

ESCHATOLOGY, PART 1 – INTRODUCTION AND MILLENNIAL VIEWS

What is Eschatology? Last things, or end times – the study of unfulfilled biblical prophecy of latter days
Key texts: Matt. 24, Rev. 19-21, 1 Thess 4:13-18, Rom. 9-11, Zech. 12-14, Eze. 36-39, Dan. 9:24-27

Why study Eschatology? Rev. 1:3, 22:6-16, 2 Peter 3:10-18. Others?

What are the effects of under-emphasis or over-emphasis?

- neglect God's truth and/or holy living (proper application of right eschatology)
- focus on antichrist more than Christ (or rapture fiction but not in fact living and loving Christ & others)

What are the essentials of orthodox end times views?

- Christ will return literally, physically, visibly, and imminently (possibly soon, some differ on "any moment" vs. what signs will precede)
- Bodily resurrection, judgment, literal heaven and hell for humans and angels
- God fulfills all His prophecies and promises (past, present, and any in future)

What views are outside orthodoxy (false doctrines / heresies)?

- Denying the above, ex: hyper-preterism (all prophecy is already fulfilled)
- Date-setting (ex: Christ will return in 1988)
- Annihilationism (no eternal hell), universalism (everyone saved), radical Christian Zionism (ex: preacher John Hagee taught Jews don't need to be evangelized or believe in Jesus to be saved)

What does our church believe? Doctrinal Statement: "We believe He could return at any moment to take believers to Heaven, and someday will come to earth to reign for 1000 years as King of Kings and Lord of Lords ... We believe in the personal visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe there will be a final, eternal judgment of God on the unbeliever in Jesus Christ, and on Satan and his angels, and that there will be eternal blessedness for the believer."

What will this lecture not be covering?

- Rapture views (pre-tribulation, mid-trib, post-trib, pre-wrath, partial rapture)
- Less-known "Pro-millennial" view and "Pan-millennial view" (what are these?)
- Covenants of O.T., tribulation details, millennium details, international politics, antichrist identification

Note: Different views on nature and future of Israel, kingdom and rapture are important, but should not evoke charges of heresy by opposing sides nor consider other views virtually sub-Christian or cause for breaking fellowship. Historically, evangelical Christian brethren have held diverse viewpoints by godly men acceptable within bounds of orthodoxy, and there are biblical arguments used by all sides and difficult questions for each view. We need to study carefully and prayerfully, with humility and maturity, and seek to maintain charity as we pursue clarity. For example, some teach a future mass conversion hope of national Israel is a recent aberrant view (but see chart on reverse). Some would similarly wrongly say a distinct rapture was "invented" by 19th century dispensationalism, but see Ephraem of Nisibis (306-373 A.D.), Codex Amiatinus (690-716), Dolcino (1307), American Puritan Increase Mather (1639-1723), Peter Jurieu (1637-1713), John Gill (1697-1771), and Morgan Edwards (1722-1795). It's one thing to *disagree* with other beliefs, but let's not *disdain* other believers.

What are the different approaches to Revelation 6-18?

Futurist – these chapters are prophetic visions predicting the last days, and should be interpreted more literally

Historicist – visions of actual events occurring throughout history (1st century till the end of church age)

Preterist – like Matthew 24, virtually all prophetic events before Christ's return happened by around 70 A.D.

Idealist – not necessarily historic actual events, but symbolic of good-and-evil struggle in church age

Recommended reading: *Revelation 20 and the Millennial Debate* (M. Maymeyer), *Future Israel* (B. Horner)

CHART OF MILLENIAL VIEWS, REVELATION 20, AND ISRAEL

By Pastor Phil Layton, 12-30-2007

Categories:	Amillennial (includes Preterist)	PostMillennial (includes Traditional, Theonomy, Liberal [social gospel])	PreMillennial (includes Historicist and Futurist views)
Millennium (from Latin for 1,000 years)	Literally <i>no millennium</i> in sense of earthly kingdom for 1000 years; Christ now reigns heavenly spiritually and the eternal state will follow His imminent return. "...amillennialists do not believe in a literal thousand-year reign which will follow the return of Christ... the millennium of Revelation 20 is not exclusively future, but is now in the process of realization." A.A. Hoekema	Christ will return <i>after the millennium</i> (not exactly 1,000 years but a golden age of gospel fruitfulness) "... 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 ... the world eventually is to be Christianized and the return of Christ is to occur at the close of a long period of righteousness and peace, commonly called the millennium." L. Boettner	Christ will return <i>before the millennium</i> , and will then set up His kingdom on earth for 1,000 years of literal physical reign over this world, fulfilling any prophecies He did not fulfill in His first coming (some differ as to which OT prophecies relate to this timeframe or eternal state, and differ on Israel's role and timing or nature of rapture). Some would see Christ's kingdom as present in some sense, yet future in other (already/not yet aspect, heavenly vs. earthly, etc.). Historicists do not necessarily insist the millennium is exactly 1,000 years long
Great Tribulation (Rev. 6-18)	Preterist: focused on 1 st century (esp. 70 A.D.) Amil: Tribulation is church age in general. For some, Israel will convert near end	Experienced in present and/or future. Some see future conversion of Israel near the end (especially the Puritans).	Historicist – some see intensified tribulation preceding 2 nd Coming Futurist – usually 7 literal years with emphasis on rapture, personal antichrist, and conversion of Israel.
Resurrection / Judgments	All believers and unbelievers at very end	All believers and unbelievers at very end	<i>Second Coming/Rapture</i> – Believers <i>End of millennium</i> - Unbelievers (Historic sees just 1 <i>judgment</i> at end)
Revelation 19-21 Chronology	Not sequential – millen. in ch. 20 will actually come <i>before</i> 2 nd coming in ch. 19 and new heavens / earth of ch. 21 right after ch. 19.	Some see non-sequential like Amil, others see the chapters as sequential like Premil. New heavens/earth of ch. 21 is set up at 2 nd coming of ch. 19.	Sequential – 2 nd coming of chapter 19 naturally comes before millennium in chapter 20. The new heavens/earth of ch. 21 chronologically come after the thousand years in ch. 20.
Satan's Binding in Rev. 20	Presently bound, beginning with Christ's earthly ministry	Many see present binding like amil, others see future binding while world is Christianized before the Second Coming	Satan is alive and well and active on earth and deceiving and will be until Christ returns and has him bound, thrown into the abyss, locked and sealed so he can no longer deceive
Rev. 20 First Resurrection	Spiritual resurrection	Spiritual resurrection	Bodily physical resurrection, just like the second resurrection.
"Thousand Years"	Symbolic for period of time between 1 st and 2 nd coming	Some see symbolic, others more literal / futuristic	Most believe "thousand years" means thousand years
Reign Locale	Heaven	Heaven / Earth	Earth
Notable Past Adherents	Augustine, some early Reformers, Catholic and Eastern Orthodox church, numerous Puritans, majority of contemporary Reformed theologians and pastors (W. Hendiksen, M. Lloyd-Jones, C. J. Mahaney, Ligon Duncan III), and others (Hank Hanegraaf – non-Calvinist preterist) <i>Influential writers: Gentry, Riddlebarger, Hoekema</i>	Jonathan Edwards, Charles Hodge, B. B. Warfield, A. H. Strong, large number of Puritans and Protestants of 18 th and 19 th century (dominant view in these centuries but diminished in 20 th century after world wars) <i>Influential representative writer: L. Boettner</i>	Early church fathers through 4 th century, Puritans such as Thomas Goodwin, Jeremiah Burroughs, Joseph Mede, John Gill, and others in their tradition: J. C. Ryle, Horatius Bonar, Charles Spurgeon, James M. Boice, etc. Representative schools: Masters Seminary (futurist, moderate dispensational), Dallas Seminary (traditionally classic / revised disp.), Talbot / BIOLA / others (some progressive dispensational), Trinity E.D.S. (historic premil), Covenant Seminary (covenant premil)
Adherents Seeing Future Conversion of National / ethnic Israel	Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, Geneva Bible of 1560, Lloyd-Jones (in 1980), R. C. Sproul, Ken Gentry (Preterist), many Amil Puritans and Protestants	Jonathan Edwards, Charles Hodge, John Murray, majority of Puritans and many 17 th century Reformed theologians (Dutch, etc.)	Vast majority of premillennialists <i>Influential writers: George Ladd (historicist), John MacArthur (futurist)</i>