

# Eschatology

## (Establishing a Firm Foundation - Session #9)

### 1. The Concept of Eschatology

- Eschatology: the study of last things
- Approach with humility
  - The humble examples of Simeon and Anna

Lk. 2:25, 28-30 "And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him... he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: 'Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation' "

Lk. 2:36, 37-38 "Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess,... and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem."

- The prideful example of the Pharisees
  - Jn. 7:52 "They answered and said to him, 'Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.' "
- Approach with awe
  - Ps. 22:28 "For the kingdom is the LORD'S, and He rules over the nations"

## 2. Some key concepts

- Tribulation Period

Mt. 24:21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be."

Jer. 30:7 "Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it."

The tribulation period represents a last chance for humanity (Rev. 7:4; Rev. 11:1-7; Rev. 14:6-11) coupled with judgment upon wayward humanity (Rev. 6-19).

- Rapture

- The word "rapture" comes from the Latin translation for "caught up"
- Greek word "harpazo" means "to seize, catch away, catch up, pluck, pull, take (by force)."
- Primary passage

1 Thes. 4:15-18 "For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."

- Examples of those gathered: Enoch, Elijah, Jesus

Gen. 5:24 "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."

2 Kings 2:11 "Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

Acts 1:9 "Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight."

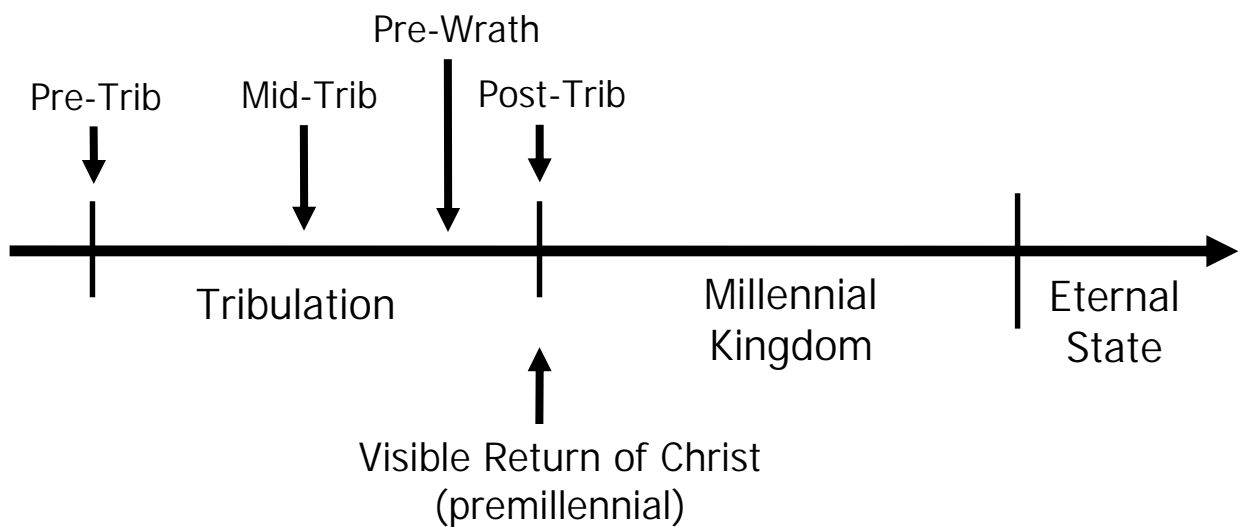
- This is when we will receive our new bodies

1 Cor. 15:51-53 "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed--in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

- Millennial Kingdom - a special time of peace and justice under Christ's rule (see Rev. 20).
- Eternal State - the final never-ending state (see Rev. 21-22)

### 3. Rapture Positions

- Pre-trib rapture – The Church is gathered at the beginning of the tribulation period.  
At that time believers who have died are resurrected.  
Israel & others come to Christ during the tribulation.
- Mid-trib rapture – The Church is gathered halfway through the tribulation period.  
At that time believers who have died are resurrected.  
Israel & others come to Christ after that.
- Pre-wrath rapture – The Church is gathered toward the end of the tribulation period.  
At that time believers who have died are resurrected.  
No one comes to Christ after that.
- Post-trib rapture – The Church is gathered after the tribulation period.  
At that time believers who have died are resurrected.



- I hold to the pre-trib position for the following reasons:
  - Imminence
 

The pre-trib position is the highest imminence position.

Mt. 25:13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

Mk. 13:35 "Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming--in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning--lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

Dan. 12:11 "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days." (Note that the post-trib position is the lowest imminence position).
  - Israel
 

Rom. 11:25-26 "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved,..." (Jewish people, including their leadership, will come to Christ in droves).

Rev. 7:4 "And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:" (Those sealed during the tribulation period are all of Jewish descent; this is Israel's time to serve as the issuers of God's last call to humanity).
  - The restraining force
 

2 Thes. 2:7-8 "For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming." (Consider the possibility that "He who now restrains" is the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church).

- The abomination that causes desolation... an actual tribulation event
  - Predicted by Daniel
 

Dan. 12:11 "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days."
  - Predicted by Jesus
 

Mt. 24:15-16 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."
  - The antichrist declares himself to be God
 

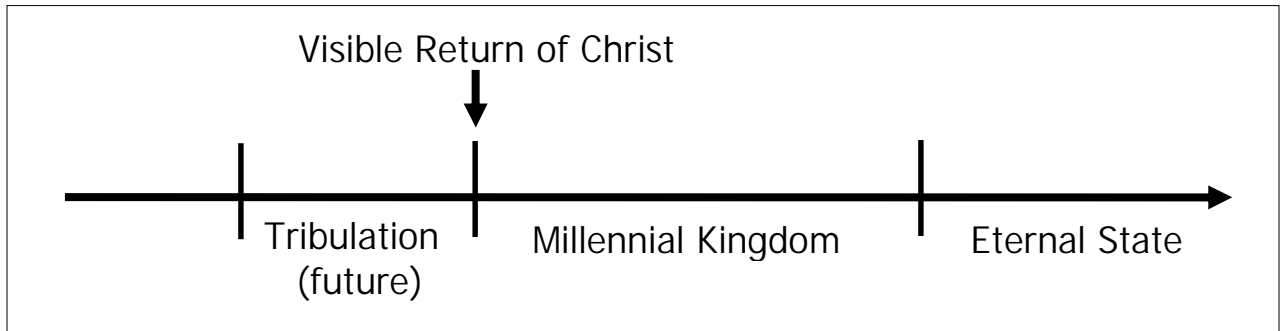
2 Thes. 2:3-4 "Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

Rev. 13:4 "So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, 'Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?' And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven."
  - Midway through a seven "week" (year) period
 

Dan. 9:27 "Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate."

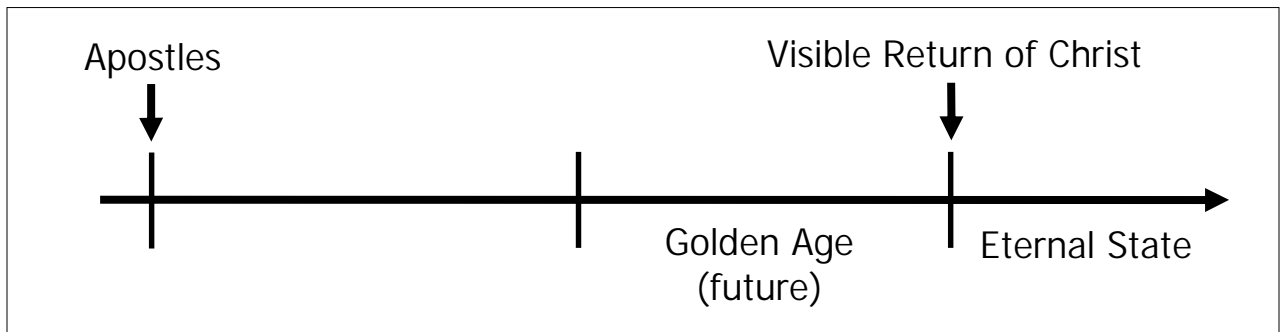
4. Millennial Positions (key passage: Rev. 20:1-8)

- Premillennial -- Jesus visibly returns prior to His millennial rule



I hold to the premillennial position because it best explains tribulation & millennial events (e.g., the abomination that causes desolation).

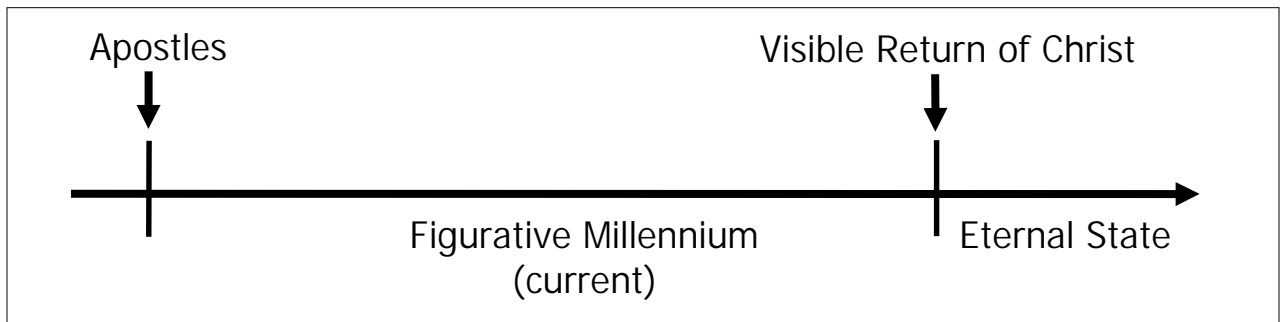
- Postmillennial -- Jesus visibly returns after a golden age ushered in by the Church (most postmillennialists believe that the tribulation was fulfilled in the 1<sup>st</sup> century)



Note: This was a common position when America was being settled.

Question: Are we really heading toward a Golden Age prior to Christ's return?

- Amillennial -- The millennial kingdom is figurative; it's already here; (the tribulation was either fulfilled in the 1<sup>st</sup> century or it's figurative)



Note: This is the common Catholic, Presbyterian, and Lutheran position.

Question: Is Satan really bound (as per Rev. 20:2) at this time?

## 5. The Eternal State (key passage: Rev. 21-22)

- Follows the millennial kingdom of Rev. 20
- The Great White Throne Judgment

Rev. 20:11-15 "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."

- The reality of hell

Mt. 25:45-46 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Mt. 25:30 "And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

- The fate of the unholy trinity

Rev. 20:10 "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."

- Eternity with God... God's work of restoration is complete

Rev. 21:2-4 "Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

## 6. Healthy attitudes

- An underlying hope (Christ and His followers are ultimately victorious)
- A healthy sense of urgency (we don't know how long we have; let's live each day to its fullest)