment of the Gentiles **(PP#90)**

1. Circumstances: This is the judgment of living Gentiles at the second coming of Christ – Matthew 25:31-46. It will take place on the earth in the valley of Jehoshaphat – Joel 3:2.
2. Basis: The treatment of Jews during the tribulation period – Matthew 25:40. To do good to the Jews during this time will involve a real risk of one's own life and doing these things will be evidence of new life in the doer's heart. . . Being regenerate saves them; doing these good works proves that they are regenerated.
3. Result: "Those whose lives have given evidence of the new birth will become citizens of the kingdom – Matthew 25:34. Those whose works proved their lack of eternal life will be condemned to the lake of fire (verse 41). Those who do enter the kingdom will enter with their earthly bodies; they will marry, bear children and become the means of populating the millennial earth" (Charles Ryrie).

C. Judgment of Jews, tribulation saints and Old Testament saints **(PP#91 & 92)**

1. Circumstances: Those Jews who live through the tribulation period will also be judged – Ezekiel 20:34-38. The Lord also spoke of this judgment in a parable – Matthew 25:14-30 – and placed it immediately after His return.
2. Result: The unsaved Jews will be cut off from both millennial and eternal life, for no rebel will enter the millennium – Ezekiel 20:37 and Matthew 25:30.

D. Judgment of fallen angels **(PP#93)**

The fallen angels will be judged at "the great day" – Jude 6 – this is probably when Satan is judged at the end of the millennium – Revelation 20:2-10. Believers will apparently have a part in executing this judgment – 1 Corinthians 6:3.

E. The Great White Throne Judgment – Revelation 20:11-15 **(PP#94)**

1. Circumstances: At the conclusion of the millennial reign the unsaved dead of all time will be judged. All the redeemed will have been raised and judged previously, so only the unsaved will be left – Revelation 20:6. Christ will be the Judge – John 5:22 – and the judgment will take place in space – Revelation 20:11.
2. Basis:
 - a. The Book of Life
 - b. Works . . . There will be degrees of punishment in eternity – Luke 12:47, 48.
3. Result: Second death – Eternal separation from God in the lake of fire.

IX. RESURRECTIONS **(PP#95)**

A. Resurrection of the just **(PP#96)**

There will be several stages; it will not happen all at once:

1. Rapture – dead Christians – 1 Thessalonians 4:16.
2. Redeemed of the tribulation period – Revelation 20:4 – at the Second Coming.
3. Old Testament saints – probably with tribulation saints, but not clear – Daniel 12:2.
4. Millennial saints – not mentioned in Scripture, probably will be immediately transferred to the New Jerusalem.

B. Resurrection of the unjust **(PP#97)**

All will be raised at the end of the millennium – Revelation 20:11-15. "At their resurrection they will apparently be given some sort of bodies that will be able to live forever and feel the effects of the torments of the lake of fire."

X. Chronology of events connected with the Second Coming of Christ (**PP #98 thru #102**)

1. The marriage of the Lamb (Rev 19:7-10)
2. The glorious appearing of Christ (Rev 19:11-18)
3. The Battle of Armageddon (Rev 14:14-21; 16:16)
4. The world's greatest earthquake (Rev 16:18)
5. The judgment of the nations (Matt 25:31-46)
6. Antichrist and False Prophet cast into the lake of fire (Rev 19:20-21)
7. Satan bound 1000 years (Rev 20:1-3)
8. Resurrection of all believers (Rev 20:4)
9. Christ establishes His millennial kingdom (Rev 20:1-6)
10. Satan released one last time (Rev 20:7-9)
11. The final rebellion (Rev 20:7-9)
12. Satan cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10)
13. The Great White Throne Judgment (Rev 20:11-15)
14. The acknowledgment that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil 2:9-11)
15. The new heaven and new earth (Rev 21:1)
16. The New Jerusalem comes to earth (Rev 21:2-8)
17. Heaven described (Rev 21:8-27)
18. Christ's last call to mankind (Rev 22:6-20)

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