

All the Key New Testament Words On The End (Eschatology)

When people come to me for advice about understanding eschatology, I usually advise them to go through their New Testament, perhaps with a red pen, and study all the obvious statements regarding the end made by Jesus and the apostles.

I advise them not to delve into the symbolism of Zechariah and the other prophets, or even John's Revelation, but to stick to clear and categorical statements made in non-symbolic contexts. I believe this to be good advice. Only by doing this can one come to a stable and sane template for the events of the end. With this framework in hand, one can then try to fathom the complexities of symbolism – certain that the symbol cannot overturn the straightforward, but must comply in some way.

Sadly, the first choice of many Christians is to read some wacky book or listen to some over-the-top sermon delivered in a passionate oratory. In time they develop a template from such peculiarities and then find themselves unable to interpret even quite simple texts which appear to threaten their false template, which they now feel obliged to defend due to mere subjective emotional ties. Brethren, we must study scripture logically and systematically, taking care to learn line upon line, precept upon precept.

Studying Rev 20:1-4 before one has read all that the Lord Jesus said in plain language is simply foolish. Likewise coming to a conclusion about a secret rapture, two Second Comings of the Lord and a 7-year Great Tribulation, before one has studied all that Paul said in context, is also folly.

This paper is being written to help Bible students do this necessary reading without having to search and struggle with concordances. I will make some comments to clarify the passages but will not give lengthy expositions, wishing to keep the focus of attention upon plain scriptures.

May it help us to gain wisdom.

Jesus' description of the Signs of the End Matthew 24 / Luke 21 / Mark 13

These passages constitute the longest narrative about the end times.¹

Matthew 24

1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.

5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

6 "And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

8 "All these are the beginning of sorrows.

9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.

10 "And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

13 "But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

15 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),

16 "then let those who are in Judaea flee to the mountains.

17 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.

18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.

19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

20 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

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.

22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.

24 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

25 "See, I have told you beforehand.

26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.

27 "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

28 "For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and

¹ Adapted from my paper, *The Signs of the End in Matthew 24*. For more information on these passages, see my paper: *The Signs of the End in the Olivet Discourse*.

they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 “And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 “ Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

33 “So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near – at the doors!

34 “Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

35 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will

by no means pass away.

36 “ But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

37 “But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

38 “For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

39 “and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

40 “Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.

41 “Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.

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

43 “But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

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

Luke 21

6 “These things which you see – the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.”

7 So they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign will there be when these things are about to take place?”

8 And He said: “Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and, ‘The time has drawn near.’ Therefore do not go after them.

9 “But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately.”

10 Then He said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

11 “And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

12 “But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake.

13 “But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.

14 “Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer;

15 “for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.

16 “You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death.

17 “And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake.

18 “But not a hair of your head shall be lost.

19 “By your patience possess your souls.

20 “ But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.

21 “Then let those who are in Judaea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her.

22 “For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 “But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

24 “And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

25 “ And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with

perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;

26 “men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken.

27 “Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 “Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”

29 Then He spoke to them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.

30 “When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near.

31 “So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.

32 “Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place.

33 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

34 “ But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.

35 “For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 “Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

Mark 13

1 Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, “Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!”

2 And Jesus answered and said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately,

4 “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?”

5 And Jesus, answering them, began to say: “Take heed that no one deceives you.

6 “For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and will deceive many.

7 “But when you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet.

8 “For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows.

9 “But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them.

10 “And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

11 “But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

12 “Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

13 “And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

14 “ So when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not” (let the reader understand), “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

15 “Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house.

16 “And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.

17 “But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

18 “And pray that your flight may not be in winter.

19 “For in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be.

20 “And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

21 “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘Look, He is there!’ do not believe it.

22 “For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

23 “But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.

- 24 “ But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;
 25 “the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
 26 “Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.
 27 “And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.
 28 “ Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.
 29 “So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near – at the doors!
 30 “Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.
 31 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.
 32 “ But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.
 33 “Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.
 34 “It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch.
 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 –
 36 “lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.
 37 “And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!”

Comments

This is related to two events: the end of the age and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD (Matt 24:3). These occur in phases.

Phase One (Matt 24:6,8)

- There will be great deception and the coming of false christs, (Matt 24:5).
- There will be wars and rumours of wars (Matt 24:6).
- There will be national uprisings and tribal wars (Matt 24:7).
- And there will be famines, pandemic diseases, and earthquakes. (Matt 24:7)

Phase Two

- All will hate God’s elect people; persecution will arise (Matt 24:9).
- There will be many betrayals and much hatred (Matt 24:10,12).
- Many false prophets will arise and deceive many (Matt 24:11).
- The church must endure through this, there is no secret rapture (Matt 24:13).
- The Gospel of the Kingdom is preached throughout the world, then the end comes (Matt 24:14).

Destruction of Jerusalem and temple in 70AD

After these events, Jesus then qualifies certain matters. The following applies to a time when ‘the abomination of desolation’ occurs in God’s temple (Matt 24:15).

- Those who are in Judaea should flee to the mountains (Matt 24:16).
- One who is on the housetop should not go down to take anything out of his house (Matt 24:17).
- He who is in the field should not go back to get his clothes (Matt 24:18).
- Those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days will be in jeopardy (Matt 24:19).
- The material Jewish Sabbath particularly applies to these people (Matt 24:20).
- A great and unique tribulation occurs (Matt 24:21).
- For the elect’s sake those days will be shortened (Matt 24:22).

These matters seem to especially apply to the fall of Jerusalem. Then Jesus seems to return to general principles and the theme of the end of the world.

General Principles

- Do not be taken in by false christs (messiahs, Matt 24:23).
- False messiahs will manifest great signs and wonders which may even deceive the elect. Jesus emphasises this particular warning (Matt 24:24-6).
- The Second Coming will be like the days of Noah (Matt 24:37). At this time life carried on as normal (Matt 24:38) until the flood came suddenly (Matt 24:39). One died in judgment while another was rescued and saved in the ark (Christ, Matt 24:40-2).

Signs related to the end

- The Second Coming of Christ will be like lightning coming from the east and flashing to the west (Matt 24:27).
- There is a tribulation before this event, which is like the death of the world (Matt 24:28-9).
- After this tribulation there is and unusual eclipse of the sun as well as the moon. The sky will seem to shake as stars fall (Matt 24:29).
- Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matt 24:30).
- Then the elect are gathered (Matt 24:31).

Warnings to be watchful

- Believers will recognise the approaching event (Matt 24:32-33)
- But no one knows the actual time for certain (Matt 24:26,44).
- Since we do not know the actual time, we must always be watchful (Matt 24:42).
- Satan does not know the time of the end (Matt 24:43).

Other passages in the Gospels

Matt 13:40-43

24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;

25 "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.

26 "But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.

27 "So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'

28 "He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'

29 "But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them.

30 'Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." ' "

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

37 He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.

38 "The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*.

39 "The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

40 "Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.

41 "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,

42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Comments

1. The field is the world; the good seed is the church; the tares are unbelievers; the harvest is the end.
 2. At the end the tares have come to fulness. The wickedness of man is complete and ready for reaping and casting into hell.
 3. But note that the wheat also comes to fulness. This means firstly, that the full number of the elect is complete and ready for harvesting to heaven and blessedness. Secondly, it implies that there is a visible testimony of fulness, the wheat is seen to be ready for harvesting, it is full in the ear and fruitful. This implies that there is a strong testimony of the church at the end. This does not mean, however, large numbers or even a visible institutional presence; others passages deny this. At the end the church is an underground body, persecuted but fruitful, similar to the early church in the Roman Empire.
 4. The current church must learn from this and abandon outward, institutional forms (buildings, use of media, advertising, formality, professionalism) and get back to God's pattern, which is a body that meets in homes as a family without formality, but is also a dynamic organism of interdependent ministry.
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Matt 13:47-50

47 " Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind,

48 "which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away.

49 "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just,

50 "and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Comments

The end is the time of separation of the elect and the reprobate. The end of the reprobate is hell, punishment that is felt; torment that is conscious.

Matt 16:27

For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

Comments

The reward is according to faith in Christ. No works merit heaven. Amongst sinners, judgment is according to works and will differ.

Matt 21:43

42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, And it is marvellous in our eyes'?"

43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it."

Comments

1. This is a clear and categorical statement. It teaches that the theocracy in Israel is over and finished. The kingdom of God is no longer only identified with Israel but is now universal. People do not need to become Jewish in order to be part of the kingdom.
 2. The Jews rejected Jesus as their Messiah and lost the kingdom.
 3. This was part of God's sovereign plan to universalise the kingdom; which comprises of all nations, all peoples, and spreads worldwide.
 4. This is not just a rejection of the Jewish religious leaders. Firstly, they represented the people anyway; a rejection of Israel's leaders is a rejection of Israel. Secondly, the people fully supported the religious leaders at the crucifixion and took the responsibility (Matt 27:25) and the followers of Jesus became a frightened minority. Thirdly, this was sealed by the utter destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, as prophesied by Jesus. This meant that the whole Jewish system of worship could no longer be maintained: there was no temple, no city, the nation was dispersed, the priesthood fell into ruin and there was no sacrifice.
 5. This verse alone destroys certain key principles of Dispensationalism.
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Matt 25:31-33

31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats.

33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Matt 25:41, 46

41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels ...

46 "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Comments

1. The first coming of Christ was as a servant; the Second Coming is as a glorious king.
 2. Here we are told that all the angels accompany Christ at that time.
 3. The Day of Judgment is universally public, by special act of God. It comprises of all men who ever lived all in one place.
 4. The end is a time of separation of righteous and wicked, elect and reprobate, sheep and goats.
 5. The end of the wicked (goats) is hell – a place of everlasting fire (judgment) not annihilation. This is the Lake of Fire mentioned in Revelation, which is primarily for the devil and his demons who rebelled against God at the beginning. By following the devil and his lie, sinners are identified with Satan and join him in eternal condemnation.
 6. The righteous elect go into eternal life.
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Lk 17:24

For as the lightning that flashes out of one *part* under heaven shines to the other *part* under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day.

Comments

Confirms Matt 24:27.

Lk 17:26-29

26 "And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:

27 "They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

28 "Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;

29 "but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all.

30 "Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."

Comments

1. Confirms Matt 24:37ff. Life is normal when Christ returns. The world does not expect the end.
 2. The Second Coming is not at the end of a great international battle.
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Lk 22:

29 "And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed *one* upon Me,

30 "that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Comments

Compare Matt 21:43. Further confirmation that the kingdom was taken away from Israel and given to the elect of all nations via the ministry of the apostles. There is one universal people of God manifested in the church, the body of Christ – those who are united to him.

Jn 5:28-29

28 "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice

29 "and come forth -- those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Comments

At the end all men will be raised to face God in judgment. The doing good here is faith in Christ.

Jn 6:39-40

39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Comments

No one who comes to Christ is ever lost but is assured of being raised unto eternal life.

Jn 11:25

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live."

Comments

Believers are raised to life because they are in Christ. He is not only our life now (Gal 2:20), but is our resurrection. Physical death is not the end; believers are assured of eternal life after they die.

Paul's warnings about the end

Rm 2:5-12

5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds":

7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honour, and immortality;

8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness -- indignation and wrath,

9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;

10 but glory, honour, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

11 For there is no partiality with God.

12 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law

Comments

1. The end is a day of wrath and revelation of God's judgment.
 2. The standard of judgment is based on the deeds of the sinner. This is not an indication of works righteousness. Paul later says that 'no one does good' (Rm 3:10,12), echoing the Psalmist (Ps 14:3; Ps 53:3). Those who do good and seek glory are only those who know Christ and have been justified by faith, as Paul explains in chapters 3-5.
 3. Eternal life is merited by righteousness alone, doing good. This righteousness must be perfect, and only the righteousness of the Lord Jesus imputed to believers will do (as Paul goes on to explain in Rm 4ff).
 4. The root of sinful behaviour is selfishness, which leads to refusal to obey the truth.
 5. Condemnation involves tribulation and anguish. It is a conscious torment.
 6. Heaven includes glory, honour and peace to the elect.
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Romans 8

8 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope;

21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now.

23 Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

Comments

1. Creation waits expectantly for release at the last day just as much as believers.
2. This release is 'deliverance from bondage of corruption' and entering into glory without corruption.
3. The main change for believers in this event is the redemption of our body. Our spirit was saved at conversion whereby we received the new nature and became a new creation (Eph 4:22-24; 2 Cor 5:17). Our soul is being saved as we progress in sanctification (1 Pt 1:9; Jm 1:21); but our bodies are changed only at the Second Coming whereby we are made fit to enter heaven (1 Cor 15:49; Phil 3:20-21; 1 Jn 3:2).

Romans 11

12 Now if their fall *is* riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!

15 For if their being cast away *is* the reconciling of the world, what *will* their acceptance *be* but life from the dead?

23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

25 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.

26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

27 For this *is* My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."

28 Concerning the gospel *they are* enemies for your sake, but concerning the election *they are* beloved for the sake of the fathers.

Comments

1. The whole chapter ought to be read to gather the context, even though Paul's subject is primarily election and not the end.
2. Some groups make much of these verses, both premillennialists and postmillennialists.
3. These verses cannot be made to contradict Paul's normal teaching about grace and salvation.
4. Throughout Rm 11, Paul explains that Israel is blind and had stumbled and fallen. Israel is not a spiritual root of the church as claimed by certain groups.² The root mentioned by Paul in v18 is not Israel but the faith of Abraham. Israel is not even the root of itself. When God called Abraham he was not Jewish but an uncircumcised Sumerian. Israel did not formally exist until the Exodus when God formed a nation from the tribes of Jacob. The root of salvation, in the sense of the establishment of a covenant with God for eternal life, is the calling out of Abram and the faith he exercised in God's promise. This faith was also given him by God in grace (as all true faith is (Eph 2-8). This is the root. Israel sprang from Abraham's loins in the flesh, but the promised Seed (Christ) is from Abraham according to the Spirit of promise, according to the covenant (Gal 3:16). Christians are part of Christ and thus part of this Seed (Gal 3:29). Thus the root Paul is talking about is the covenant, promise, faith and Seed involving Abraham, chosen by God. Christians are also Abraham's seed because they are in Christ.
5. Paul explains that a remnant of Israel will be saved (v5) according to God's grace. Jews that do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted back into God's people as they believe in Christ as Messiah (v23).
6. An influx of many Jewish believers into the church would be of great benefit (v12, 15).
7. The question that poses the biggest problem of interpretation is, what does Paul mean by, *blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved?* Commentators argue perennially as to what exactly this means. There are several ideas:
 - *All Israel after the flesh, all physical Jews will be saved at the end – a future group of Jews.* But this denies many scriptures, especially those that state that God does

² Of course it is a foundation in the sense that Christ was a Jew, the OT is Jewish and Christianity arose from Jewish surroundings. But this is indirect.

not deal with men after the flesh at all but chooses by his sovereign good pleasure in eternity. There is certainly no indication of God dealing with Israel as a physical nation anymore. The kingdom is not Jewish; the new covenant is in Christ; the old covenant is cancelled.

- *'Israel' refers symbolically to the whole church gathered in, Jews and Gentiles.* This is a possible explanation.
- *It suggests an end-time Jewish revival where large numbers of Jews are converted.* But this is somewhat contorted; Paul does not mention revival but the salvation of all Israel.
- *It refers to all elect Jews only.* This is a possible, and the better, explanation.

The answer is found by consulting what Paul has said earlier in 9:6-7, **For they *are* not all Israel who *are* of Israel, nor *are* they all children because they are the seed of Abraham.** Thus Paul cannot mean every ethnic Jew, either in the past or the future. Indeed he talks about a remnant only being saved even in this chapter. The idea of a formal spiritual restoration of Israel also contradicts his analogy of the olive tree in this chapter. Saved Jews are now grafted on to the same olive tree with the Gentiles. The old olive tree of Israel is not resurrected. There is only one people of God. Further, Paul has been talking here about the salvation of Jews by faith and joining the church; the disputed text reads: **'And so all Israel will be saved.'** The preposition 'so' is important; it is not 'then' as some apply it. In other words, he has been describing how Jews get saved in the normal way; he is not referring to a future climactic salvation of national Israel. Thus there is no spiritual restoration of the fleshly nation of Israel as the separate people of God. This not only contradicts Paul but also other apostolic statements (such as 1 Pt 2:9). It does not teach that after the fulness of Gentiles has come in every Jew will be saved. After focusing especially on Jews in the context of election, what he teaches is that the elect in physical Israel will also come to fulness just as the elect in the Gentiles.

8. In general Paul is saying that as the end approaches there is a falling away amongst those who were once in the olive tree; there is an increase of wickedness; but the elect (both amongst Gentiles and Jews) will be saved. Fulness is the measure of God's election, not the whole unit. Not every Gentile will be saved and neither will every Jew. This also explains Paul's reference to **'blindness in part has happened to Israel'** i.e. blindness has affected a part of Israel, the part that is not elect. God has hardened the reprobate but not the elect part of Israel; the full number of Jewish elect = the fulness of verse 12. Human nature and Arminians struggle with this passage because they do not accept this election of some (hence Paul strongly defending it from chapter 9-11). This blindness remains until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in – and then comes the end. In keeping with his explanation of election, Paul is simply saying that blindness has affected part of Israel while part is elect. This continues until elect Gentiles also are all converted (the fulness has then come) – and then comes the end. The fulness, the full number of elect, both of Jews and Gentiles, is complete at the same time and ushers in the end. None of God's chosen people are left behind.
9. So, there is no evidence for a future restoration of national Israel as a separate people of God.
10. There is no support here for a future revival amongst Jews that results in the majority, or even all, Jews becoming converted.
11. There is no support for the Dispensational Jewish Root (or Hebraic Root, or Christian Zionism) ideas.

1 Corinthians 15

20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

21 For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those *who are* Christ's at His coming.

24 Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

26 The last enemy *that* will be destroyed *is* death.

47 The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second Man *is* the Lord from heaven.

48 As *was* the *man* of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *Man*, so also *are* those *who are* heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *Man*.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed --

52 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.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

55 "O Death, where *is* your sting? O Hades, where *is* your victory?"

56 The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law.

57 But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Comments

1. Christ is the firstfruits. His resurrection is the beginning of a new race of spiritual people who are united with him. Believers are in Christ.
2. All who are in Christ will be resurrected. There is no doubt and no one left behind. Physical resurrection occurs 'at his coming' (v23). Then comes the end (v24). Note this: there is no gap. Christ returns once, his saints are physically resurrected and then the end comes (the Last Judgment, creation of new heavens and Earth). The kingdom of the elect is delivered to the Father and all human rule (and lives) are destroyed. No trace of man is left on the earth.
3. Since death is destroyed, those who are raised will never die, but enjoy eternal life in an everlasting, incorruptible, spiritual body the image of Christ – the heavenly man.
4. In normal times Christians die ('sleep') and go to heaven to wait for the kingdom. At the Second Coming, those saints then alive on Earth will not taste death but will be transformed (v51). Dead believers will be raised at that time (v52), so that all saints are given new bodies at the same time, the righteous dead in order first (1 Thess 4:16).

See my paper: *Christ - the First Born* regarding point 1.

2 Corinthians 4

14 ... knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present *us* with you.

Comments

- Our resurrection is achieved by the Father.
- All believers in history will be presented to the Father together at the same time.

Philippians 3

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,

21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Comments

1. The believer's real home is with God and not on this earth. He is only passing through this world and has no roots here.
 2. We should be eagerly awaiting the appearance of Christ in glory. Any doctrine of the end which makes believers fearful or seeking to avoid events is unfaithful.
 3. Our body is transformed at the Second Coming.
-

Col 3:4

When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Comments

Christ is the source of life for believers. When he appears, we will be caught up to meet him and be glorified.

1 Thessalonians 4

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 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.

16 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.

17 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.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Comments

1. Dead believers are currently with Christ in heaven and are brought with the Lord on his return to Earth in glory.
 2. All believers are raised together (other passages confirm this), but the righteous dead are treated first. Both groups are taken into the sky by the Lord's side.
 3. The appearing of the Lord is glorious and noisy. There are sounds from heaven (trumpet-type, regal, victory sounds) and the voice of an archangel (proclamatory announcement).
 4. Teaching on eschatology should result in comfort and assurance of victory.
 5. There is absolutely no sense of more than one Second Coming in these verses. Jesus returns with the righteous dead; living believers are caught up with them; both groups are transformed. It is a noisy affair which the whole world hears; the world also sees the glorified Lord. Immediately after this the world is burned up and purified (as other passages make clear). [That anyone could fall for a secret rapture being taught in these verses is astonishing.]
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1 Thess 5:2-3

2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labour pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

Comments

Complies with earlier teaching that the Second Coming is sudden during a time of peace and not war or battle.

2 Thess 1:7-10

7 and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

Comments

1. Rest for the believer only really comes when Christ returns and takes us to be with him forever.
 2. The Second Coming is a time of vengeance upon sinners.
 3. Gospel obedience is required of men. Those who teach that it is not man's duty to repent and believe are wrong (Gospel Standard and some other Reformed Baptists). The basis of man's condemnation is refusal to obey the Gospel.
 4. Hell is eternal punishment. 'Destruction' means separation from God, not annihilation. See 1 Cor 5:5 where the word is used of the disciplining of a sinful believer. There it means separation from the church, dis-fellowship.
 5. Jesus is glorified in his saints at the end and marvelled at by them.
-

1 Thess 3:13

... so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

Comments

The sanctification of believers is completed at the end. No sins are left out, all are dealt with and all personality traits purified ready for heaven. This is the full salvation of the soul. With a holy nature complete we are then given new bodies.

1 Thessalonians 5

1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.

2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labour pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.

5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober.

Comments

1. The Second Coming is sudden.
2. But we should recognise the season of it.

3. Believers ought to be carefully evaluating the times and watching for what God is doing in the turbulent events of the world. We should recognise patterns.
4. One constituent of the season will be a time when the world is at peace all of a sudden.
5. The end is not in the context of war or a great battle.

For more information on this passage, see my paper: *The Antichrist*.

2 Thessalonians 2

1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you,

2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.

3 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,

4 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.

5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.

7 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.

8 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.

9 The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,

12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Comments

1. The Second Coming cannot precede a great falling away.
2. There have been many great apostasies in the church during history, but this one results in the establishment of the revealing of the man of sin.
3. Whatever one's view of what this 'antichrist' is, it is clear that the world is united in a global, wicked, rebellious, blasphemous government that persecutes Christians.
4. Part of the expression of this wicked government is a false religion. There is an expression of evil government in conjunction with a supposedly Christian religion. [Revelation explains this in more detail under the symbol of two beasts or the beast and the false prophet.]
5. A key part of this religious power will be genuine miracle-working empowered by Satan.
6. The foundation of all the rebellion is deception resulting in utter delusion. The love of the truth is the only thing that can combat this deception.
7. The key element in the deception is **the** lie; that is the original lie in Eden, that man can be as God by sinful human power.
8. Those who do not follow the truth will be condemned.
9. At the time Paul wrote there was a restraining force holding back this global government so that the Gospel could be taken to the ends of the earth. Before the end this restraint is removed and Satan has his full sway over the earth through this corrupt government. [A case can be made that this restraint has now been removed.]
10. The essential principle of the wickedness inherent in human government, and the problem of evil in high places, has been evident from the beginning; but at the end it will continue unchecked. Lawlessness will be legalised.

11. When the principle of human wickedness is fully revealed, the Lord will return and destroy this lawless government simply by speaking in glory.
 12. There is no suggestion of more than one coming.
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1 Timothy 4

1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,
 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,
 3 forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

Comments

1. The end is a time when people depart from the faith. There is no global revival of large numbers in churches.
 2. The great danger in the end is deceit. This deceit arises from demonic forces working through trusted leaders.
 3. Lying and hypocrisy characterises these leaders.
 4. Some teach celibacy and special diets.
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2 Timothy 3

1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:
 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,
 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,
 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!
 6 For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts,
 7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.
 8 Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith;
 9 but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.

2 Tim 4

1 I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:
 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;
 4 and they will turn *theirears* away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

Comments

1. The Lord Jesus will judge all men at his appearing, at the start of his kingdom.
2. The last days are perilous. They are dangerous times.
3. This list of wicked character traits is fully evident today.
4. People and churches that manifest such character must be avoided.
5. The truth is absent from such people. Deceit is prevalent.
6. Sound doctrine is denied and cannot be tolerated.
7. Churches fragment as aberrant groups find teachers who will pander to their particular idiosyncrasies of doctrine.
8. As people turn from the truth of scripture, they fall into believing utter fables (invented falsehoods). Such inventions are common in churches today. One large faction teaches

that believers will soon be able to fly, walk through walls, be invulnerable to bullets and will rule the world through apostles and prophets. Such is the fiction accepted by numerous 'Christians'.

The book of Hebrews and Peter's warnings about the end

Heb 9

27 It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

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

Comments

1. This destroys any false ideas about Purgatory or a second chance after death.
 2. Christ's first coming to Earth was to provide atonement for sin, to take away sin of many, but not all. He is the Saviour of the elect not all men. His Second Coming is to enable the consummation of that salvation, the transformation of believers with a new body and the renewing of the earth.
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1 Pt 5:4

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

Comments

This refers to the provision of a glorious new body that will be eternally fitted for heaven. It only comes when the Lord returns.

2 Peter 2

1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction.

2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.

3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

Comments

1. Peter confirms Jesus' warnings that the end will see a proliferation of false prophets and false teachers. Deceit will reign in the church.
 2. Heresies are destructive. We cannot afford toleration of false teaching in any form.
 3. Some heresies will even deny the Lord Jesus while preaching about him in church.
 4. The reward for this is destruction.
 5. However, many church people will follow these heresies and be exploited, resulting in the true way of truth being blasphemed. That is, those who follow the truth will be castigated and the word of God denied and decried.
 6. Behind the heresy is often covetousness, and lust for money. Many false teachers will lead big organisations that have a huge financial turnover.
-

2 Peter 3

3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,

4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation."

5 For this they wilfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water,

6 by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water.

7 But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

15 and consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation -- as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,

Comments

1. At the end things are much as they have been throughout history. Men will mock the expectation of believers.
 2. The end is a time of fire, unlike the flood. At the end, the world is burned up with all its works and all mankind will die and be raised to face God in judgment. The result of judgement on sinners is condemnation and perdition (eternal destruction in hell).
 3. The reason why God is patient is that he will not institute the end until the last elect person has been converted.
 4. The end is sudden and noisy. No secret rapture here. The heavens (sky) and elements (Earth) are burned up. Everything of man is destroyed and purified by fire.
 5. This expectation should be a prompt to righteousness now.
 6. The end cannot be advanced by believers (its time is determined by the last elect person). Hastened here means 'desire earnestly'.
 7. After the dissolving of the existing earth, a new heavens and Earth are created by God.
 8. The new Earth is a place of righteousness.
 9. We should look forward to this time.
-

Jude and John's warnings about the end

Jude

14 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints,

15 "to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

16 These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling *words*, flattering people to gain advantage.

17 But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ:

18 how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.

19 These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.

Comments

1. Jude confirms what Paul and Peter have said earlier.
 2. The Lord comes with his saints and executes judgment on sinners on the last day.
 3. The end is characterised by selfishness, deceit, mocking of God, lusts, pride and people causing divisions.
 4. Note there is great sensuality in the schismatics. This does not just imply sexual temptation but the passion of emotions. Much modern worship is sensual in that it is superficial and emotional.
-

1 Jn 3:2

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

1 Jn 4:17

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

Comments

1. The new bodies we will receive will, in some small measure, be like Christ's resurrected body.
 2. We will see God as he is, we will fellowship with the glorified Christ.
 3. On the Day of Judgment we can be confident because we are in Christ. Knowing God's love for us, we do not need to fear. Our confidence is in the shed blood of Jesus.
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1 John 2

18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us

2 John 1:7

7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ *as* coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Comments

1. John's description of the Antichrist complies with Paul's description of the Lawless One.
 2. The concept of Antichrist has been evidenced from the beginning of the church.
 3. This antichrist spirit involves apostasy (falling away) as a result of deception. There is the pretence of being Christian followed by acting wickedly.
 4. The word 'Antichrist' essentially means 'in place of Christ', and not just 'opposed to Christ'. The Antichrist is someone who sets himself up in Christ's place, pretending to be the temple of God, the dwelling place of God. It is rooted in deceit.
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Summary of simple and clear facts derived from these passages

The time of preparation

The beginning of the sorrows

- Deceit: Matt 24:4-5; Mk 13: 5-6; Lk 21: 8; 2 Thess 2: 9-12; 1 Tim 4:1-3; 2 Tim 4: 3-4; 2 Pt 2:1-3
- False christs: Matt 24:5; Mk 13:6
- Many wars: Matt 24:6; Mk 13:7; Lk 21:9
- Famines, pandemics: Matt 24:7-8; Mk 13:8; Lk 21:10-11

Deceit

- The end is a time of deception.
- Doctrines of demons are prevalent.
- The formal church is full of deception, false doctrine and erroneous practices.
- There are many false teachers, false prophets and false messiahs.
- There are many false miracles.

World government and social structures

- There will be wars, unrest, instability and political upheavals.
- There will be national uprisings, disasters and tribal conflicts.
- There will be international distress and people living in fear.
- And there will be famines, global plagues & pandemic (national/regional) diseases.
- There will be earthquakes and other natural disasters.

The state of the church

- There is no global revival in formal Christianity, rather there is desertion from the true church.
- The institutional church is riddled with deceit.
- The true church will be an underground movement meeting in homes, as at the first.
- There are many false teachers, false prophets and false messiahs taking advantage of gullible 'Christians'.
- Many people will believe in fictitious doctrines and follow unbiblical imposed disciplines.

- There will be the appearance of power (fleshly forms of power: large numbers, imposing buildings, emotional worship, popular leaders, media attention) but no spiritual power.

The time of fulness

Tribulation

Has a parallel with the destruction of Jerusalem: Matt 24:15-22; Mk 13:14-20; Lk 21:20-24

Worldwide persecution: Matt 24:9; Mk 13:9, 11; Lk 21:12-15

Brotherly hatred: Matt 24:10, 12; Mk 13:12-13; Lk 21:16-19

False prophets: Matt 24:11, 24; Mk 13:21-23

Universal preaching of the Gospel: Matt 24:14; Mk 13:10

Revelation of antichrist: 2 Thess 2; 1 Jn 2:18-22, 4:3

Signs in heaven: Matt 24:29; Mk 13:24-25; Lk 21:25-26

Wicked world government

- There is a global government founded upon Satanic principles and empowered by the devil.
- This government has two key administrations: 1) authoritarian secular power; 2) religious and pretended Christian power.
- It will provide a stable peace in the world.
- This government will persecute true Christians.
- There is a formal, authoritarian movement of false prophecy.

The true church

- There is a great tribulation for true believers which the church cannot avoid.
- There is no secret rapture.
- All will hate God's elect people and there will be many betrayals.
- The Gospel of the Kingdom is preached throughout the world.

The earth

- After this tribulation there is an unusual eclipse of the sun as well as the moon.
- The sky will seem to shake as stars fall.
- Then the end comes.

The end

The Lord's Return: Matt 24; Lk 17:24, 21; Mk 13; 1 Cor 15; Col 3:4; 1 Thess 3:13, 4:15-17; 2 Thess 2:1ff; 1 Pt 1:13; 1 Jn 2:28

General Resurrection & Day of Judgment: Matt 13:40-43, 47-50; 16:27; 25:31-33; Mk 13:27; Rm 2:5-12; 2 Tim 4:1; Heb 9:27; Matt 25:41, 46; Jn 5:28-29; Jn 6:39-40; Thess 1:7-10; Rev 11:15-18, 20:10-15

Saints perfected: Jn 6:39-54, 11:25; 1 Cor 15:21-24, 51-54; Col 3:4; 1 Thess 3:13, 4:15-17; Heb 9:28; 1 Pt 5:4; 1 Jn 2:28, 3:2, 4:17

New Heaven and earth: Rm 8:20-23; 2 Pt 3:10-13; Rev 6:14-17

The Second Coming

- Only occurs once. Thus there can be no millennial reign in between two comings of the Lord. There is no basis for the idea that different Greek words teach different comings.

See Appendix One; here the Greek words are analysed and it reveals that they are synonymous. They all refer to different aspects of the Lord's one return.

- The Lord's return is glorious, globally witnessed, and noisy.
- It is accompanied by angelic powers.
- At his coming, every human being dies, to be raised again for judgment.
- The dead saints appear with the Lord and are transformed. Living saints are caught up with the Lord in the sky and transformed after the righteous dead. All saints then appear in glory with the Lord.
- The earth is burned up and all human trappings destroyed.

The judgment

- The wicked are arraigned before God's judgment seat and condemned. They give an account of their sin and witness to their own destruction. Everyone who ever lived witnesses everything that takes place. Every idle word is judged.
- The wicked are thrust into hell.
- The devil and his demons are thrust into hell.
- Hell is a place of eternal torment and separation from God.
- There is no Purgatory, no second chance, and no annihilation. The suffering of the condemned is conscious.

The new beginning

- A new heavens and Earth are created by God.
- God dwells on Earth with men, who live in righteousness, peace and blessing forever.
- Heaven and Earth are united once more.

Things that we do not see mentioned at all

Traits of various forms of Premillennialism and Dispensationalism

1. Any kind of millennium.
2. A secret rapture.
3. Two Second Comings.
4. A millennial reign of Christ on an un-renewed Earth (either premillennial or postmillennial).
5. The throne of Christ established in physical Jerusalem.
6. A great tribulation that lasts seven years, split into two halves.
7. A Jewish kingdom.
8. A theocracy in a Jewish millennial kingdom.
9. The Gospel being preached by a remnant of believing Jews only.
10. The restoration of David's physical kingship and an earthly throne.
11. A rebuilt Jewish temple.
12. Hordes of people from Gog and Magog (usually interpreted as Russia or some form of Soviet power) attacking Jerusalem.
13. A physical battle in a place called Armageddon.
14. More than one Day of Judgment.
15. A separation of Christians into two classes: the overcomers and the ordinary believers.

Traits of various forms of Postmillennialism, Reconstructionism and Dominionism

16. A global revival in unprecedented numbers.

17. The world becoming gradually Christianised.
18. Christians ruling the world by influence.
19. The establishment of Mosaic Law worldwide.
20. The global rule of apostles and prophets.
21. The true church controlling global political power.
22. Christians who have super powers (able to fly, walk through walls or be invulnerable).

It is absolutely crucial that we develop our understanding of eschatology on the basis of Gospel truth and not weird ideas of men – no matter how widespread and popular these ideas may be. The list of errors above represents the majority view amongst Christians today – and yet it is clear that these ideas are completely false and damage those who hold them. In earlier times in Church history this was not the case.

The various ideas on the end today are generated by different interpretations of Rev 20:1-4; where the notion of a millennium (a 1,000 year golden age) comes from. However, careful reading of the text shows that this is not being taught at all but refers to the Gospel age, the time when Satan is restrained so that the Gospel may flourish. At the end he is released for a while (as 2 Thess 2 teaches) so that man's wickedness comes to fulness – and then the end comes. This complies exactly with the clear NT passages on eschatology. This view is Amillennialism which has been universally held throughout church history, by various churches, until the 20th century. It holds that there is no millennium. The different views today are based on the proposal that Christ returns either before or after this imaginary millennium.

Forms of Postmillennialism

Postmillennialism was held by only a few, and not really in any numbers until the 1600s. The radical Dominionist Postmillennialism (Triumphalism) is really very modern existing in two forms. The first is Reformed (mostly American) and holds that a time is coming when Mosaic Law will rule the earth (Reconstructionism or Theonomy). The second is the more common form, which is represented in the triumphalism and crazy ideas of Charismatics. These ideas originated in the Latter Rain heresy of the 1940s, which was outlawed by the US Assemblies of God churches. It is this teaching that espouses such ideas as Christians being able to fly or be invulnerable to bullets at the end. It was resurrected via John Wimber, Paul Cain, Rick Joyner and others and now holds sway in the Apostolic and Prophetic Movement, dominated by people such as C. Peter Wagner. There are many aspects of this, such as: the global rule of apostles; the idea of Territorial Spirits that must be controlled; or spiritual mapping followed by planting cell groups to defeat demons.

Forms of Premillennialism

Historic Premillennialism is ancient, being derived from Jewish ideas, but it was not ever widely held amongst theologians and was derided as *Chiliasm*, based on the Greek word for 1,000 years. At the time of the Reformation, it was held by very few, and usually by extreme Anabaptists, and was in such ridicule that Calvin did not even bother to write against it as it was held in derision by all sound theologians and needed no treatment.

Dispensationalism did not exist in history at all until after 1830 when it was propagated by Edward Irving's apostolic church in London, which was later scandalised and riddled with heresy. Irving died a broken, disappointed man. If Brethren leaders William Kelly and John Darby had not taken it up, popularised in Scofield's Bible, it would have vanished.

It is a modified form of the old Premillennialism. The root idea of this complex theology is that God deals differently with his people in different historical dispensations

(administrations of the Gospel). This leads to a separation of the church from Israel, thus forming two people of God that each have different characteristics, promises, covenants and hope. This is the key element of Dispensationalism and it is something never before seen in church history. This heresy has led to further errors, such as the Jewish Root Movement where Jewish features are brought back into the church 2,000 years after Paul taught that they have no place, where there is no Jew or Greek but one people in Christ.

The idea of a secret rapture originated from the occult, tongues-speaking and visions of a sick and deluded, teenage girl called Margaret Macdonald in 1830. This idea was then taken up by Edward Irving and published in his church magazine, *The Morning Watch* and discussed at various conferences. It was the missing link they had waited for in formulating their new plan for eschatology. The rapture has different places in the various forms of Dispensationalism. Some are Pre-Tribulation (saints are raptured before the tribulation), some are Mid-Trib. others are Post-Trib. Due to its many errors, Dispensationalism is always changing and adapting. Most common is the classic form taught in Scofield's Bible, but this has virtually been abandoned by scholars as it is so erroneous. Some academic forms, such as Progressive Dispensationalism, are beginning to approach Amillennialism.

Conclusion

It is important to remember that what we are examining here are the clear, simple, straightforward facts about the end, as taught by Christ and his apostles. God does not play games with his children, but wants them to understand his truth and live in the good of it. These texts give us a very simple and clear understanding of the end, and instructions how we should behave. There is no need to make it more complicated and all other obscure passages on the end must comply with this clear teaching.

Developing novel doctrines that are not taught in these clear passages is not only dangerous but it is evil. If we cannot find the false features listed above being taught by Jesus and the apostles, then they are not scriptural at all. Different eschatological systems have formulated their ideas from various sources; notably from obscure prophetic OT passages and from a few places in Revelation. Due to the obscure nature of the passages, even interpreters in the same school contradict each other as to what they mean. However, some ideas (such as a secret rapture) originated outside of scripture.

It is poor interpretation to begin with the obscure or symbolic and then make the clear passages fit into some fantastic scheme. It is much worse to then develop a whole mythology based upon these weird schemes, as we find in many supposedly 'Christian' works of fiction on the end.

I urge you to read the clear passages for yourself and come to your own conclusions. My comments are to help clarify the passages, but they are not necessary to come to a clear understanding. Ignore my comments if you prefer, but please do study the words of Jesus and his apostles and search the scriptures to gain understanding.

The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple. Ps 119:130

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Appendix One Greek Synonyms For The Second Coming

Events	His 'Coming'	His 'Appearing'	His 'Manifestation'	His 'Revelation'	End of the World	Day of the Lord	7 th (last) Trumpet, Vial, Seal	Great White Throne
	<i>Erchomai</i> <i>Parousia</i>	<i>Optanomai</i> <i>Phaneroo</i>	<i>Epiphaneia</i>	<i>Apokalupto</i>		<i>last day or hour</i>		
Destruction of Earth; New Heaven & Earth	2 Pt 3:4,13					Rev 6:14,17 2 Pt 3:10,12	Rev 16:20	Rev 20:11
General Resurrection						Jn 5:29 Jn 11:24		Heb 9:27 Rev 20:11-12
Dead saints appear with the Lord; Live saints changed; purified & glorified	2 Thess 2:1 1 Thess 3:13, 4:15-17 1 Jn 2:28	Col 3:4 1 Jn 2:28					Rev 7:15 1 Thess 4:15-17	
Saints resurrected	1 Cor 15:23 1 Thess 4:15	Col 3:4 1 Jn 3:2		1 Pt 1:13		Jn 6:39-54	1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thess 4:15-16	
Separation of righteous and wicked	Matt 24:37-40, 25:31-46			Lk 17:29-35	Matt 13:40-43, 47-50	Matt 7:22-23		
Judgment of wicked for sin / tribunal of righteous for rewards	2 Thess 1:8-10		2 Tim 4:1			1 Jn 4:17	Rev 11:15-18	Rev 20:11-12
Saints rewarded	Matt 16:27 1 Jn 2:28 1 Thess 3:13	1 Pt 5:4	2 Tim 4:8	2 Thess 1:7-10 1 Pt 1:13, 4:13	Matt 13:40-43	1 Cor 3:13-15 2 Thess 1:10	Rev 7:16-17, 11:18; 1 Thess 4:15-17	
Wicked condemned	Matt 16:27, 25:41-46 2 Thess 2:8			2 Thess 1:7-10	1 Cor 15:24-26; Matt 13:49-50	2 Pt 2:9, 3:2-7; Rm 2:5; Jude 6; 1 Thess 5:1-3	Rev 11:18, 19:10	Jude 6 Rev 6:14-17
Seen by all	Matt 24:27			Lk 17:24				
Waited for and looked for	1 Thess 1:10	Heb 9:28*	1 Tim 6:14 Titus 2:13	1 Cor 1:7 1 Pt 1:13, 4:13		2 Pt 3:12		2 Pt 3:12
Destruction of Satan & his works	2 Thess 2:8						Rev 19:20	Dan 7:11 Rev 20:10

*Heb 9:28 = *optanomai*, only used here

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Appendix Two
A Tabular Comparison
Of Jesus' Teaching and Modern Eschatology

What Jesus and the apostles taught clearly	Teachings of Historic Premillennialism	Teachings of Dispensational Premillennialism	Teachings of Historic Postmillennialism	Teachings of Dominionist Postmillennialism
Note: this = Amillennialism				
There is one people of God.	There is one people of God. However, some teach that there are two classes at the end: ordinary believers and the overcomers.	The church is a separate entity to Israel. The kingdom belongs to the Jews alone. Two peoples of God, two forms of salvation, two kingdoms.	There is one people of God.	There is one people of God. However, there are those who support apostles/prophets and those who do not and are second class.
Jews are converted in the same way as Gentiles, by the Gospel, throughout the church age. Salvation is always by faith.	Israel is converted in a powerful revival before the Second Coming. Salvation is by faith.	Israel is converted in a powerful revival during the tribulation. In the OT Jews are saved through law-keeping.	Israel is converted in a powerful revival during the millennial golden age of the church. Salvation is by faith.	A) Israel is converted in a powerful revival. Salvation is by faith. B) Jews are converted in the same way as Gentiles by the Gospel.
Saints experience great tribulation and persecution. No mention of duration.	Saints go through the great tribulation of 7 years.	1. Saints escape tribulation by a secret rapture (Pre-Trib). 2. Saints escape part of the tribulation when Christ returns secretly after 3½ years (Mid-Trib). 3. Saints go through the great tribulation of 7 years (Post-Trib).	No great tribulation; the church grows in righteous influence and the Gospel spreads in revival.	No great tribulation; the church grows in power and rules the world.
There is a single, glorious return of the Lord Jesus seen by all.	One return before a millennium.	Two returns; one in secret the other visibly 7 years later (after tribulation).	One return after a millennium.	A) One return after a millennium. B) (More extreme Charismatic form.) No return at all.
The Second Coming is during a time of peace and normal social activity.	The Second Coming is during a time of rebellion and war.	The Second Coming is during a time of rebellion and war. [Gog & Magog attack Jerusalem but are destroyed at Armageddon.]	The Second Coming is during a time of revival.	A) The Second Coming is during a time when the church is triumphant. B) The Second Coming is not required as the church is supreme and apostles/prophets rule the earth for God.
No mention of a 1,000-year reign on Earth as it is now, in any form at all.	Teaches a millennium reign of Christ on Earth after his return.	Teaches a millennium reign of Christ after his return. [In this time the Jewish temple is rebuilt and sacrifices re-established. David's throne set up in Jerusalem, from which Christ rules.]	Teaches a millennium reign of Christ through the church before his return.	A) Teaches a millennium reign of the church triumphant before Christ's return. B) Teaches the church reigns on Earth through apostles and prophets.

Papers for further reference

Regarding general eschatology³

- *A Very Simple Summary of the Main Eschatological Positions* (Concise eschatology).

Regarding the different theological positions held

- *A Concise and Very Simple Breakdown of the Different Views on the End*. Tabular diagram.
- *Introduction to Eschatology - A Simple Evaluation of the Doctrine of The Second Coming of Jesus Christ*.

Regarding eschatological texts

- *Eschatology Texts* - Texts grouped around the primary words for Christ's coming.⁴
- *The Order of Events in the End Times Denoted by Clear Scriptures*. Similar to this paper, and shorter, but laid out from the perspective of events instead of text order. It also includes passages from John's Revelation.

³ Eschatology is the doctrine of the last things, the end times: Christ's second coming, death, judgment, heaven and the new earth.

⁴ These verses should be read in conjunction with the diagram: *Scripture Texts Regarding The End* which graphically shows the link of all verses on this subject. This is given here in Appendix 1.