

# A Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

## Part 11 Eschatology

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## Part 11 Eschatology – The Doctrine of Last Things

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes” (Matthew 24:15-18).

Eschatology is the study of last things. Coming from the Greek, “But many that are first shall be last (*εσχατος* – *eschatos*) and the last (*εσχατος* – *eschatos*) first” (Mark 10:31), and “ology”<sup>1</sup>, a word, a discourse, a doctrine, a teaching. There is no greater testimony of intimate friendship than one revealing all their future plans and aspirations to their friend. Jesus said it this way, “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you” (John 15:15). The Lord Jesus Christ materialized this intimacy in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, and only those on an intimate basis with Christ can read its pages with an ear to hear.<sup>2</sup> Consequentially, what one grasps in the study of eschatology is a good indicator of their standing in the intimacy of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christendom, on a whole has failed this test of intimacy, and the Catholic Church, whether Roman or Reformed, is herein shown to be apostate.

When our Lord Jesus Christ gave his Apostle John his Revelation he commanded, “Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter” (Rev 1:19). The latter of these three is eschatology. The first is of course what John

1 *ology* is from the Greek meaning a word, a discourse, a doctrine, a teaching, a matter under discussion, a thing spoken of or talked about, also the mental faculty of thinking, meditating, or reasoning about Others have limited this suffix by equating it to the English word science, which is “The observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation of phenomena.” There really is no English equivalent that can capture the depth of ology, it is literally to go on, and on, and on about a topic with pen, or speech, or thought.

2 De 29:4, Eze 12:2, Mt 11:15 13:9,43, Mr 4:9,23 7:16, Lu 8:8 14:35, Re 2:7, 11, 17, 29 3:6, 13, 22, 13:9

wrote in his gospel record and in his three epistles, i.e. “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it...)” (1John 1:1-2a). That constitutes, for the Apostle John, “The things which thou hast seen.”

“The things which are,” were written by the Apostle John when he wrote the seven messages to the seven churches. When John, the last living Apostle wrote in the end of the first century A.D. the “*things which are*” consisted of the local independent autonomous churches. The fact that there were seven messages to seven churches emphasizes both independence and completeness. Ergo the church is not “catholic” and the time period for the present age, i.e. the church age, is displayed in its completeness. Thus the first chapter of Revelation is relegated to Jesus' first category, “The things that thou hast seen;” the second and third chapters are relegated to “the things which are,” and chapters four through twenty two are the eschatology that is to be examined in this volume.

Before correlating those nineteen chapters of the Revelation of Jesus Christ with the doctrine of the last things, it needs to be said that the seven messages to the seven churches correlates to the church history that we have seen transpire in the last two thousand years. That is not coincidence and a thorough exposition of that correlation can be found in our ecclesiology in volume nine of this work.

The real key in understanding what Christ has revealed in the last nineteen chapters of his revelation, i.e. eschatology, only comes when one understands that God works with man in seven distinct dispensations. Christ gives to the Apostle John three distinct time divisions to write down. When John wrote “*what he had seen*,” i.e. Jesus before his ascension, he recorded the transition period between the dispensation of law and the dispensation of grace. When he

recorded “*the things which are*,” i.e. the seven messages to the seven churches (Rev 2-3), he wrote about the dispensation of grace. When the Apostle John wrote “*the things which shall be hereafter*” he recorded the transition period after the dispensation of grace and before the dispensation of the kingdom (Rev 4-19), then the kingdom (Rev 20), and then the new heaven and the new earth (Rev 21-22). If one does not rightly divide God's seven dispensations they cannot rightly divide the word of truth, and they certainly cannot construct a Biblical eschatology. And if one does not clearly distinguish and delineate the seven year transition period between grace and kingdom, the period where the seven sealed book of judgment is being unsealed, trumpeted, and then vialled out, the period where the 144 thousand Jews are the gospel witnesses because the church has been raptured out, well then there will be great confusion throughout every aspect of their eschatology. It is quite like putting a jigsaw puzzle together, wherein we put the frame together first.

Thus, in this introduction to a Biblical eschatology, we need to clearly outline the seven dispensations and review the transition periods between each. We also need to examine the Covenant Theology and Replacement Theology which keeps Roman Catholicism and Protestant Reformers from the truth of dispensationalism. One can safely say that all of “Christendom” is pursuing this false teaching. The Roman Church conceived it, John Calvin constructed it, the Protestant Church pursued it, and Reformed Theology embraces it. Ergo every denomination of Christianity is tainted by Covenant Theology. Further every false cult of Christianity sprang from this wild root of apostate error. Consequently, this introduction will also briefly survey some of the foolish gangling that comes from Covenant Theology.

## ***God's Seven Dispensations Outlined***

An understanding of dispensations is best introduced starting in the book of Genesis. So is an understanding of God, understanding of man, and understanding of redemption. But presuming some understanding of those three, let us focus on the very first dispensation, which is often called “Innocence.”

### **The First Dispensation – Innocence**

God placed man in the Garden of Eden with a specific requirement of obedience. He was left in that testing for a period of time to “see” how he would fare. He fared poorly, and was consequently removed from the Garden. There were consequences for his failure and that period of testing, for all mankind, was abruptly ended. Now a new set of guidelines must be determined, a new testing of mankind would be pursued.

In that scenario there is a general set of guidelines which define a dispensation (Greek - οἰκονομία – *oikonomia* translated in English “dispensation,” four times and “stewardship,” three times). It is defined in the lexicon, *the management, oversight, or administration of a household or of other property- usually owned by another*. A dispensation contains 1) a set of rules, guidelines or expectations given by God, 2) a period of time wherein man is tried or tested under the guidelines, and 3) a distinct ending of the testing period wherein (it shall be seen as the pattern develops) man fails to live up to the guideline. The word *dispensation* is used four times in the Holy Bible (1Cor 9:17, Eph 1:10, 3:2, and Col 1:25). Additionally it is translated *stewardship* three times (Luke 16:2, 3, 4). The understanding of stewardship might better refine what a dispensation is because as a *steward* one is left in charge of what belongs to another, there is a period of time where they are accountable, and there is a definite ending wherein “the Lord of the vineyard” returns (cf Matt 21:33-46). The first dispensation, *innocence* in the Garden of

Eden, illustrates well these three concepts of a dispensation.

### **The Second Dispensation – Conscience**

What were the rules after man was removed from the Garden of Eden? C.I. Scofield labeled the second dispensation “*Conscience.*” Therein man did what was right in his own mind. In the dispensation of conscience the first born man became the first first-degree murderer. Note particularly in that murder report that man was not to take vengeance or retribution on Cain for his act of murder. Instead man had to answer for himself before a Holy God. Note also that a blood sacrifice was required in this age of conscience. Even if the learned scholar cannot find it in Genesis chapter four, the Bible believer knows the principle well from Hebrews 9:22, “And almost all things are by law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood is no remission (of sin).”

How did this dispensation of conscience end? “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart” (Gen 6:5-6). The flood brought the second dispensation to an expedient end. A new dispensation would now begin.

### **The Third Dispensation – Government**

When man's conscience before God was unable to keep him from evil, God installed a dispensation wherein man was accountable to man to curb him from evil. C.I. Scofield labeled the third dispensation “*Government.*” Human government has three primary responsibilities in this endeavor, 1) to promote the good, 2) to punish the bad, and 3) to protect the innocent. It is intended to keep a restraint on man's depravity, iniquity and evil. It finds its root and basis in

God's command, “And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man’s brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man” (Gen 9:5-6). Of course much more could be said about this dispensation, but consider that it did have other provisions, like shortened life spans, the eating of meat, and its tower of Babel consequence (Gen 6:3, 9:3, 11:3). Note also that this dispensation did not formally end, it just got dispersed to all the nations of the world when they dispersed with confounded languages. In that sense the role and principles of human government continue until today. Anyone can see its initial, and then repeated failures on man's part. In any event there was a failure of government to restrain man's evil and God moves on to a new trial for man.

### **The Fourth Dispensation – Promise**

With the failure of nations in curbing man from iniquity God chooses to construct one particular and peculiar nation and calls Abram as the father of this chosen nation. He gives Abram profound promises and Abram believes God. C.I. Scofield labeled the fourth dispensation “*Promise.*” Much more could be said about this dispensation of promise but suffice it to say some of the promises were unconditional and are yet to be fulfilled, i.e. Israel will occupy all of the promised land in peace and safety. The dispensation closes with the seed of Abraham still holding the promises. They have divided into twelve tribes of Israel (previously named Jacob), but they are in bondage in Egypt.

Dispensations are divinely ordered stewardships by which God reveals himself, reveals man's depravity, and reveals his longsuffering. It becomes increasingly apparent that every stewardship testing of man ends in man's failure. The fact that there are seven such stewardship



tests emphasizes that God is giving man every opportunity to do right. Yet each dispensation ends in the abject failure of man. Of all the failed dispensations, the failure under this one may have been more providentially driven than depravity driven, but it still depicts a failure. The failed innocence dispensation brought death, conscience – flood, government – babble, promise – bondage. In the fifth dispensation God would lay down the law for his chosen nation.

### **The Fifth Dispensation – Law**

The promised seed of Abraham, which were to inherit God's promised land, were redeemed from bondage in Egypt and read the Law of God by God himself. This began the dispensation called *Law*. The children of Israel agreed to obey all the laws of God. God agreed to bless them and give them all the promised land if they did. A quick read through the book of Judges confirms that they did not, and thus he did not.

It needs to be clarified that the law was only given to the promised seed of Abraham, i.e. the twelve tribes of Israel. It was not given to Gentile nations. It was not given as a model law for Gentile nations to pattern their laws after, and it was not given as a model law for the Christians, or the pious, or the religious. It was given to keep Israel a holy and a peculiar people in all the earth (Exo 19:5, Deut 14:2, 26:18, Psalm 135:4). The severe penalties of death by stoning were given so that this holy, peculiar people could “put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear” (Deut 21:21, cf 17:17, 19:19, 22:21, 24:7).

Consternation is dolled out to Christians who do not understand the dispensations, this dispensation or this purpose of the law. First because many religionists and “*Clergy*”<sup>3</sup> construct some form of works salvation where they pick a few choice laws and disregard others. Second because Christians themselves are confused and troubled about God having a man stoned

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3 Recall that true Christianity has no clergy, or laity, or Nicolaitans, cf Rev 2:6, 15.

because he picked up sticks on a Sabbath (Num 15:32-36). And third because the world mocks the Christian because he does not know how to explain the conflict between law and grace. Such consternation is relieved when one understands the realities of the dispensation of law. It is for Israel's peculiarity and for Gentiles learning (Gal 3:24-25).

Although the law, given to God's chosen nation Israel, is not set as a model for other nations to follow there are many moral principles and civil laws which are exemplary models for other Gentile nations. Many of our US laws are based on God's laws for Israel. Our Creator's requirements for moral right and wrong are discernible. Criminal laws for murder and manslaughter, civil laws for stealing, property damage and restitution can certainly find a place in our legal systems. But the death penalty punishments and the eye for an eye consideration must be left in their context for the dispensation of law. All of Israel's dietary laws, ceremonial laws, and other laws designed to keep Israel a peculiar people must be kept in their proper context, in order to rightly divide the Word of Truth.

And so Israel was given a myriad of laws to keep her a holy people, a peculiar people, and a chosen nation of God. She remained only the latter of those three and after her chastisements only one tribe remained. The Hebrews are now called Jews, because the only tribe left in Israel at the coming of her Messiah was Judah. The only begotten Son of God came as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, to be the king of the Jews. But after being under law for fifteen hundred years (BC 1492 – 30 AD) the lawyers, scribes and Pharisees of the Jews rejected their king. Indeed they had the Romans crucify him under their laws. Although the Jews rejected Jesus as their Messiah and King, their King did not reject them. The promise of God is emphatic, the Christ will sit on the throne of David and rule and reign the twelve tribes of Israel as he said. But after they rejected him as their king, he goes to the Gentiles, and temporarily the Gentiles

become his people. That makes for a separate and distinct dispensation, the dispensation of grace, the age of the church.

### **The Sixth Dispensation – Grace and Truth**

“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof” (Matt 21:43).... “For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).

In the sixth dispensation the promises that were made to the Jews are temporarily set aside and God's grace was extended to all people. “For by grace are ye saved through faith” (Eph 2:8a) is the hallmark of this dispensation. The salvation available in this dispensation differs from any other: individual's are Converted – Justified – Quickened – Indwelt – and Immersed-in-Christ. They are consequently sealed by the Holy Spirit of God and that new-birth, salvation, conversion, cannot be undone. It has been said, “In the Old Testament God made a temple for the people, in the New Testament God makes a people for his temple. A whole volume of this systematic theology deals with soteriology. Suffice it to say here that it has never been easier for man to be in a right relationship with his Creator, Jehovah God, and yet this dispensation of Grace and Truth (John 1:17) is destined to end “as it was in the days of Noe,... as it was in the days of Lot...” (Luke 17:26, 28).

The dispensation of grace will come to an end, and it will end in a failure of mankind. It is a failure to accept God's simple plan of salvation (Heb 2:3). The ending of the sixth dispensation and the beginning of the seventh and final dispensation is really the beginning of a Biblical eschatology. The doctrine of last things includes the closing of the Church age, or the dispensation of Grace and Truth, and the ushering in of the last dispensation.

## **The Seventh Dispensation – The Kingdom**

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end (Luke 1:31-33). And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever (Rev 11:15). And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (Rev 19:16).

It has been resoundingly promised that the Jewish Messiah (Greek *Christ*) would be the King of the Jews, i.e. the King of Israel, who sits on the throne of David. That fact is hated by Satan and refuted with tenacity by the Roman Church. The despise of that fact has freely flowed into the doctrine of the Roman reformers. The persistence of the denial has caused the rejection of all dispensational teaching in the wide gate and broad path of Christendom. That broad path is called “*supersessionism*” and it is unfortunate that so many Baptists are ignorant of its devices.

A study of Biblical eschatology will center on the fact that this kingdom will be ushered in at the second advent of Christ. It will last for the thousand years that Christ promised in Revelation chapter twenty, so it is called the “*Millennial Kingdom*.” It will be preceded by a judgment of the nations which will end “the times of the Gentiles” (Luk 21:24) and be called the seven year tribulation and the seventieth week of Daniel (Dan 9:24). This Great Tribulation has 144 thousand, from the twelve tribes of Israel, preaching the gospel, not the church. The Church is removed in a pretribulation rapture, else they would be in competition with the 144 thousand Jews. Again the whole key to understanding “*the things which shall be hereafter*” requires that one believe in the Millennial Reign of Christ as the seventh dispensation of the Holy Bible.

But even the Kingdom age, where Christ physically rules and reigns over the whole world, ends with an insurrection . That insurgence is short lived and mankind steps off into

eternity and streets of gold. This short survey of the seven dispensations builds the framework for the last things. Christendom's many misunderstandings of the end times come from those who have rejected dispensationalism and embraced supersessionism, i.e. Replacement Theology.

### ***The Facts and Flaws of Supersessionism***

The denial of the Bible's dispensational teachings started with the Roman Church. After the annihilation of the Jews, and Jerusalem in 70 AD. Catholic Church Fathers Saint Clement of Alexandria (150 – 215 AD), and his student Saint Origen of Alexandria (184 – 253 AD) supposed that Judaism was gone forever, and supposed that the Church (they supposed it to be *catholic*) should thus absorb all the promises given to the Jews. Given that the Bible clearly promised the regathering of Israel, and their inheriting the Promised Land, this would have been an impossible task, but Saint Origen, known as the Father of the Allegorical Method, found a way to dismiss any literal rendering of Scripture whenever it pleased “the Catholic Church.” Consequently the allegorical method of hermeneutics has been the mainstay of the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Reformers to this day.

### **Supersessionism Defined**

A reasonable summary of supersessionism is expressed by the neo-evangelicals who spend their days tip-toeing around it and pretending that it is not so bad:

Replacement theology or supersessionism is not a ‘one size fits all’ perspective. There are variations within this view. Punitive supersessionism emphasizes Israel’s disobedience as the reason for its displacement as the people of God. Economic supersessionism emphasizes that national Israel’s role as the people of God expired with the coming of the New Testament church. Structural supersessionism is an approach to the canon that minimizes the role of the Hebrew scriptures. Within supersessionism strong and mild forms are discernible. Strong supersessionism does not believe in a future salvation or restoration of Israel. Mild supersessionism believes in a salvation of the nation Israel but no restoration to a

place of prominence.<sup>4</sup>

## Supersessionism Refuted

A thorough refutation of supersessionism is found in an article by James Showers, “The Facts And Flaws of Covenant Theology.”<sup>5</sup> That article is copied in its entirety below:

James A. Showers is executive director for The Friends of Israel. Permission to copy and distribute this material is granted provided that you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction or alter the wording in any way. Please contact The Friends of Israel if you are making more than 100 physical copies. Proper accreditation must be visible on each copy. For web posting, a link to this document on our website is preferred (where applicable). Any exceptions to the above must be formally approved by The Friends of Israel. Please include the following statement on any distributed copy: From The Friends of Israel. Website: [www.foi.org](http://www.foi.org) . E-mail: [webmaster@foi.org](mailto:webmaster@foi.org). Toll free: 1-800-257-7843.

### ***The Facts and Flaws of Covenant Theology, Part 1***

*By: James Showers*

**Covenant Theology is the dominant theological system of most mainline Protestant churches.**

It is a system of theology that interprets the Bible’s philosophy of history through the lens of two or three covenants and is founded on Replacement Theology, which maintains that God has replaced the Jewish people with the church and that Christians are now God’s chosen people.

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4 Michael J. Vlach, “VARIOUS FORMS OF REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY”, TMSJ 20/1 (Spring 2009) 57-69, <https://legacy.tms.edu/JournalIssue.aspx?year=2009> (accessed 10/29/2016) . [Michael J. Vlach is a Ph.D. and Assistant Professor of Theology at Dr. John MacArthur’s Masters Seminary. The neo-evangelical positions of Masters Seminary do not represent the views of this author.]

5 James Showers, “Facts and Flaws of Covenant Theology”, from The Friends of Israel. Website: [www.foi.org](http://www.foi.org). Toll free: 1-800-257-7843, <http://www.foi.org/free-resources/article/facts-and-flaws-covenant-theology-part1/> <http://www.foi.org/free-resources/article/facts-and-flaws-covenant-theology-part-2/> <http://www.foi.org/free-resources/article/facts-and-flaws-covenant-theology-part-3/> <http://www.foi.org/free-resources/article/facts-and-flaws-covenant-theology-conclusion/> (accessed 9/9/2016). [James A. Showers is executive director for The Friends of Israel.]

As a systematic theology, it attempts to explain God's purpose for history. Why are things the way they are today? Why were they different in the past? Why was there a time when there was no government on Earth? Why was there a time when God gave the Law to a particular group of people? Why is that system of law not applied throughout the world today?

Systematic theology must make sense of the progress of revelation. Why didn't God give the Epistles to Old Testament Israel? Why did He wait to reveal those after the church began? Theology must provide a unifying principle that connects these historical differences with the progress of revelation, thus providing answers for the past, present, and future. Most important, a valid philosophy of history will answer these questions: "Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going?"

## **The Facts**

Covenant Theology's basic premise is that, in eternity past, God determined to govern all of history on the basis of three covenants. (Some combine two of the covenants into one.) These are the covenants of works, redemption, and grace.

**The Covenant of Works.** According to Covenant theologians, the covenant of works was established between the creation and Fall of Man. Covenants are formal, legally binding agreements in which both parties have obligations.

The covenant of works supposedly was established between the triune God and Adam, in which Adam is God's representative head of the human race and acts for all his descendants. Covenant theologians argue that Adam's obligation was perfect obedience to God. God's obligation was to provide eternal life in exchange for perfect obedience. Adam's penalty for failing to keep his part of the covenant was death to both Adam and his descendants.

Where do we find this covenant in the Bible? We don't. It is not in the Bible. Covenant theologians infer these covenants based on certain Scriptures, including the threat of death for eating of the tree of knowledge in Genesis 2. There must be a covenant, they say, because God provided a warning and a penalty. That is the logic they use.<sup>1</sup>

**The Covenant of Redemption.** This covenant supposedly was established before creation in eternity past between God the Father and God the Son, in which the Father made His Son the Head and Redeemer of the elect. The Son volunteered to take the place of those whom God gave to Him—the elect here on Earth. The Son's obligation was to become human under the Law, live without sin, and willingly take the elect's punishment on the cross. The Father's obligation was to resurrect the Son and give Him numerous seed, all power in heaven and earth, and great glory.

Again we ask, "Where is this covenant in Scripture?" And again the answer is that it is not there. It does not exist. Covenant theologians claim it is implied based on God's promises and the Son's willingness to go to the cross.<sup>2</sup>

**The Covenant of Grace.** Some Covenant theologians combine the covenants of redemption and grace. They are uncertain when the covenant of grace was established. Some argue it began with the promise of redemption in Genesis 3:15 when God told the serpent He would bruise the serpent's head and that the serpent would bruise the Man-Child's heel. Others argue it began with the covenant God made with Abraham in Genesis 12.

In the covenant of grace, God, the offended, makes a covenant with the elect sinner, the offender. The elect sinner's obligation is to accept the promise of salvation willingly, agree to be a part of God's people, trust in Christ forever, and commit to a life of obedience and dedication to God. God's obligation is to provide salvation through faith in Christ and eternal life to all who



believe.

There is no reference to this covenant in the Bible. Covenant theologians argue that it is implied in the “I will be Your God” passages throughout the Old and New Testaments.

These three covenants constitute what is known as Covenant Theology. They define history’s ultimate purpose as glorifying God through the redemption of elect man.

The shortcoming of this philosophy is that it presents a human-centered view of history: The glory of God is summed up only through the redemption of man. The covenant of grace becomes the unifying principle for history, in which history is understood in terms of God’s redemption of man.

If you want to understand what happened in the past, you turn to the covenant of grace. If you want to understand what is happening now or in the future, look at the covenants of grace and redemption.<sup>3</sup>

## **The Flaws**

There are a number of problems with Covenant Theology. First, its ultimate goal for history is flawed because it only explains God’s purpose for elect man. It does not begin to touch on all the other programs God is carrying out in history.

For example, if God is the one true and sovereign God of this universe, He will restore the universe to its pre-fall condition (Mt. 19:28; Acts 3:18–21). Covenant theology provides no explanation for this aspect of history. Nor does it provide reasons for God’s dethroning of Satan as ruler of the earth (Rom. 16:20) or for reestablishing God’s theocratic Kingdom on Earth (Rev. 19—20).

Second, it is a human-centered theological system with an inherent weakness for

humanism. Who is the god of humanism? It is man and the belief that, ultimately, all answers lie in man.

A theological system that believes the glory of God is centered in what God is doing with man ultimately focuses on man. Add to that fact a hermeneutic that spiritualizes the words of Scripture, reinterpreting the literal into something figurative, and you have created a platform for humanism. History bears out that liberal, modernist movements have flourished in mainline Protestant, Covenant churches.

A further problem is that the unifying principle of Covenant Theology is too narrow. It deals solely with man's redemption; it does not include God's plan for the redemption of all creation. Nor does it provide enough answers for what God is doing here on Earth. Furthermore, it diminishes the true covenants recorded in Scripture: the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and New Covenants— to mention three.

Another of Covenant Theology's serious flaws is that it denies the distinction between Israel and the church. It redefines the church as all covenant people throughout history. Therefore, the church begins with Abraham (Gen. 12), rather than in Acts 2; and Old Testament Israel no longer refers to the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Old Testament Israel is redefined as the covenant people, the people of faith in the Old Testament. No longer is it physical descent that makes one an Israelite; it is faith in God.

To accomplish its goals, Covenant Theology uses two methods, rather than one, to interpret Scripture— another serious flaw. Bible-believing Covenant theologians use the historical-grammatical-literal method of interpretation for most of Scripture, including all prophecy that has already been fulfilled. However, when it comes to unfulfilled prophecy, they turn to a different method: an allegorical-spiritual one that enables them to redefine Israel and make it the

church, rather than the Jewish people. They also change the Millennial Kingdom from a literal, future 1,000-year period into the current Church Age. This belief is referred to as Amillennialism or Postmillennialism.<sup>4</sup>

Because it is built on Replacement Theology, to remove Replacement Theology from Covenant Theology would collapse the entire system. It would force Covenant theologians to accept that God has two distinct programs, one for Israel and one for the church. Covenant theologians would have to define the church as beginning in Acts 2, with Israel being a separate entity. Further, they would have to accept a literal, future Tribulation and the Millennium. To accept this would turn them into dispensationalists.

## ENDNOTES

*1 Renald E. Showers, There Really Is a Difference (Bellmawr, NJ: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1990), 10.*

*2 Ibid., 9–10.*

*3 Ibid., 10–13.*

*4 Ibid., 19–24, 127, 136–137.*

### ***The Facts and Flaws of Covenant Theology, Part 2***

*By: James Showers*

Covenant Theology is the dominant theological system of most mainline Protestant churches and maintains that God has replaced the Jewish people with the church.

On the basis of two or three “covenants” that are found nowhere in the Bible, it claims that Christians are now God’s chosen people and that the Jewish people have no claim to the land of Israel. When examining this theology, what matters most is whether it can stand when tested by

Scripture. It cannot.

## **What God’s Word Actually Says**

God’s Word says the church began after Christ. Jesus Christ said, “I will build [future tense] My church” (Mt. 16:18). Christ was looking to a future day when the church would begin. Clearly, it had not yet begun or He would not have used the future tense. So the church must begin after Matthew 16. It began at Pentecost with the baptism of the Holy Spirit whom Christ promised to send after He was gone (Jn 14:16– 17; Acts 1:8).

First Corinthians 12:13 says all believers are put into the church through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, when Peter referred to Pentecost in Acts 11:15, he called it “the beginning.” Obviously, he meant the beginning of the church.<sup>1</sup>

**God’s Word distinguishes between Israel and the church.** In the Old Testament, Israel was a nation. In the New Testament, the church is never called a nation but, rather, an assembly or gathering of believers from many nations. Saved Jews in the Old Testament were never called the church, but they are part of the church in the New Testament. For example, Paul said, “Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks [Gentiles] or to the church of God” (1 Cor. 10:32). The words Jews and Greeks encompass all the unsaved (unredeemed). The words church of God refer to the saved, which include both Jews and Greeks.<sup>2</sup>

**Scripture calls Israel the wife of God (Isa. 54:5–6) but calls the church the Bride of Christ (Rev. 21:9; 22:17).** These concepts are never interchanged. They refer to two distinctly different relationships.

**God’s Word says there will be seven years of tribulation following the Rapture of the church.** Covenant Theology claims there is no need for the Tribulation and no need to restore the

nation of Israel and bring it to repentance because God is finished with Israel. According to Covenant Theology, there also is no reason for God to judge the Gentile nations for their treatment of the Jewish people.

Scripture begs to differ. Paul taught that the church will be caught up before the wrath of the Day of the Lord (1 Th. 4:16–17). In 1 Thessalonians 1:10, he spoke of our waiting for God to send His Son from heaven, “even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.” First Thessalonians 5:9 says, “For God did not appoint us to wrath.”

The Tribulation is a literal seven years, according to Daniel 9. The Antichrist will usher in that period by entering into a covenant with Israel. Divine judgment will flood the earth. Revelation 6—18 explains God’s twofold purpose: to punish the Gentiles and bring Israel to reconciling faith in the Messiah.

The prophet Jeremiah referred to the Tribulation as “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7). He said Jewish men will hold their loins like women in labor because of the great trouble on Earth. Christ referred to the time as “great tribulation,” the greatest trouble the earth has ever seen (Mt. 24:21). Unless God stopped it, He said, no one would survive. It will culminate at the battle of Armageddon (Joel 3:9–17; Rev. 16:14–16), in which Satan will bring the armies of the world against Israel to destroy the Jewish nation. Then Christ will return to deliver Israel (Zech. 14:1–5; 2 Th. 2:8; Rev. 19:11–21).

**God’s Word promises Christ will rule from His throne for a literal 1,000 years.**

Covenant Theology, of course, sees no reason for this. Covenant theologians have developed two views that spiritualize the texts. The first is Amillennialism. Augustine developed it about 400 years after the church began. It maintains the Church Age merely continues until Christ returns to judge all men and then take believers to the eternal future. The second view is Postmillennialism.

It takes what it considers to be a more positive outlook: The church will continue until the entire world becomes Christian, thereby opening the door for Christ to return to take all believers to the new heavens and new earth. Both these views are contrary to the explicit Word of God.

Six times in the first seven verses of Revelation 20 there are references to the 1,000-year reign of Christ here on Earth. God promises to establish His Kingdom on Earth with the Messiah sitting on the throne to rule over Israel (Isa. 9:6–7; 11:1–2; Lk. 1:31–33) and the nations (Ps. 72:8–11; Dan. 7:13–14; Zech. 14:9). The Bible says Messiah will govern as God’s King—God’s representative to do God’s will (Ps. 7:2–8; Zech. 14:9; Rev. 11:15). Since the time Adam fell in sin, there was no qualified human representative to administer His rule until Jesus came. When Jesus returns, His purpose will be to reestablish the theocratic Kingdom on Earth.

The beginning of the Millennial Kingdom is called a time of restoration of all things, a season of refreshing (Acts 3:18–21). Christ referred to it as the time of regeneration, in which He will restore the environment to its pre-sin condition. He will do away with droughts, wars, pestilence, disease, and illness and bring the world back to the way it existed before man sinned (Isa. 2:2–4; 9:6–7; 11:2–5, 6–9; 33:24; 35:5–6; 55:13; Ezek. 34:25–29; 47:1–12). Covenant Theology is a fabrication based on supposed covenants found nowhere in Scripture. However, the Bible does have covenants that are clearly defined. They include the Abrahamic Covenant, the Land Covenant, the Mosaic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant. We do not have to say that God implied these covenants; they are all recorded. They are clearly defined in Scripture. They were all initiated by God. They were given to the Jewish people, and they see their ultimate fulfillment through Israel. They also are unbreakable because their fulfillment is not based on Israel’s obedience but on God’s faithfulness. And they are everlasting covenants (Gen. 17:7–8, 19; Ps. 105:8–11).

These covenants guarantee that Israel will be restored to the Promised Land as a nation and its place of blessing. Someday all of Israel will be regenerated. The Messiah will return to establish God’s Millennial Kingdom on Earth and will rule from His throne in Jerusalem. And Israel will be the most blessed nation on the earth (Isa. 2:1–4; 60:1–3; 61:4–9; Zeph. 3:20; Zech. 8:23).

All this will happen because God clearly says so in His Word. And His Word will endure forever!

## **ENDNOTES**

*1 Renald E. Showers, There Really is a Difference (Bellmawr, NJ: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1990), 171, 180. 2 Ibid., 183–6.*

### ***The Facts and Flaws of Covenant Theology, Part 3***

*By: James Showers*

**If Replacement Theology is true, then certainly God has an opinion about it—one He states clearly and teaches visibly in Scripture.**

Conversely, if it is not plainly taught, then Replacement Theology must be the fictitious creation of men.

#### **What It Maintains**

Replacement Theology maintains that, because the Jewish people rejected Jesus Christ, God has replaced or superseded ethnic Israel with the church\* and punished them by rescinding all of the covenant promises He gave them.

It also claims (1) the church began with Abraham in Genesis 12, (2) the church is merely a continuation of Old Testament Israel, (3) the church is true or “spiritual Israel,” and (4) true

Israel in the Old Testament was comprised of Abraham's spiritual, not physical, descendants.

Replacement theologians also claim we must first understand the New Testament before we can understand the Old. The New Testament, they say, teaches us how to interpret the Old Testament. This method enables them to redefine Israel to mean Abraham's spiritual descendants only. However, interpreting Scripture this way ignores the progress of God's revelation and implies that people who had only Old Testament revelation could not have understood it.

Replacement Theology also conveniently manages to uncouple God's covenant promises from His covenant curses. The church inherits all of the promises to Israel, but the Jewish people (ethnic Israel) keep all of the covenant curses. This uncoupling is quite a feat.

Since the Replacement church sees itself as a continuation of Old Testament Israel, it applies portions of Old Testament Law to itself while ignoring important New Testament teachings.

Finally, Replacement Theology teaches there is no future for national Israel: God has thoroughly rejected Israel and no longer has a place for it in His plan for eternity apart from the salvation of individual Jewish people. They are no longer His Chosen People; nor is there a future 70th week of Daniel (see Daniel 9:24–27) or a future, literal, Millennial Kingdom of God on Earth.

Replacement Theology is the historical position of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches and the common position of the Reformed and Covenant churches. Unfortunately, it has fueled anti-Semitism for 1,800 years. It has been said that more anti-Semitic acts have been committed in the name of the church than by all other groups combined.

### **Christ's Words**

Since Israel did not reject Christ until the Gospels, we would expect Replacement



Theology to be taught in the New Testament. Using a literal-historical-grammatical method of interpretation, we would expect to find:

- Clear, concise statements that God has rejected Israel.
- Definitive passages that teach that the church has replaced Israel.
- God’s declaration that He has excluded Israel from the Old Testament covenants.
- A total lack of New Testament verses that speak of Israel’s future in God’s plan.

Speaking to a Jewish audience, Jesus said, “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it” (Mt. 21:43).

Replacement theologians say this passage teaches that Jesus said (1) God has permanently rejected national Israel, and (2) the “nation” to whom the Kingdom of God will be given is the church.

On the surface, this explanation seems reasonable. However, scrutiny shows otherwise. Throughout the first part of His ministry on Earth, Jesus preached, “Repent, for the kingdom is at hand!” He offered the restored Kingdom of God to Israel if the people repented of their sins and accepted Him as their Savior and Lord. But they would not.

Later Jesus lamented over Jerusalem, “who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! You shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’” (23:37, 39). Although this passage teaches that Israel will be judged, it concludes by promising a future day when a new generation of national Israel will repent and accept Him as Messiah. If Matthew 21:43 taught that God had rejected Israel, then Jesus would not have taught later that a future Jewish nation will accept Him. Therefore, Matthew 21:43 cannot imply God has permanently rejected Israel as His people.

Furthermore, nowhere does Scripture define the church as a “nation.” Rather, it teaches that the church is composed of people from many nations. Christ’s use of nation in Matthew 21:43 refers to the future generation of Jewish people who will accept Him and bear the fruit of the restored Kingdom. Christ chose the word nation rather than generation because He knew the Jewish people would soon be scattered; and He wanted to note a future day when Israel would again be a nation, accept Him as Messiah, and usher in the restored Kingdom of God.

Far from teaching Replacement Theology, Jesus emphasized that, because the Jewish generation alive during His First Coming refused His offer of the restored Kingdom, God would take the Kingdom from them and give it to a future Jewish nation that will accept Him.

### **Paul’s Words**

One of the most often-quoted passages in defense of Replacement Theology is Galatians 6:16: “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God,” written by the apostle Paul. Replacement theologians say Israel of God refers to the church.

Their argument revolves around the Greek word kai that precedes the words upon the Israel of God. Kai is most commonly translated “and”; but they say kai is an explicative case (what follows explains what came before) and, therefore, should be translated “even.” This change makes Israel of God refer to as many as walk according to this rule, meaning Christians. They also say Paul taught in Galatians the unity of all ethnic believer groups. Therefore, the words Israel of God refer to all believers, that is, the church.

However, the explicative case of kai is extremely uncommon usage and not likely supported by context or grammar. The more commonly used and to connect the words Israel of God with the first half of the verse makes more sense.

In Galatians, Paul defended salvation by grace through faith alone. He spoke against the Judaizers who taught circumcision was required for salvation. They added works (circumcision) to faith. When Paul said, “as many as walk according to this rule,” he spoke of those who walked by faith in Christ alone. His use of Israel of God contrasts Jewish people who believed in Christ alone with the Judaizers who taught one must have faith plus works to be saved.

In all other Pauline passages, the word Israel refers to national or ethnic Israel. It is highly unlikely he would use Israel here to refer to the body of all believers. Paul prayed in Galatians 6:16 that God would bless all who put their faith in Christ alone for salvation and that He would especially bless the Jewish believers who were distinct from the Judaizers. This verse does not say the church has replaced Israel. Even if one accepts the Replacement explanation, the most it says is that Gentiles are included with Israel.

Replacement theologians also use Galatians 3:7 and 29 to bolster their position: “Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham” (v. 7). “And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (v. 29).

They maintain the words sons of Abraham and Abraham’s seed imply the church has become true Israel, concluding that all believers are spiritual Jews. They tell us Abraham’s seed means believers are related to Christ, whom they say is the true seed of Abraham; thus the church is true Israel.

However, it is possible to be Abraham’s “son” or “seed” but not be Jewish. Ishmael was Abraham’s son, but he was not Jewish. In Romans 4:11–12 Paul taught that Abraham is the father of both the uncircumcised (Gentiles) and circumcised (Jewish). Some of Abraham’s descendants are Jewish, and others are not.

Abraham himself was not Jewish. He was a Gentile from Ur of the Chaldeans. If he had

been Jewish, then all of his descendants would be Jewish. Yet only the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are Jewish. It wasn't until Jacob that God bestowed the title of Israel, after Jacob wrestled with God all night (Gen. 32:24–30).

Galatians 3:7 and 29 do not say Israel has been replaced; they merely teach that people (Jewish or Gentile) who put their faith in Christ become partakers of the spiritual promises God made to Abraham. Paul affirmed this fact in 3:28 when He said, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, . . . for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

*\* Unless otherwise specified, all references to the church refer to the church in its broadest sense, including Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and evangelical. Facts and Flaws of Covenant Theology, Conclusion*

*By: James Showers*

## ***The Facts and Flaws of Covenant Theology, Conclusion***

*By: James Showers*

**What does God say about Israel’s future? If the New Testament teaches ethnic Israel has a future, then Replacement Theology is untrue.**

While on Earth, Jesus established that He was premillennial—meaning He believed in a literal, future, restored Kingdom of God. In Matthew 6:9–10, He taught His followers to pray, “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Jesus instructed His followers to pray that God will bring or restore His Kingdom on Earth, and He described what Earth will be like when that occurs.

How is God’s will done in heaven? Precisely as He says. His will is absolute. If the church is the Kingdom of God, as Replacement theologians claim—or the Kingdom of God is here now—then what is done on Earth must mirror God’s will in heaven. That is an impossible stretch even for the most generous mind.

### **Jesus’ Throne**

According to the New Testament, the nation of Israel and the Promised Land are vital to God establishing His restored Kingdom on Earth. The Bible teaches that Jesus fulfills the Davidic Covenant that guarantees a descendant of David will sit on David’s throne in Israel forever. The Hebrew Scriptures teach the Messiah will rule over Israel and the Gentile nations from His throne in Jerusalem (Isa. 9:6–7; 11:1–12; Jer. 23:5–8; 33:14–16).

To date, these prophecies have not been fulfilled. But Jesus said, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Mt. 19:28). Jesus spoke those words in response to the apostle Peter’s concern about the disciples’ future.

Jesus told them that someday, they each will sit on a throne ruling the tribes of Israel. Jesus certainly saw a future for ethnic Israel.

But the verse reveals more. The title Son of Man refers to Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus said He will sit on the throne of His glory, a throne that will bring Him honor. Nowhere does Scripture say He sits on a throne in heaven. Rather, it teaches that He is seated at the right hand of the Father's throne. The throne of Christ's glory is earthly. It will be located in Jerusalem where He will rule over Israel and the world. Jesus did not ascend to that throne at His First Coming. Thus, if He is to be faithful to His words, He must yet sit on His throne in Jerusalem.

Jesus explained when that event will occur: in the “regeneration.” The Greek word translated “regeneration” is a compound made up of two Greek words: palin and genesis. Palin literally means “back again” or “back to a previous time.” Genesis is the word for genesis, “in the beginning.”

The Old Testament prophets taught the Messiah will restore God's Kingdom to Earth and transform Earth to its pre-fall condition. No more disasters, disease, sickness, deformities, hard labor, thorns and thistles, pollution, wild nature in animals, injustice, or war. Thus Jesus said He will sit on His throne when Earth is restored to its condition as in the beginning—the restored Kingdom of God on Earth.

When the apostles saw Christ prior to His return to heaven, they asked, “Will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). Obviously, they fully believed Jesus will restore the Kingdom to Earth and that Israel will be central to the process. Jesus did not correct their belief that He will restore the Kingdom to Israel. He simply replied that it was not for them to know the timing of God's plan to do so; their concern should be to get busy building His church.

### **Peter's Eschatology**

A mere two chapters later, Peter used the teaching of the restored Kingdom to preach salvation to the Jewish people from Solomon's porch on the Temple Mount. The location would have ensured his listeners were Jewish. But he also addressed them in Acts 3:12–18 as those who denied Christ before Pilate and chose a murderer over Him. What Peter shared next revealed he, too, was premillennial.

Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began (vv. 19–21).

Peter laid out an eschatological order for Israel. The nation's repentance will lead God to blot out its sins; Christ will return, and then the times of refreshing will come from God when He restores the Kingdom. Peter didn't teach Replacement Theology. Rather, he taught that God has a unique program for Israel that is key to God restoring His Kingdom on Earth.

Paul also taught this truth: "Has God cast away His people? Certainly not!" (Rom. 11:1). It is obvious from the context of Romans 11:1–2 that Paul was asked if God had cast Israel away. His response was clear: Certainly not! In fact, he declared, (26). Then he quoted from Psalm 14 and Isaiah 59 that God will honor His covenant and remove the Jewish people's sins.

In Romans 11:29, Paul reminded us, "The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." Irrevocable means God will not cancel or retract His gifts or call. He Himself is the One who made the covenants with Israel. He is the One who told the people of Israel the covenants are everlasting. He is the One who remembers His covenants with Israel, and He is the One who keeps them.

Israel's coming national reconciliation, Christ's return, and the restoration of God's Kingdom on Earth do not depend on anything the Jewish people have or have not done. They depend solely on God's faithfulness to keep His irrevocable promises. According to Ezekiel 36, God will keep His promises for His name's sake so that His name will be exalted above every name on Earth, under the earth, and in the heavens.

### **Conclusion**

For Replacement Theology to be valid, God must teach it clearly in His Word. However, nowhere does the Bible teach God has rejected Israel or replaced it with the church. Nor does it say the church is the historic continuation of Old Testament Israel or that all of the covenant promises have been taken from Israel and given to the church.

What the New Testament does teach is that Israel has a grand future in God's plan, although Israel's role is distinct and different from God's plan for the church. And without a future for Israel, there will be no glorious future Kingdom of God on Earth.

Info from Friends of Israel, foi.org article by James Showers accessed 9/9/2016

### ***Replacement Theology and Amillenianism***

A dangerous and errant tenant of Reformed Theology, Calvinism, and the Presbyterian Denomination is called Replacement Theology. It, and its link to Amillenianism, is captured by George Zeller, Pastor of Middleton Bible Church, Middletown CT.

**Replacement Theology:** This view teaches that the Church has replaced Israel in the plan and purpose of God. The many promises made to Israel in the Bible (especially the kingdom promises) are fulfilled in the Christian Church, in a non-literal way. The prophecies in Scripture concerning the blessing and restoration of Israel to the Land of Promise are "spiritualized" into promises of God's blessing for the Church. The



prophecies of condemnation and judgment, however, still remain for national Israel. **Amillennialism:** This view harmonizes well with "replacement theology." It teaches that there will be no future kingdom. Rather, the kingdom promises are being fulfilled (in a non-literal way) by the church. The nation Israel will not enjoy a future millennial kingdom, nor will the Messiah rule over the world from an earthly Davidic throne in Jerusalem. The kingdom of God is being enjoyed today in the hearts of believers in a spiritual way, but the nation Israel has no future kingdom to look forward to.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> From a message “*How To Destroy the Jews!*” by George Zeller, Middleton Bible Church, 349 East Street, Middletown, CT 06457 as published in [www.biblicalevangelist.org](http://www.biblicalevangelist.org) Volume 36, Number 4, July Aug 2005

### ***The Premillennial Return of Christ***

Christ promised that he would return as King of kings and Lord of lords, and set up his kingdom, setting on the Throne of David in the city of Jerusalem. When God promised “My king upon my holy hill of Zion” he said of his Christ, “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel” (Psalm 2:6, 7). This kingdom is called millennial because it is promised to last for 1,000 years<sup>7</sup>. Roman religionists rejected it and called it chiliasm after the Latin word for one thousand. For the Bible believer to suppose that such a millennial reign of Christ could be ushered in by any Vicar of Christ from the Roman Catholic Church, prior to the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ is clearly and emphatically heretical. The Bible doctrine of the premillennial return of Christ, insists that Christ will return to set up his kingdom before the kingdom will be set up, and that once set up that kingdom will rule this earth for the literal 1,000 years which the inerrant Word of God decrees.

One is not a sinner because they sin, rather one sins because they are sinner. Likewise, a church or denomination is not apostate because they have heretical teachings, rather a church or denomination has heretical teachings because they are apostate. This is a profound concept, and worthy of a profound understanding. When Flavius Valerius Constantinus (272 – 337 AD) saw a vision which, in his mind, assured him that he should conquer in the sign of the Christ, he made his pagan warriors carry Christ's monogram on their shields. When this mysticism resulted in his victory, the upcoming Emperor of Rome forced a similar paganism to be the universal religion of the Roman Empire. Thus was hatched the vile and apostate Roman Catholic Church which

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<sup>7</sup> Rev 20:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

forced all Roman subjects to convert or die. This Roman Religion was not Christianity. It structured an apostate church from its inception, and this apostate church rejected the premillennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ because it was an apostate church.

A Systematic Theology must first have as its foundation a true Bible Doctrine. From that foundation a discourse must systematically analyze the doctrine keeping it pure from its detractors, and evaluating its fit into the larger arena of theology. Detractors from truth are myriad from outside but internally they fall under three major considerations. First, The Roman Catholic Religion has always directly opposed Bible truth; second the Protestant Reformers, it is supposed, have come back to Bible truth, but, subtly, they still carry all the Roman error as concealed weapons; and third, the ecumenical Bible correctors who make a pretense of using textual criticism and modern language to "fix" what God was unable to preserve. These three are enemies to Bible doctrine, Roman, directly; Reformed, more subliminally; and Ecumenical Bible correctors, very shrewdly. Exposing their pernicious ways is not generally the focus of a Bible Doctrines book, but in a world where Bible doctrine is under constant attack, such a systematic approach needs to be expounded.

## **The Pretribulation Rapture of the Church**

Once one understands the premillennial return of Christ, the upcoming dispensation of the kingdom age, and the transition period between the grace and kingdom dispensations, the Scriptures which point out the pretribulation rapture of the church, jump off the page of their Bible. The late Evangelist Lauren Dawson was contending for the faith with some Calvinistic reformed theologians. They said, “We just don't see how you can get the pretribulation rapture out of that Scripture!” He responded, “That is my point, you cannot get it out of the Scripture. God put it in there and it has been there for over nineteen hundred years. I don't see how you can reject God's truth of the pretribulation rapture of the church.”

For the world seeing is believing, but for the Christian believing is seeing. When someone is entrenched in the Roman doctrine of Replacement Theology, when they are misled by John Calvin's Covenant Theology, when they will not delineate God's dispensations and the transitions between them, they will not “see” the pretribulation rapture of the church. ... in draft fff

## ***Cambron's Chapter 9 Eschatology - The Doctrine of Last Things***

A solid Biblical Doctrine must form the basis and starting point for a systematic theology. There is no truer, or more thorough, published, Baptist, and Biblical doctrine than that of Dr. Mark G. Cambron.<sup>8</sup> His teachings on Ecclesiology at Tennessee Temple Bible School thoroughly

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<sup>8</sup> Dr. Mark G. Cambron, B.A., M.A., Th.B., Th.M., Th.D., D.D., L.L.D., Litt.D., was one of the foremost theologians of our times. Born in Fayetteville, Tennessee on July 31, 1911. He was born-again in 1919. It was during a Billy Sunday campaign in Chattanooga that he trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. He served for many years at Tennessee Temple College (1948-59) with Dr. Lee Roberson and served as Dean of the College. From <http://www.thecambroninstitute.org> accessed 10/16/2013

lay the foundation for this systematic theology. His book, *Bible Doctrines*<sup>9</sup> will, with the permission of the Cambron Institute<sup>10</sup>, be given in block quotes throughout this effort. The book is readily available through <http://www.thecambroninstitute.org>, and it forms the foundational basis for this Systematic Theology.<sup>11</sup>

Believing in the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures and believing that every single word is directly chosen by God, it is necessary to preserve and defend the doctrines extracted from Scripture and presented by Dr. Cambron. Below, in a block quote of his book, is his extensive analysis of Eschatology:[block quote of Dr. Cambron's *Bible Doctrines* page 249-288]

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**OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER IX ESCHATOLOGY**

Sections I - V	Sections VI - XII
<p>I. Physical Death.                      Death Is Not a Cessation of Being.                      Death Is Not Soul Sleep.                      Death Means Separation.                      II. The Bodily Resurrection.                      A. The Fact of Resurrection.                      B. The Nature of the Resurrection.                      C. The Time of the Resurrection.                      III. The Intermediate State.                      Before the Cross.                      At the Time of the Cross.                      After the Cross.                      IV. The Second Coming of Christ.                      A. The Importance of the Doctrine.                      B. The Meaning of the Second Coming.                      C. The Events of the Second Coming.                      V. The Antichrist.                      His Person.</p>	<p>VI. The Tribulation.                      The Tribulation of the Body of Christ.                      The Tribulation of Israel.                      The Great Tribulation.                      VII. The Battle of Armageddon.                      What It Is Not. What It Is.                      VIII. The Millennium.                      The Fact of the Millennium.                      The Description of the Millennium.                      The Types of the Millennium.                      The Conditions During the Millennium.                      IX. The Judgments.                      Judgments of the Christian.                      Judgment of the Nations.                      Judgment at the Great White Throne.                      X. After the Millennium.                      Satan Loosed.                      Nations Gathered.                      Army Destroyed.                      Satan Doomed.</p>

9 Mark G. Cambron, *Bible Doctrines*, 1954, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 60-69

10 The Cambron Institute, 35890 Maplegrove Road, Willoughby, Oh 44094

11 It is noted and reproved in the Bibliology section of this work that Dr. Cambron's *Bible Doctrines* book recommends using the R.V., instead of the Holy Bible, 41 times for 54 Bible verses.

His Titles. His Forerunners. His Work. His Career. His Time. His Appearance. His End.	XI. The Future of the Wicked. The Scriptural Teaching. The Terms Used. The Theories Proposed. XII. Heaven. First Heaven. Second Heaven. Third Heaven.
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**Chapter IX** ESCHATOLOGY Eschatology is the doctrine of last things.

## I. PHYSICAL DEATH

The Bible always gives sufficient information for the faith of the believer. The Bible was never proposed merely for his curiosity. God teaches finite beings to walk by faith in the unexplained infinite.

### *A. Death Is Not a Cessation of Being.*

Thirty-five hundred years ago Job asked, “If a man die, shall he live again?” This question has been asked for millenniums. It is still a universal question. It is a subject of perennial interest. That those whom we love should die and be buried does not seem right; and it is not! God never made man to die; He created him to live and to have fellowship with Himself. But sin brought death and the grave, thus separation from God. Should the Lord tarry, everyone reading these words, the author included, shall die, for death has passed upon all men (Rom. 5:12).

A poem lasts longer than the poet; the voice on the recording tape can be heard years after the recording artist is dead; pictures of dead loved ones remain, even after the loved ones are gone.

Things on this earth are not equal. The rich have always oppressed the poor; the wicked have always prospered over the righteous. Human justice demands an equalization of all things in a life after death. We are living in a changing world. The robins build their nests, even as they did in the garden of Eden, and animals possess the same characteristics as they did at the beginning. However, man does not live as he used to, even as he did twenty-five years ago. Although this be true, the inquiring mind of man remains the same, still asking the question, “If a man dies, will he live again?”

There is a universal belief in a life after death. If you go to the darkest part of Africa, where Christ has never been preached, you find that people there believe in a life after death. Why do some heathens burn their wives? Why do some bury food with the corpse? They believe that the departed one must have a companion and food on his journey beyond the grave. The Egyptians furnished a charter, a book for the journey, and placed it with the corpse. Why do the birds fly south? Instinct in them proves there is a southland. The heart of man, and his inward instinct are proofs that there is a life hereafter. Both physiology and philosophy maintain there must be a life after death.

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There are two great reservations:

1. *Reservation for the Christian.* “Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . hath begotten us . . . to an

inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, *reserved* in heaven for you” (I Peter 1:4). In Philippians 1:23 the Apostle Paul used the word “depart” as describing death. By this he did not mean that he would cease to exist. Depart means “to depart.” Did he mean to depart to the grave with Christ? Of course not, for Christ is not in the grave; He is in heaven. II Corinthians 5:8 makes the meaning of departure even clearer when it says, “We are confident . . . and willing . . . to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord” The word “present” means “to be at home with.” The death of a Christian, therefore, is pictured as a ship pulling up anchor and setting sail for home; in other words, the death of a Christian means “going home.”

2. *Reservation for the Ungodly.* “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished” (II Peter 2:9).

### B. *Death Is Not Soul Sleep.*

The word “sleep” in Scripture, concerning the dead in Christ, means “rest.” It does not mean “unconsciousness.” The body may die, but the soul and spirit will never die. In the resurrection it is the body that is raised, not the soul and spirit. The Scriptures clearly state that the soul is absent from the body, present with the Lord; and that the souls and spirits are fully awake and aware of things round about them. A perfect illustration of the above truth is found in Revelation 6:9, 10: “When he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the *souls* of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” Here we see the disembodied souls, alive, and reasoning with God.

The Apostle Paul says, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21). “To live” meant that Paul had perfect fellowship with the living Christ. If death were the end, why would Paul say, “and to die is gain?”

### C. *Death Means Separation.*

Death in Scripture always means “separation.” *Physical death* is the separation of the soul and spirit from the body. *Spiritual death* is the eternal, complete, final separation from God (Rev. 21:8).

Life means “union” (John 3:16). Death means “separation” (Rom. 8:35-39). The *ego*, the “I,” lives in the house of flesh. You are not a body, having a soul and spirit, but you are a soul and spirit possessing a body. Scientists used to tell us that the bodies in which we live change every seven years; now they say that they change every seven days. Our bodies may change, but we ourselves, that is, our *ego*, never changes. People cannot see

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*us*, the *ego*, but only the house, or tent, in which we dwell. Death is the departure from this house (II Peter 1:13,14; Phil. 1:21,24; Gal. 2:20; II Cor. 5:6,7; Job 19:26; Luke 16:26; II Tim. 4:6; II Cor. 12:2). People have been burying bodies for six thousand years; just the bodies, not the persons.

The soul is the seat of feeling and appetite; from Scripture we believe it is the exact counterpart of the body. The spirit is the seat of man’s intelligence. When Samuel was called up by the request of Saul, it was his spirit that appeared, not his body. Death, then, is not a circle, or a square. We shall not be formless if we depart this life, but our souls and spirits shall be fully conscious, existing in the same form and shape as our bodies.

Memory may be seated in the brain, but the brain is not the source of thought. We may remember things that happened ten years ago, but we do not have the same brain that we had ten years ago. *I possess* a brain, but the brain is not *I*. Death simply means, “*I* have departed”; *I* am separated from my body.

## II. THE BODILY RESURRECTION

### A. *The Fact of the Resurrection.*

1. *Anticipated in the Old Testament.* Such terms as “in the latter days,” “awake and live,” are indications of a resurrection. The Old Testament contains many types of the resurrection. Joseph was counted dead, but he came back to his father; Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights, and then was released; Daniel was placed in the lion’s den, a place of death, but came out alive; Israel died in the wilderness, and a new Israel went in Canaan. All of these are figures of the resurrection. The following Scriptures verify the resurrection. “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead” (Is. 26:19). See also Job 19:26, 27; Psalm 16:9, 11; Daniel 6:23; 12:2; Matthew 12:40.

2. *Revealed In the New Testament.* “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive” (I Cor. 15:22). “[I] have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust” (Acts 24:15). See also Matthew 22:30-32; Luke 14:13, 14; 20:35, 36; John 5:28, 29; 6:39, 40, 44, 54; I Thessalonians 4:14-16; II Timothy 1:10. Christ did not come to save my soul only, but all of me: my soul, spirit, and body. *All of me* is to be saved.

### B. *The Nature of the Resurrection.*

Death is never set forth as the hope of the believer. In Corinth (I Cor. 15) some had declared that there was no bodily resurrection, but in the above chapter Paul rebukes them for this false doctrine and proves to them that there is a resurrection (by Christ’s own resurrection): if one does not believe in man’s resurrection, then it is impossible to believe in Christ’s resurrection; and if Christ had no resurrection, there is no Gospel, and if no Gospel, we are not saved.

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Satan has always been against the Word, and he has many weapons trained on it. The revelation he most despises is that of the resurrection. Materialism denies the resurrection altogether. Spiritualism denies the bodily resurrection. We are never to doubt the resurrection. “I forgot God when I said, How can this be?” Whether man believes, or understands the resurrection means little; it is true, nevertheless.

Some people cannot believe that flesh and bones shall be perfect. When speaking of Christ’s resurrection, they maintain that it was a spiritual resurrection. We know by this statement that they do not know what they are talking about. Jesus Christ’s spirit was not put in the tomb; only His body was. The Roman soldiers were not stationed at the sepulcher to guard His spirit, but to guard His body. It was His *body* they guarded; it was His *body* which arose from the dead!

One Scripture used by those who believe only in a spiritual resurrection is I Corinthians 15:44: “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a *spiritual* body. There is a natural body, and there is a *spiritual* body.” Notice that the verse does not say “a *spirit* body,” but “a *spiritual* body.” The natural body is controlled by the soul; the spiritual body shall be



controlled by the Spirit; hence, a spiritual body.

1. *Theories Proposed.*

a. *Germ Theory.* This is an old Jewish belief found in the Talmud. According to it, in man there is a little bone, called a “luz,” which death can not destroy, and out of that germ the body will be resurrected. Some Christians hold to this theory, using I Corinthians 15:36, 37 for support.

b. *Identity Theory.* This is the belief that the body in the resurrection will be raised just as it was buried. A body buried with an arm missing, will be raised with an arm missing; an infant buried will be an infant raised; a lunatic buried, a lunatic raised. The Mohammedans hold to this theory. If this be true, we will not be like Jesus.

c. *Reincarnation Theory.* This idea supposes that when a man dies he goes immediately into another body. If this should occur, we would not be “at home” with the Lord. When a person dies, he is not a complete human being; he can only be so by a bodily resurrection (I Thess. 5:23).

d. *Intermediate Body Theory.* This theory contends that the believer receives his resurrected body immediately upon his death. It is based on II Corinthians 5:1-4: “We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.” But the above Scripture refers only to those believers who are *living* when Christ comes.

2. *Truth Believed.* The resurrection is by *Divine Power!* “God giveth a body as it has pleased him, and to every seed his own body” (I Cor. 15:38). Jesus Christ’s own resurrected body was proved to be flesh and bone. When Christ appeared unto the

disciples, He remarked, “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Luke 24:39). Christ did not say that there were no spirits, but that a spirit does not have flesh and bones. Ezekiel 37 pictures the resurrection of Israel; flesh, bones and spirit are mentioned, but no blood. The law demanded the shedding of blood, and Christ shed his blood to pay for that demand. In the resurrection, all will be raised without blood; life will be in the spirit of man.

“[The Lord Jesus Christ] shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Phil. 3:20, 21). Our bodies, the *same ones* that may be planted in death, will pass under a great transformation and be raised. If we should plant a lily, a lily will come up; if we plant wheat, wheat will come up; if we plant tares, tares will come up; if we plant human bodies, glorified human bodies will come up. God looks upon the cemeteries as nothing but harvest fields. The seeds in these harvest fields are the bodies of the dead, and the harvest is the resurrection.

“And we shall be changed” (I Cor. 15:52c). Yes, a great transformation will take place, but it will be the same body, for the resurrected body of Christ proves that it will be the same body, as He bore in His resurrected body the print of the nails.

I Corinthians 15:42-44 describes fully the resurrection of the just (*God tells nothing of the bodies of the damned in their resurrection*): “It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption.” A dead body is a corruptible body. A live body is a mortal body. Nothing is ever said in Scripture of planting a mortal body. A corruptible body is subject to decay and dust, but one day it will be raised in incorruption, a body fit for heaven, that can never be subject to corruption again. “It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory.” These vile bodies have been dishonored by sin, but one day they will be raised in glory like unto the glorious body of our Lord. “It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.” Sin has made us weak, also. The weakest thing in the world is a dead body. In order for a dead man to move, he must *be moved*. He has eyes that cannot see and ears that cannot hear; he makes no protest about being put in a coffin and placed in a grave. There is no resistance in a dead body. These same weak bodies shall be raised with great power. Notice what man can do for the eyes today, but think what God *will* do. The resurrected believer will be able to see spiritual beings. Mortal man has the microscope and telescope, but, oh, what eyesight our new bodies will have! Today we have limits of speed, but in the resurrection there will be no limit. Do not make present standards the limit of our future standards. “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.” The natural body is our animated body, containing flesh, bones and blood. Our resurrected spiritual bodies shall not be spirit-bodies, but spiritual; they will be bodies composed of only flesh and bone, no blood, dominated by our spirits.

### *C. The Time of the Resurrection.*

“As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive” (I Cor. 15:22). All men shall be raised from the dead, but not all at the same time. The Scriptures plainly declare

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that there are *two* resurrections, and *not* a general resurrection. They are the first, and the last resurrection (Rev. 20:5, 6).

1. *The First Resurrection.* The first resurrection includes Christ, and all believers of all ages. Their resurrection occurs at different intervals. Christ at one time; the Church at the Rapture (before the Tribulation); and the Old Testament saints and Tribulation saints *after* the Tribulation.

a. *Christ the Firstfruits.* “Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept” (I Cor. 15:20). The firstfruits was God’s pledge that the entire harvest would come later. Christ’s being the Firstfruits is God’s pledge that the harvest will be coming later. “Because I live, ye shall live also” (John 14:19b). There are records of others being raised from the dead, but these were “resuscitations,” or restorations; they died again. Christ liveth to die no more! “Behold, I am alive for evermore” (Rev. 1:18b).

b. *The Saints at Christ’s Resurrection.* “The graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many” (Matt. 27:52, 53). On one occasion, the Lord Jesus said, “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24). Christ did die and was planted as a corn of wheat, but when He was raised from the dead, He brought forth much fruit with Him. This fruit was the saints who arose immediately after His resurrection. We do not know how many were raised, nor do we know where they went. They may have gone up to

heaven with him, for remember, he was the Firstfruits, and we know that in the Feast of Firstfruits, a *sheaf* of the wave offering was waved before the Lord. There was more than one grain in the sheaf. Thus, we are led to believe that there were more people in the firstfruits to go to heaven than just Christ.

c. *The Body of Christ (The Church)*. The Church will have a resurrection of its own. “The dead in Christ shall rise first” (I Thess. 4:16). The Church was never known in the Old Testament (See Chapter VII). Therefore, the Old Testament prophets saw nothing of its Spiritual baptism, rapture, resurrection and transformation. The Church was a mystery hid in God; it was first revealed to the Apostle Paul (Eph. 3:1-9). However, the old Testament saints did know of their own resurrection, which shall occur *after* the Tribulation (Dan. 12:2, 13).

The resurrection of the Church was revealed to the Apostle Paul; it will occur *before* the Tribulation. “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10). See also I Thessalonians 1:10.

There has been over nineteen hundred years since Christ the Firstfruits has been raised. The time of the resurrection of the Church is not known.

d. *Old Testament and Tribulation Saints*. This phase of the first resurrection takes place after the Tribulation, at least seven years after the Church is raised. It includes all saints who do not belong to the Body of Christ. “Go thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days” (Dan. 12:13). See also Daniel 12:1,2.

2. *The Last Resurrection*. The last (or second) resurrection occurs after the

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Millennium, and shall include all the wicked dead. They shall be raised to stand before the Great White Throne. “The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:5, 6).

### III. THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

Where are the dead? is the question on the lips of all mankind. The only true and correct answer is given by the Word of God. Other answers, such as those given by spiritualism, are nothing but a babel of voices. Various cults have preyed upon unsuspecting souls, taking them captive at the Devil’s will.

The following are things to remember as we explain the intermediate state, the state of man between death and resurrection: Death is the separation of the soul and spirit from the body. The soul and spirit are together in death. The soul is the seat of the appetite, and the spirit is the seat of knowledge, and they both function in death, as shown by the example of the rich man in Hades. He was in torment; he had feelings. He reasoned; thus, his spirit and soul were together.

The word “Sheol” and the word “Hades” are the same. “Sheol” is the Old Testament Hebrew word. “Hades” is the New Testament Greek word. We know they are the same, for the Apostle Peter, at Pentecost, quoted from Psalm 16, saying, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [hades], neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption” (Acts 2:27). Psalm 16 uses the word “Sheol” for hell [Hades]. Thus, Hades and Sheol are the same. This is the place of departed souls and spirits. The mistranslation of the words

“Sheol” and “Hades” by the King James translators has caused much trouble in the Church today. They translated these words to mean hell (the place of everlasting punishment), grave, pit, and the like. The wrong translation has led people to believe that the grave is the only hell. Sheol and Hades are the names of the same place for the departed spirits of man.

1. These words are never found in the plural.
2. Sheol and Hades are never located on the face of the earth.
3. The Bible never speaks of an individual’s Sheol.
4. Man never puts anyone in it, as the grave.
5. Man never digs or makes a Sheol, or Hades.
6. The Bible never speaks of a man touching Sheol.
7. The Bible never speaks of a *body* going into Sheol, but with one exception, and the exception proves the rule. Korah (Num. 16:28-33) defied the leadership of Moses and the 215

priesthood of Aaron, and influenced many in Israel against them. God showed His displeasure by causing the earth to open up its jaws and swallow Korah and his family. The King James Version says that he went down alive into the pit, which should be translated “Sheol” (Num. 16:33).

In Luke 16:19-31 we have the true account of Lazarus and the rich man both dying and existing in the intermediate state. There are some who claim that this story was only a parable. The Word does not so state. In all of His parables, the Lord never mentioned proper names, as He does here. If it were a parable, it would be true, for every parable that He spoke was built upon the truth (Matt. 13:3).

The following is a common interpretation of this so-called parable:

*Rich man* — the Jewish nation, rich in what God has given him.

*Lazarus* — the Gentiles — poor at the door of the rich man.

*Both died* — end of the dispensation, when both are blessed by the Gospel.

Why say this refers to Jew and Gentile, when the Scriptures do not say so? Why did the Lord use the rich man in picturing the Jewish nation, when in the preceding passages he was warning the rich? The idea of the Jews ever requesting aid of the Gentiles is farfetched.

There is no gulf between the Jew and the Gentile. No Gentile nation has ever begged from the Jews as Lazarus begged bread from the rich man.

If the Jewish nation died (pictured by the rich man), who were the five brethren who were left? We still contend that this is a true account of two men who died and went to Hades.

*A. Before the Cross.*

The Cross is the dividing line of many Scriptural truths. We shall discuss the question, where did men go at death before Christ died upon the Cross? We shall show that they all went to the same place — Hades (Sheol) — but in different parts.

From Numbers 16:33 we learn that Sheol, or Hades, is somewhere inside the earth.

“They, and all that appertained to them went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.” From Luke 16:19-31 we see that Hades was in two compartments: Abraham’s Bosom, the place of the departed righteous, where Lazarus went; and the place of torment, where the rich man went. A great gulf separated these two sections.

Since we know that Sheol (Hades) is somewhere in the earth, and that it is composed of two compartments, we turn to the Lord Himself to find the exact location. “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the *heart of the earth*” (Matt.12:40). Ephesians 4:9, 10 makes this clearer still. “Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the 216

*lower parts of the earth*. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.” Philippians 2:9, 10 says, “God . . . hath highly exalted him . . . that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things *under the earth*.” This speaks of the future adoration of Christ by all creation. However, we want to call attention to the above underlined words. To go “under the earth” means to submerge, as a submarine which goes under water. Thus, we conclude that Sheol (Hades) is in the heart of the earth, composed of two sections, one part for the righteous dead and the other for the unrighteous dead, with a great gulf fixed between them. By the Lord’s revelation of the rich man and Lazarus, which occurred before He died on the Cross, we see where all men, whether righteous, or unrighteous, went after death, before the Cross.

#### *B. At the Time of the Cross.*

Under this heading we shall deal with only two persons, the Lord Jesus, and the penitent thief. Upon death, the Lord Jesus went to Hades. We know this from Psalm 16:10, which says, “Thou wilt not *leave* my soul in Sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.” The Apostle Peter, on the day of Pentecost, quoted from this same passage, but, of course, he used the Greek word “Hades,” instead of “Sheol.” These words describe the resurrection of Christ, while fully stating that he went to Hades. We see this by the use of the word “leave.” The Holy Ghost would not have employed the word “leave” if he had not gone there. As to the thief on the cross, he went to Hades with Jesus, into the compartment reserved for the righteous dead. “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luke 23: 43b). How many days was Jesus in Hades? Three days. On the first of the three days, the thief was to be with Jesus in paradise; therefore, we learn that paradise was another name given to Abraham’s Bosom, which was the place of the righteous dead.

#### *C. After the Cross.*

Now where do the departed go at death? The unrighteous still go to Sheol (Hades), awaiting the last judgment.

The righteous, praise the Lord, go at once to heaven to be with the Lord. “We are confident . . . and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord” (II Cor. 5:8). When Christ arose from the dead “he led captivity captive” (Eph. 4:8). Christ emptied Hades (Sheol) of all the righteous, and took them and paradise with him to glory. Paradise was, at one time, in the heart of the earth; now it is in the third heavens. “I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into *paradise*, and heard unspeakable words which is not lawful for a man to utter” (II Cor. 12:2-4).

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## IV. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

### A. *The Importance of the Doctrine.*

It is said that one out of every twenty-five verses of the New Testament speaks of the Second Coming, while in the Old Testament there are eight verses concerning the Second Coming to every verse concerning the First Coming. In the promise of a Redeemer (Gen. 3:15), the Second Coming is mentioned before the First Coming. “It shall bruise thy head [occurs at the Second Coming], and thou shalt bruise his heel [occurred at the First Coming, upon the Cross].”

1. *Testimony of Our Lord.* “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:3). See also Matthew 24, 25; Mark 13; Luke 21.

2. *Testimony of Angels.* “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

3. *Testimony of Peter.* “He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you” (Acts 3:20). See also I Peter 5:4; II Peter 1:16.

4. *Testimony of Paul.* “I thank my God always on your behalf . . . that in every thing ye are enriched by him . . . so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Cor. 1:4-7). See also Romans 11:26; I Corinthians 15:23; II Corinthians 5; Philippians 3:20; Colossians 3:4; I Thessalonians (all); II Thessalonians 1:7, 10; I Timothy 6:14; II Timothy 4:8; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 9:28.

5. *Testimony of James.* The prophets, quoted by James, represent the Lord as saying, “After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up” (Acts 15:16). See also James 5:7.

6. *Testimony of John.* “Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (I John 3:2). See also I John 2:28, and the Book of Revelation.

7. *Testimony of Jude.* “Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints” (Jude 14).

### B. *The Meaning of the Second Coming.*

#### 1. *Negative.*

a. *It Is Not Death.* Death is the departing of the saint, not the coming of the Lord. The Lord *will* come, but death may never come.

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b. *It Is Not the Fall of Jerusalem.* Luke 21:20-24, and I Thessalonians 4:13-18 did not occur when Jerusalem fell. The second coming of Christ is connected with the *gathering* of Israel, not the scattering.

c. *It Is Not the Coming of the Holy Spirit.* Christ said that He would send another (John 14:16). I Thessalonians 4: 13-18 did not occur when the Holy Spirit came. Notice that all of the Epistles which speak of the Second Coming were written *after* Pentecost.

d. *It Is Not the Conversion of a Sinner.* If this is true, He has come millions of times. According to I Corinthians 15:51-57, the dead would have to be raised every time a soul was saved, and then get back into the grave, waiting for another to be saved.

e. *It Is Not the Diffusion of Christianity.* By this some mean the spreading of the Gospel. But remember, this same Jesus, a personal Christ, is to come again.

f. *It Is Not the End of the World.* When Christ comes, the world will not be destroyed, for He will reign a thousand years after He appears.

2. *Positive.*

a. *It Will Be a Personal Coming.* John 14:3 says, “I will come.” We are not to expect a spirit, but a Spirit in a body. I Thessalonians 4:16, 17 uses the word “himself.” Acts 1:11 declares “this same Jesus”; not some other person or thing is expected, but Christ Himself.

b. *It Will Be a Visible Coming.* “As the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matt. 24:27). See also Zechariah 12:10; Revelation 1:7.

c. *Meaning of the Words Used.*

(1) *Parousia.* This means the personal presence, the coming presence. It is spoken not only of the coming of the Lord, but of the coming of other men (I Cor. 16:17; II Cor. 7:6,7; Philippians 1:26). Concerning the coming of the Lord, it is at that moment, when absence ceases and presence begins (Matt. 24:3, 27; I Cor. 15:23; I Thess. 2:9; Jas. 5:8).

(2) *Epiphaneia.* This simply means “appearing.” It is used of both advents (II Tim. 1:10; II Thess. 2:8; I Tim. 6:14; II Tim. 4:1,8; Titus 2:13).

(3) *Apokalupsis.* The literal meaning is “unveiling revelation.” It emphasizes the visibility of the Lord’s return (II Thess. 1:7; I Peter 1:7, 13; 4:13. It is used also for men: Romans 8:19; II Thessalonians 2:3,6, 8).

d. *It Is a Coming in Two Phases.*

(1) *When Christ Comes for His Saints in the Air.* “We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him” (II Thess. 2:1). The promise of Christ’s return of Acts 1:9-20 was given before the Rapture was revealed. Hebrews 9:28 has nothing to do with the Rapture.

(2) *When Christ Comes with His Saints to Earth.* “Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints” (Jude 14).

(3) *These Two Phases Are Vastly Different.*

(a) *Different in Character.* “For His people” is an act of faith; “with His people” is an act of judgment.

(b) *Different in Manner.* One is secret, the other is a manifestation.

(c) *Different in Place.* “For His people” — in the air (I Thess. 4:17); “with His people” — to the earth (Zech. 14:14).

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(d) *Different as to Time.* “For His people” occurs before the Tribulation (Jacob’s trouble); “with His people” occurs after the Tribulation (Jacob’s trouble). We are never told in Scripture to look for signs preceding His coming *for* His saints, but men are told to look for signs before He comes *with* His saints (Compare II Thess. 2:1-3 with Is. 13: 6-9).

(e) *Different as to Dispensations.* Coming “for His saints” occurs at the beginning of the dispensation of Tribulation; coming “with His saints” occurs at the beginning of the dispensation of the Millennium.

(f) *Different as to Purpose.* Coming “for His saints” fulfills His promise to gather

His people (John 14:3); coming “with His saints” as a man of war, His promise to overthrow His enemies (Jude 14).

(g) *Different as to Relation.* “For His saints” is the adoption of the children of God; “with His saints” the time that the sons of God are manifested to the world. (Rom. 8:19,23).

*C. The Events of the Second Coming in Relation to the Body of Christ.*

As we deal with the Rapture of the Church, we recognize the fact that the word “rapture” is not a Scriptural word. The Rapture is, however, a Scriptural fact.

1. *The Resurrection of the Dead in Christ.* “The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (I Thess. 4:16). The very first thing that happens is the resurrection of the body of Christ. Certainly this will include all who die before reaching the age of accountability, such as babes, the mentally retarded, and the like. If Christ does not come, there will be no resurrection, and if no resurrection, then man shall be an eternal spirit. If diamonds can be made from soot, sapphire from clay, and opals from sand, what will God make out of our bodies? It will be wonderful, will it not?

2. *The Renovation of the Living in Christ.* “Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. . . . and we shall be changed. . . . And this mortal must put on immortality” (I Cor. 15:51-53). The Christian is one who is not looking for death, but for the conqueror of death. The words “we shall not all sleep” mean “we shall not all die.” What a glorious hope this is! What a shout that will be that day! “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (I Cor. 15:55). Isn’t it a blessed hope that it is possible for us to go without dying? No man, not even a Christian, wants to die. That is natural. The Christian, however, is one who is not afraid to die. The Christian is the only person who has a hope of never seeing death. Yes, we know the Scripture says, “It is appointed unto men once to die.” But the Scripture does not only say *all* men! The changing of us who are alive and remain at His coming is not death, for we shall not all die!

3. *The Rapture of All in Christ.* “Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind . . . as that the day of the Lord is at hand” (II Thess. 2:1, 2). The above Scripture, and the phrase, “we all shall be changed,” eliminates the possibility of a partial rapture. The entire Body of Christ will be raptured (caught up); it will be a rapture, and not a

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rapture. The Body of Christ will be complete. No member of His Body will be left to go through the Tribulation. Some say, “How can this be?” God took Elijah up without death; He can take a million, or ten million up just as easily.

The Rapture of the Church will cause a great separation. All unbelievers will be left here to go through the Tribulation. The Rapture of the Church will be the means of a great reunion. “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up *together* with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (I Thess. 4:17). What a great word is “together”; all of our loved ones in Christ “together” once more.

“We should live soberly, righteously, and godly . . . looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). What do



we mean by “looking for Christ”? It does not mean that we believe that He may come at any moment, but that we are looking for Him to come. Are you looking for Him today? Are you looking for Him tonight? That is what the Scripture means by “looking for Him.”

## V. THE ANTICHRIST

“I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15). While this verse speaks of Christ as the seed of the woman, it also prophetically declares the Antichrist as being the seed of the serpent. The seed of the serpent, the Antichrist, is mentioned first in the first book of the Bible, and described fully in the last book of the Bible; it can be traced in between as well. This is very significant.

### A. His Person.

The Early Church taught that Nero was the Antichrist, and that when he died he would be raised from the dead. In the eleventh century the Waldenses, Hussites and Wycliffites declared that the Roman Catholic Church was the Antichrist. The Roman Catholic Church, in turn, declared that Napoleon was the Antichrist. During World War I Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany was thought to be the Man of Sin. Many men will be proposed for this office, but it is useless to speculate, for he will not be revealed until after the Rapture of the Church (II Thess. 2:1-12).

*He Is a Man!* “Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the *number of a man*; and his number is six hundred three score and six” (Rev. 13:18). Notice the Scripture says he has the number of a man. Man’s number is 6. God says his number is 6-6-6: he is a *man*; he is a *man*; he is a *man*! He is not the Roman Catholic Church; he is not a system; he is a man. He will rule in Jerusalem, and not in Rome.

1. *He Will Be a Jew.* “Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers” (Dan. 11:37a).

“God of his fathers” means Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. “I am come in my Father’s name, 221

and ye receive me not: if *another* shall come in his own name, him ye will receive” (John 5:43). The word “another” implies “another Jew.” The name Antichrist is a Jewish title, and the Jews will not accept a Gentile as their Messiah.

2. *He Will Be a Genius.* He will be the most remarkable man the world has ever seen apart from Jesus Christ.

a. *An Intellectual Genius.* “In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up” (Dan. 8:23). See also Ezekiel 28:3.

b. *An Oratorical Genius.* “He shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries” (Dan. 11:21b). He shall be a mockery and an imitation of Him of whom it is said. “Never man spake like this man.”

c. *A Governmental Genius.* He rises from obscurity to power. He is the “little horn” spoken of in Daniel 7 and 8, and the “beast” of Revelation 13 and 14. All kings will give their power to him.

d. *A Commercial Genius.* No one will be able to buy or sell without his seal. “No man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (Rev. 13:17).

e. *A Military Genius*. “I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer” (Rev. 6:2). “Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?” (Rev. 13:4b).

f. *A Religious Genius*. He demands to be worshiped as God. “Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (II Thess. 2:4).

g. *A Financial Genius*. “He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps” (Dan. 11:43). See also Ezekiel 28:4,5.

#### B. His Titles.

1. *Man of Sin*. This is the most important and most terrible of all his titles. All the sins of man will be embodied and headed up in him. “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that *man of sin* be revealed, the son of perdition” (II Thess. 2:3).

2. *Son of Perdition*. The above Scripture declares him to be the *son of perdition*, also (II Thess. 2:3).

3. *The Lawless One*. “Then shall that Wicked [lawless one] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” (II Thess. 2:8). Christ is the *righteous* one; the Antichrist is the *lawless one*.

4. *The Lie*. “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a [the] lie” (II Thess. 2:11). Jesus Christ is the Truth; the Antichrist is the *Lie*. John 8:44 says that the Devil is a liar “and the father of it.” “It” refers to “the lie.”

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5. *The Antichrist*. “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that *antichrist* shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time” (I John 2:18).

6. *King of Babylon*. Babylon is always the seat of Satan. Babylon shall be revived in the last days, and the Antichrist shall reign over it (Rev. 17 and 18).

7. *The Little Horn*. “Out of one of them came forth a *little horn* which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. . . And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up” (Dan. 8:9, 23). See also Daniel 7:8.

8. *The Willful King*. “The king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done” (Dan. 11:36).

9. *The Assyrian*. “O *Assyrian*, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation” (Is. 10:5). See also Isaiah 10:12, 24.

10. *The Beast*. (Rev. 13, 17, 19).

#### C. His Forerunners.

Some are seen in the Scriptures, and some out of the Scriptures.

1. *Cain*. He denied the blood and was a liar and murderer (I John 3:12).

2. *Nimrod*. His history preceded the calling of Abraham to the Promised Land. The

Antichrist will precede the call of the seed of Abraham and enter into the Promised Land the second time. Nimrod means “rebel,” While the Scriptures speak of him as being a mighty hunter, in reality he was not a hunter of animals, but a hunter of souls. He was “a mighty man against the Lord.” So the Antichrist will be.

3. *Saul*. This king of Israel was demanded by the people, but he was against the anointed of the Lord. The Antichrist will be the choice of the people also, and he will be against God’s anointed.

4. *Absalom*. Absalom means “father of peace”; yet he denied his father. He posed as a man of peace and tried to steal the kingdom. So will the Antichrist.

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#### ABSALOM ANTICHRIST

1. A Man of Beauty 1. The same.

2. Tried to gain the kingdom by flatteries. 2. The same.

3. Set up a pillar to himself. 3. The same.

4. Came to a violent end. 4. The same.

5. *Nebuchadnezzar*. He was the first world ruler, who became the forerunner of the last world ruler.

6. *Antiochus Epiphanes*. He was the mad man who sacked Jerusalem, killing four hundred thousand Jews. He took a sow and burned it upon the altar. The Antichrist, too, shall profane the altar.

7. *Alexander the Great*. He was known as the “Unsatisfier.” He was a military genius who never suffered defeat. He sought to be worshiped as the Son of God. The same will be true of the Antichrist.

8. *Caia Caligula*. This Roman Emperor was considered mad. No doubt he was possessed by a demon. The Antichrist shall be fully possessed by the Devil.

9. *Nero*. During his life he was thought to be the Antichrist by the early Christians. Many believed that when he died he would be raised from the dead. The Antichrist shall be raised from the dead.

10. *Charlemagne*. This man was considered a great warrior and statesman. The Antichrist shall he considered the same.

11. *Napoleon*. He thought to revive the Holy Roman Empire. This figurative empire is considered to comprise those countries whose lands are washed by the waters of the Mediterranean Sea. Napoleon planned a new Jewish kingdom and Sanhedrin. The Antichrist will accomplish many of these same plans.

12. *Kaiser Wilhelm*. This leader of the German Empire had the same objective as Napoleon. It is said that every general carried a map of the Holy Roman Empire.

13. *Mussolini*. There were no doubts as to the objectives of this man. At one time he made a map of the old Roman Empire and included England in it. England protested, but the map remained. The Antichrist will not only make a map, but he will make a kingdom with all empires in it.

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#### D. His Work.

His work shall be motivated by Satan, ruling the world and trying to destroy the Jew (Is. 10:12-27).

#### F. His Career.

Remember, this is the mocker and mimic of Christ. He shall claim a reincarnation. His birth shall be obscure; he will begin as a mere man in world affairs; but he will be rapidly promoted until he becomes ruler of the entire world. Daniel 9:27 states that he will “confirm the covenant” with the Jews. “Confirm” means to “recognize.” What covenant is Israel interested in? The Mosaic Covenant. For the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation the Jews will be allowed to worship in their new temple. This would have been hard to believe a hundred years ago, for then only a handful of Jews lived in Palestine. But look at Israel today. She is recognized as a nation; she has a government, an army, an air force; she is doing business with the rest of the world. There are literally hundreds of thousands of Jews back in the land. Here is Israel as a nation; why do they so exist? Is this the last regathering? Are they waiting for the Messiah? No. For the most part, Israel has returned to the land in unbelief. They do not even believe the God of their fathers, much less in their rejected Messiah. What, then, is Israel waiting for? She is waiting for the rise of the Antichrist, although she knows it not. He is to confirm the covenant. Therefore, there must be a nation with which the Antichrist can confirm the covenant. Here is Israel waiting for the Antichrist.

“I saw one of his heads as it was wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast” (Rev. 13:3). According to this Scripture and Revelation 17, we see that the Antichrist shall suffer death, that he shall die. The words “deadly wound” are better translated “death stroke.” Revelation 13:12 has the phrase, “whose deadly wound was healed,” which describes fully the death and resurrection of the Antichrist. See also Revelation 13:14. No wonder the world will wonder after him and say, “Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?” (Rev. 13:4). He shall be the seventh of seven kings who shall be world rulers. When he dies and is resurrected he becomes the eighth ruler of the world. The world shall be divided into ten kingdoms, overlorded by ten rulers, “These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast” (Rev. 17:13).

No doubt he comes to the ascendancy of world rule in the seventieth week of Daniel. He demands to be worshiped as God at this time, and thus he marks the beginning of The Day of the LORD.

#### *F. His Time.*

He has not yet been revealed, but it is *possible* in the light of present-day events, that somewhere in the world he is alive today. He will not appear as the Antichrist until the old Roman Empire is revived, composed of the ten-toed kingdom of Daniel 2 and the

horned beast of Revelation 13 and 17. Another thing that must come to pass before he is revealed is the Rapture of the Church.

#### *G. His Appearance.*

He shall be a Jew by birth, a Roman by citizenship, and a Syrian by nationality. “Out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land” (Dan. 8:9). He marches on to conquer the nations of the south, and the east, and the west, He does not conquer the north, for that is where he shall come from — *Syria!*

#### *H. His End.*

“Then shall that lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of

his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” (II Thess. 2:8). See also Revelation 19:20.

## VI. THE TRIBULATION

There are three distinct tribulations in the Scriptures, and unless they are distinguished from each other, confusion will result. While the Word says that the Body of Christ is enduring tribulation, it also says that Israel shall have tribulation. Then there shall be three and one-half years of great tribulation, such as the world has never seen. At this point many get confused — by the combination of these three into one tribulation. They are distinctly separate, however. First, there is the Tribulation of the Church, which is for the Body of Christ and is now present. Second, there is the Tribulation known as Jacob’s Trouble, which lasts seven years and is future. Finally, there is the Great Tribulation, which commences in the midst of Jacob’s Trouble and lasts for three and one-half years. The first Tribulation is for the Church and is brought about by Satan. The second Tribulation is upon Israel and is brought by God. The Great Tribulation is pronounced upon Israel and the world and is brought by God through Satan.

### A. *The Tribulation of the Body of Christ.*

There is no denying that the Church is enduring tribulation. “For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know” (I Thess. 3:4). “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (II Tim. 3:12). It is the nature of the Church to suffer. The world lieth in the hands of the wicked one; we being of heavenly origin, are bound to be persecuted by Satan and his cohorts. The Church is a Body; as it is natural for it to suffer, one member may be suffering while the others are not; yet, one member cannot be hurt without the entire body suffering.

Paul, in speaking to the Colossians, said, “[I] now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the *afflictions* of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church” (Col. 1:24). Notice that the word “afflictions” is the Greek word

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*thlipsis*, meaning tribulation. This is the same word that is used of the Tribulation and the Great Tribulation. Also, we call attention to the words “afflictions of Christ”: the definite article should appear before “Christ,” making it read “the afflictions of *the* Christ.” Thus, it is the Tribulation of the Christ, or the Body of Christ, the Church. As it is natural for the Body to suffer, and as the Colossians were not suffering, Paul had to make up for what was lacking on the part of the Colossians. He so states in this verse. If this were not so, how could he be suffering for the Colossians? He had never been there; he only knew a few of the Christians there; he was in Rome, hundreds of miles away from them, How could his suffering in Rome be effective for them in Colosse? The only answer is that he had to make up for the lack of suffering on the part of the Colossians. In Colossians 1:13 Paul speaks of the Church as being the kingdom of God’s dear Son, and then in verse 24 he emphasizes its sufferings, or tribulation.

John states the same thing in Revelation 1:9 (R.V.): “I John, your brother and partaker in *the* tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.” Verily, the Church is enduring tribulation — it is the Tribulation of the Christ.

### B. *The Tribulation of Israel.*

A more familiar term is “Jacob’s Trouble.” “Alas! for that day is great. so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it” (Jer. 30:7). This period lasts for seven years, and is known as the 70th week of Daniel. “Seventy weeks are determined upon *thy people* and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined, And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week” (Dan. 9:24-27).

By these verses we learn that seventy weeks, four hundred and ninety years, were determined for *Daniel’s people*, the Jews. From the time that the command came to rebuild Jerusalem to the time when Messiah (Christ) was cut off, was sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years. Between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week is a gap, known as the Church Age, which Daniel knew nothing about, nor did any other Old Testament prophets (Eph. 3:5). We know that these seventy weeks have to do with Israel alone. The years during the Church period have, we must confess, been lean years for the Jews. It seems that God has forsaken them, but He has not. After this Church Age is completed, known as the “fulness of the Gentiles” (Rom. 11:25), the Church will be raptured, and the Lord shall give full attention to the Jews (Israel) again. This will be the

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seventieth week, known as the Tribulation, which lasts seven years.

The Church will not go through any part of this seven-year Tribulation. The fourth and fifth chapters of Revelation fully describe the Rapture of the Church before the Tribulation. Chapters six through nineteen then deal with the Tribulation. The Tribulation is identified when the Antichrist confirms the covenant with the Jews. It is concluded with the revelation of Christ in judgment.

### *C. The Great Tribulation.*

While it is still Jacob’s Trouble, judgment shall be intensified the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation. It is marked by the breaking of the covenant by the Antichrist, and by the revelation of the Antichrist as *the Lie*. “In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the over-spreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate” (Dan. 9:27). The Lord Jesus re-emphasized this truth when He added some details to the above quoted Scripture: “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. . . . For then shall be *great* tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matt. 24:15, 16, 21). From the words of Daniel and the Lord Jesus we learn that in the middle of the Tribulation the Antichrist breaks his covenant with the Jews, causes the revived sacrificial rites to come to an end, and places himself in the holy

place, which is described as the abomination of desolation. II Thessalonians 2:4 describes this event in added detail: the Antichrist “opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”

During this last three and one-half years, when the Antichrist shall demand to be worshiped as God, man will not be able to buy or sell without his mark (Rev. 13:17). Many times the question is asked, “Will anyone be saved during the Tribulation (including the Great Tribulation)?” Yes, people will be saved, even during the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation. The departure of the saints will convince many unbelievers of the truth of the Gospel; however, these believers will *not* be part of the Body of Christ. Some may question these statements by using the following verses: “Then shall that lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a [the] lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (II Thess. 2:8-12).

The above verses seem to teach that if one has rejected Christ before the Rapture he will not be able to be saved during the Tribulation. But we call attention to the fact that God 228

causes them to believe the *Lie*, and they will not be able to believe the Lie until the *middle* of the Tribulation period, as the Antichrist will not be revealed, as such, until then. Therefore, we are led to believe that the invitation will still be given men to be saved during the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation. But if they reject Christ during this time, God shall give them strong delusions to believe the Lie, and it will be impossible for them to be saved during the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation.

The natural question then arises, “Will anyone be saved during the last three and one-half years?” Revelation 7 declares emphatically that there shall be countless numbers of Jews and Gentiles saved during this period, known as the Great Tribulation. Those saved during the Great Tribulation will be those who have never heard the Gospel and have not taken the mark of the beast. Their salvation will be brought about by the preaching of a great evangelistic movement, which will be composed, we believe, of the 144,000 Israelites (Rev. 7:4-8).

You may ask, “How, then, will it be possible for them to be saved when the Holy Spirit has been taken up out of the world?” Let us turn to Moffatt’s translation and read: “For the secret force of lawlessness is at work already; only, it cannot be revealed till he who at present restrains it is removed” (II Thess. 2:7). The Holy Spirit will not be taken up out of the earth, but will take His restraining hand off sinful man and give him up fully to his sin. The Holy Spirit will still be here, for He is omnipresent. He will not manifest himself during the Great Tribulation as He did *before* the dispensation of grace. Again we remind you that the Great Tribulation ends with the coming of Christ to this earth.

## **VII. THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON**

Whenever a great battle is fought, people fear that it is the Battle of Armageddon. In

order clearly to understand this battle, let us find out first what it is not, and then what it is.

*A. What It Is Not.*

1. *It Is Not World Wars I and II.*

2. *It Is Not the First Battle of Gog and Magog.* This battle is composed of the forces of the Northern confederacy (Russia and her allies). It is not much of a battle, but God rains fire and brimstone upon the armies and country. This occurs at the beginning of the Tribulation.

3. *It Is Not the War in Heaven.* This battle is described in Revelation 12:7-17. It concerns the forces of Satan being defeated by Michael and his army.

4. *It Is Not the Second Battle of Gog and Magog.* This is the concluding battle of all battles, whether physical or spiritual. It is fought *after* the Millennium, when Satan is loosed for a season and deceives the Gentile peoples (Rev. 20:7-9). Fire comes down

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from heaven and destroys them.

*B. What It Is.*

1. *The Participants.* “I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army” (Rev. 19:19). This is the seed of the serpent fighting against the Seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15). It is the conflict between Christ and the Antichrist.

2. *The Place.* The plain of Esdraelon is the place of this battle. It is an ancient battleground. Gideon fought there; Saul and Jonathan were killed there; Josiah was killed by Pharaoh there; the Greeks and Romans battled there; and Napoleon suffered his first defeat there.

3. *The Time.* The battle occurs at the end of the Great Tribulation, just before the Millennium begins.

4. *The End.* The end of this battle results in the complete annihilation of the Antichrist’s army. The Antichrist and the False Prophet are then cast alive into Hell. “The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone” (Rev. 19:20).

## **VIII. THE MILLENNIUM**

The Millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ immediately following the Great Tribulation. Millennium is not a Scriptural word, but it is a Scriptural truth.

*A. The Fact of the Millennium.*

1. *The Lord Has Decreed It* (Ps. 2).

2. *Christ Taught It* (Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21).

3. *The Scriptures Teach It* (Is. 2, 11).

4. *The Psalmist Described It* (Ps. 72).

5. *The Angels Declared It* (Luke 1).

6. *The Transfiguration Pictures It* (Matt. 16:28; 17:1).

7. *A Gospel Outlines It* (Mark 6:45-56).

8. *The Apostles Preached It* (Acts 2, 3).

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9. *Nature Longs For It.* (Rom. 8).

B. *The Description of the Millennium.*

1. *The Thousand Years* (Rev. 21:1-7).

2. *The Age to Come* (Eph. 1:21).

3. *The Day of the LORD* (Rev. 6:12-17; Joel 2:10, 11,30, 31; Hag. 2:6,7; Matt. 24; Zech. 14:1-5).

4. *In That Day* (Is. 4:2; 2:11, 17, 20, 21; 11:11).

5. *The Restitution of All Things.* “(The Lord] shall send Jesus Christ. . . . whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, *which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began*” (Acts 3:20, 21). Some use this verse as meaning the restitution of Christ-rejecting sinners, and even the Devil. But notice that the above verse says, “which God *hath spoken* by the mouth of all his holy prophets.” The prophets say nothing of the restitution of the Devil and sinners.

a. *Israel to the Promised Land* (Is. 11:10-12).

b. *Repentance of the Nations to Jehovah* (Zech. 12: 10-14).

c. *The Removal of the Band of Iniquity* (Zech. 3:9).

d. *Restoration of Rain* (Joel 2:23-29).

e. *Re-engraving of Jehovah’s Law* (Jer. 31:28-37).

f. *Redistribution of the Land* (Ezek. 48).

g. *Reconstruction of Jerusalem* (Is. 62; Ezek. 40).

h. *Restitution From Bondage of Fear* (Is. 14:1-3; Jer. 33:14-16).

i. *Restitution of Jehovah’s Love* (Zeph. 3:16-20).

6. *The Regeneration of All Things* (Matt. 19:18; Is. 32).

7. *The Falling Stone* (Dan. 2).

C. *The Types of the Millennium.*

1. *The Year of Jubilee* (Lev. 25).

2. *The Feast of Tabernacles* (Lev. 23).

3. *The Sabbath.* It is that rest to come.

4. *The Kingdom of Israel Under Solomon’s Reign.* This was an absolute reign of peace.

D. *The Conditions During the Millennium.*

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1. *The Church,* “It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him we also shall live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us” (II Tim. 2:11, 12). Wherever the Lord shall be, there we shall be with Him (I Thess. 4:17). We shall reign, and we shall judge over angels and the world. I Corinthians 6:2, 3 says, “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world. . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels?”

2. *Satan.* Satan shall be sealed and bound for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-7). The Antichrist is cast into the lake of fire before that (Rev. 19:20).

3. *Israel.* She shall become the head of all nations again, and will not remain the tail as she is today (Is. 2:1-4; 11:3, 4; 61:5; Zech. 8:23; Deut. 28:13).

4. *The Nations of the World.* All nations will have to come up to Jerusalem year by year and worship Jehovah there. If they do not keep the yearly Feast of Tabernacles, God will cause no rain to fall upon that nation (Zech. 14:16; Is. 2).

### 5. *Mankind.*

a. *Spiritual Condition.* Some have been led to think that there will be no sin during the Millennium, but there will be. Human nature has never changed from one dispensation to another. There will be universal adoration of Christ (Heb. 8:11; 2:14; Phil. 2:10, 11), but it will be feigned obedience upon the part of many. For example, many in prison obey their warden, not because they love him, but because they must. Where will these sinners come from, as the Millennium begins with only born-again believers? They will be born of saved parents who came out of the Tribulation alive.

b. *Physical Condition.* Human life will be lengthened. Some will be able to live throughout the Millennium. There shall be death during this reign of Christ, also — death, not to the believer, but to the unbeliever. No babes or children shall die. When the sinner becomes one hundred years old and still rejects Christ, he shall be cut off by death. “There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed [cut off]” (Is. 65:20).

c. *Moral Condition.* This will not be a period of absolute perfection. However, sin will not be allowed to raise its head. Christ shall rule with a rod of iron (Ps. 46:9; Is. 2:4). Sin, nevertheless, will be committed in the hearts of men.

### 6. *Creation.*

a. *Physical.* When Adam fell, the earth was cursed (Rom. 8:18-23). Man has accomplished wonders with his irrigation systems, and the like, but look what God will do! “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose” (Is. 35:1). See also Isaiah 55:13. Creation shall be restored completely; no more earthquakes; no more storms, famines and pestilences (Joel 2).

b. *Animal Creation.* Before man sinned, God had put the fear of man in the animals. They ate the grass of the fields. During the Millennium they shall revert back to the same

order which He had intended for them (Is. 11:6-9). “And a little child shall lead them” (Is. 11:6) means that a child, during the Millennium, shall *literally* lead animals around. It is not speaking about children leading sinners to the Lord.

## IX. THE JUDGMENTS

The Bible does *not* teach a general judgment. Instead, it informs us that there are many judgments, some past, some present and some future. For example, there is the past judgment upon Sodom and there is the future judgment upon Babylon.

### A. *Judgments of the Christian.*

1. *Judgment on Sin.* When did this occur? For the Christian this is a past judgment, for all of our sins were judged at Calvary. “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit” (I Peter 3:18). “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (I Peter 2:24). See also Galatians 3:13; John 3:16; Isaiah 53:5,6.

2. *Judgment on Christian Service.* No Christian will have to be judged for his sins; they have already been judged upon the Cross of Calvary. The Christian will have to answer to God for his works. “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that

everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (II Cor. 5:10). Yes, the Christian has escaped the future judgment of the wicked (“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life” —John 5:24, R.V.), but he shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive rewards for the deeds done in the body. The words, “judgment seat,” are from the Greek word “Bema,” better translated “Rewarding Stand.” This will be set up when Christ comes. “Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be” (Rev. 22:12).

There are several crowns that the Christian may achieve:

- a. *The Crown of Life*. “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the *crown of life*, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him” (Jas. 1:12). See also Revelation 2:10. This is rewarded for faithfulness, even unto death.
- b. *An Incorruptible Crown*. “Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an *incorruptible*” (I Cor. 9:25). This is a reward for those who live separated lives unto the Lord.
- c. *Crown of Rejoicing*. “What is our hope, or joy, or *crown of rejoicing*? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?” (I Thess. 2: 19). This is the soul-winner’s crown.
- d. *Crown of Glory*. “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a *crown of glory* that fadeth not away” (I Peter 233 5:2-4). This is the shepherds’, pastors’, or ministers’ reward.
- e. *Crown of Righteousness*. “There is laid up for me a *crown of righteousness*, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” This crown goes to all who love His second coming. If you love His appearing, you will talk about it. All doctrines are headed up by the Second Coming.

#### *B. Judgment of the Nations.*

This takes place at the beginning of the Millennium, the thousand year reign (Matt. 25:31-46). A better name for “nations” is “Gentiles.” This is the judgment of all Gentiles who come out of the Tribulation alive. There are three classes of people mentioned: sheep, goats and brethren. The brethren are the Jews; the sheep are the righteous; and the goats are the unrighteous.

The righteous (sheep, Gentiles) go into the kingdom, then on to eternal life. The unrighteous (goats, Gentiles) are sent immediately to the lake of fire; therefore, they will not be judged at the Great White Throne. They go there a thousand years sooner than the wicked *dead*.

There are those who contend that this is a judgment of works and that men go to heaven or hell on the basis of their works; for, they say, the Scriptures state that this judgment is based upon the words “inasmuch as ye have done it, or inasmuch as ye did it not.” However, we will show that it is still a judgment based upon faith. The Lord, here, is the

judge, and He does mete out judgment on the basis of the words “inasmuch as . . . But let us ask, What prompted the sheep nations to minister to the brethren, the Jews, during the Tribulation? They did it because they accepted the brethren’s preaching. Do you think that they would have visited, clothed, fed and ministered to the brethren during the Tribulation if they had not believed? Remember, the Tribulation is going to be a time of peril. Man will not be able to buy or sell without the mark of the beast. The sheep (Gentiles) defy this order, reject the mark of the beast, and accept what the brethren preach. We know they accept Christ, for the Lord has said, “He that receiveth you receiveth me” (Matt. 10:40). Again we emphasize that the sheep (Gentiles) are saved because of their faith in Christ, for Revelation 7:14 declares it so: “He said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation [the Great Tribulation], and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

The unrighteous nations (goats, Gentiles) are cast into hell because of their unbelief. They rejected the brethren, thus rejecting Christ.

#### *C. Judgment at the Great White Throne.*

This great judgment is found in Revelation 20:11-15: “I saw a great white throne, and him that 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, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead

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were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works.” It is the judgment only of the wicked dead who have been raised at the last resurrection. No born-again believer shall appear here. The wicked dead are not to be tried as to whether they are going to heaven or hell; it has already been determined that they are going to hell, for they died condemned (John 3:18). This judgment is to determine the degrees of punishment, “according to their works” (Rev. 20:13).

There are two witnesses against them: The Book, and the Books; that is, the Book of Life, and the Book of Works. We do not know what the different degrees of punishment will be.

## **X. AFTER THE MILLENNIUM**

“When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breath of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them” (Rev. 20:7-9).

This is the war that ends all war. It is the final conflict of the universe.

#### *A. Satan Loosed.*

As he is loosed for a short time, he tries one more thrust at God.

#### *B. Nations Gathered.*

We ask ourselves, Who could Satan organize among the Gentiles to fight against God? None other but those unsaved who are ninety-nine years old and younger, who have been born during the last century of the Millennium.

Notice that no army has gathered against them.

#### *C. Army Destroyed.*

Fire comes down from heaven and destroys them.

*D. Satan Doomed.*

He is then cast into the lake of fire prepared for him and his angels.

## **XI. THE FUTURE OF THE WICKED.**

It is not hard to think of everlasting life, but it is hard to think of an eternity in hell; nevertheless, it is true.

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*A. The Scriptural Teaching.*

1. *There Will Be a Day of Judgment* (Acts 17:30, 31).
2. *Every Man Will Be Judged for His Works* (Rom. 2:16; Rev. 20:12).
3. *It Is Eternal* (Mark 9:43-48). See also Matt. 13.
4. *There Will Be Degrees of Punishment* (Rev. 20:12; Rom. 2:5, 6).
5. *There Will Be a Resurrection of the Unjust As Well As of the Just* (John 5:29).
6. *Language Describes It* (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:45-48; John 3:36).
7. *All Is Based Upon the Character of God as Righteous.*

*B. The Terms Used.*

The following are the places where wicked human beings and angels are, or shall be sent to:

1. *Sheol*. This is the Old Testament word describing the place of the departed wicked.
2. *Hades*. This is the New Testament Greek word, describing the immediate state of the wicked dead; it is the same as Sheol. There is nothing in the Bible that speaks of an eternal Hades, or Sheol.
3. *Tartarus*. This is the place where the wicked angels are chained; it is a place of darkness.
4. *Gehenna*. Gehenna was the city dump outside of Jerusalem, whose fire never went out. The Lord Himself likened hell unto it, describing the fires of hell that shall always burn: “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:44).
5. *Tophet*. “Tophet” is the Old Testament Hebrew word meaning the same as Gehenna.
6. *Abyss*. This is the place of fallen angels, human beings are never placed here (Rom. 10:7).
7. *Lake of Fire*. This is found only in the Book of the Revelation. Its meaning is the same as Gehenna.
8. *Eternal*. Sometimes this word is translated “everlasting.” The meaning is the same. The punishment of the wicked is eternal.

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a. *First Interpretation*. Thayer translates it to mean “without beginning and without end.”

b. *Second Interpretation*. This states that “eternal” means “without beginning.”

c. *Third Interpretation*. This holds that “eternal” means “without ending.” We agree with all three. We do not hold to the interpretation that it means only “age lasting.” Some would have us believe that the wicked will endure hell for just an age. But the word “eternal” describing hell is the same word which describes eternal life (John 3:16), and the everlasting God (Rom. 16:26), and the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ (II Peter 1:11).

### C. *The Theories Proposed.*

1. *Universalism.* This is the belief that all will finally be saved, including the Devil. What would the words “judge” and “judgments” mean if they did not mean judge or judgment. When God speaks about eternal judgment, He means eternal judgment (Acts 3:21-24; I Cor. 15:22; Matt. 18:9; John 3:36).
2. *Conditionalism.* This false teaching was not found in the Early Church, but it first made its appearance in the nineteenth century. It was reasoned that eternal life is based upon the acceptance of Jesus Christ. If one accepts Him, he has eternal life. If he does not accept Him, he will never live; *non-acceptance* in this life will result in *non-existence* in the future life. There is no *Scriptural* foundation for this theory.
3. *Everlasting Punishment.* This is based upon Biblical truth, which connects sin with punishment. All sins committed are committed against eternity. He who sins by rejecting Jesus Christ shall endure eternal punishment.

## XII. HEAVEN

The Scriptures teach that there are three heavens:

A. *First Heaven.* This is the region of the clouds where the birds fly, the atmospheric heaven.

B. *Second Heaven.* This is the stellar heaven, where the stars are located.

C. *Third Heaven.* This is the place where God lives; it is the place where Jesus came from.

The Lord Jesus went through the first and second heaven to get to the third heaven.

“Having then a great high priest, who has passed *through the heavens*, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession” (Heb. 4:14, R.V.).

Heaven is just as real as the clouds and stars. It is the place where Stephen saw God; the place to which John was caught up by the Spirit. The first thing he saw, was the Lord Jesus. He is the heart of heaven (Rev. 1, Heb. 9:24). Paul, too, was caught up to the third  
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heaven (II Cor. 12:2). Where is heaven? Does the Bible make it clear? Heaven is always in the *north*. “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing” (Job 26:7). See also Isaiah 14:12-14; Psalm 82:1; 48:2.

Is heaven foursquare? Is it a cube? What will man have for his future home? Will it be a small cubby hole in a square city? Is heaven only fifteen hundred miles square? While the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21,22) is foursquare, this is only a city of heaven, which descends as a present for the Bride.

Those who go there will live in perfect peace and perfect love for all time and eternity.

“Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels” (Heb. 12:22).<sup>12</sup>

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12 Mark G. Cambron, *Bible Doctrines*, 1954, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 249-288

## ***Critique of other Systematic Theology Eschatology Works***

A systematic theology is more than a doctrines book. It needs to systematically review other belief systems and theology works.

### ***Critique of John Miley's 1892 Methodist Eschatology***

John Miley (1813-1895), a Methodist, published his Systematic Theology in 1892.

### ***Critique of Charles Hodge's 1878 Eschatology***

### ***Critique of Augustus Strong's 1907 Eschatology***

### ***Critique of Theisens' 1949 Eschatology***

### ***Critique of Chafer's 1948 Eschatology***

## **Critique of Chafer's Volume IV Ecclesiology and Eschatology Introduction**

A review of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's Ecclesiology and Eschatology in Volume IV of his Systematic Theology must begin with a review and documentation of his three most critical and systematic flaws. His whole Systematic Theology is seriously flawed in its organization, in its doctrines, and in its communication. Dr. Chafer's Ecclesiology is profoundly effected by all these shortcomings, but his Eschatology represents, at least, baby steps away from the flawed doctrine of Protestants, their Reformed Theology, and John Calvin's Covenant Theology.

Dr. Chafer has a very verbose and conglomerated communication method. His work is laden with run-on passive voice sentences. His commentary drones on for pages without significant content, and it takes careful scrutiny to discern his main point. This may be a purposeful style. Pleasing 70 + denominations at Dallas Theological Seminary is easier when some of them do not know exactly what you are saying. It is not, however, a competent way to write a systematic theology.

The doctrines of Dr. Chafer must be drawn out of his verbose commentary. As was stated in critique of his volume on Soteriology, it is easier to draw doctrine out of the Holy Bible than to draw it out of Chafer's voluminous effort. It is doubtless more accurate to do so as well. Again, trying to capture a doctrine agreed to by 70+ denominations is an undue challenge. None the less, this critique will address his doctrines on Ecclesiology and Eschatology, especially as they differ from Bible Doctrine.

The most profound flaw in Dr. Chafer's Systematic Theology is his lacking organization and lack of a system in what he considers systematic. This profoundly effects each volume and each doctrine of his work. Here, in Volume 4 of his work, this lack annuls his presentation of a Biblical Ecclesiology and a Biblical, dispensational, premillennial Eschatology.

When one sets out to write a Systematic Theology they must organize every revealed doctrine in the Holy Bible. To some extent every man is a theologian because he organizes, in some fashion, what he knows about God. In that organization he distinguishes which parts he believes. Hopefully that is done consciously. Making such organization systematic entails a considerable effort and focused purpose. To do a systematic analysis each substantial part of a system is partitioned and isolated into a separate subsystem which is carefully defined and



understood. Then all the systems are analyzed in concert to understand the larger system.

In a Systematic Theology, in a volume on Ecclesiology and Eschatology, those topics would be partitioned and isolated and therein carefully and Biblically defined. Dr. Chafer's Volume IV has none of that.

## **A Critique of Dr. Chafer's Ecclesiology**

Dr. Chafer's Ecclesiology section begins with his attempt to divide angels from Gentiles and Jews from Christians. This snafu occurred because Dr. Chafer wants to hold on to John Calvin's election of Christians, but reject John's Covenant Theology where Elect Christians replace God's Elect Nation, Israel. Calvin brought into Reformed Theology this old Roman Catholic Replacement Theology. Dr. Chafer is intent on advancing Dispensational Theology, but refuses to disbar, or deny, or even define its archenemy Covenant Theology. This dilemma results in a volume on Ecclesiology intent on differentiating between Jew and Christian and Gentile. This is very awkward and not normally a concern of Ecclesiology at all.

## **Chafer's Systematic Error**

Chafer's Volume IV of Systematic Theology contains 250 pages of his Ecclesiology, and 190 pages of his Eschatology but it includes much material not related to either topic at all. Such inexcusable organization is the result of both an overall poor organizing practice and an inadequate definition of a Systematic Theology in general. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer contends that a Systematic theology is "The collecting, systematically arranging, comparing, exhibiting, and defending of all facts concerning God and His works from any and every source."<sup>13</sup> This author stated previous that in making such a brash definition Chafer unwittingly puts

<sup>13</sup> from [www.ChristianBook.com](http://www.ChristianBook.com) book promotion paragraph quoting Dr. Chafer's promotion of his "Systematic Theology" accessed Dec 2013

philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato, and Roman Catholics such as Saint Augustine and Saint Aquinas, and Protestants who persecuted Baptist, men such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, on equal grounds with Holy Scripture. In writing his seven or eight volumes on Systematic Theology he repeatedly makes this blunder.

A Systematic Theology is not to be an unabridged rendition of everything ever believed about God, as Chafer has boasted. It is to be a systematic organization of each truth that God has revealed in his inerrant, infallible record. Truths that are then given systematic analysis wherein they can debunk the theoretical conjectures of previous philosophers and theologians.

In his fourth volume Dr. Chafer needs both a strong organization of the truth about the Church, the Church age, and the end times and then a relentless attack of the Reformed Theologian's Covenant Theology, Replacement Theology, and Catholicism of the Church. Chafer's lacking organization and discipline make such a success unachievable. Chafer's unsystematic system and flawed organization of material brings about a very flawed doctrine. A flawed doctrine which it conceals in exaggerated verbosity.

Previous theologies have been built as if theology were a science. Dr. Chafer falls into the same trap. A scientific method starts with a hypothesis which it twists and refines with experiment until it holds enough merit to advance to a theory. Theologians have considered theories reliable enough to place in their science based systematic theologies. In the scientific method, after a theory receives more extensive testing and refinement, it becomes a law. As an engineer this author loves and respects the scientific method. Kepler used it expertly to derive the laws of planetary motion. As a theologian this author insists that the scientific method has no place in deriving the "Thus saith the LORD" kind of truth which a true theologian is looking for.

Pilot asked Jesus "What is Truth?" In my statistics class I taught that truth is discovered by four primary means, only one has proven reliable. Philosophy says "I think therefore I am." In their field one thinks, reasons, deduces and believes, expecting he has therein discovered truth. Then, in the turn of the last century scientists formalized the scientific method, and used it in founding natural laws operating in our universe. In this method a hypothesis is tested, refined, and observed into a theory, which is tested, refined, and observed into a natural law. Leading theologians pounced on this, and considered theology as the chief of the sciences. They filled their Systematic Theology books with theories that they documented into laws expecting that they had discovered the truths about God. But science is only an able tool to lead and surmise the truth about natural laws, not supernatural laws.

Statistics had an ugly beginning. It had trouble overcoming its nemesis, "Figures don't lie, but liars figure." The surveys and studies, the analysis and presentation of averages and standard deviations could surely lead to truth. But consider how statisticians and politicians readily misleads people into some grandiose untruths. In statistics a majority believing something is supposed to derive the truth. Know that philosophy and science do the same misleading. For philosophy rationally comprehending something makes it a personal truth. One need only mention Christian Science founder Mary Baker Glover Eddy's idea that this world is only in the mind to alert the dangers of philosophy. Now we have come to where science has elevated the spontaneous generation of life to a teachable truth, and even teach as truth the insane idea that "survival of the fittest" had changed beagle dogs into Clydesdale horses, and lizards into bald eagles. Thus science-so-called<sup>14</sup> cannot discern the truth. Ergo these forms of discriminating

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14 1Ti 6:20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of **science falsely so called:**

truth have their notable flaws.

The forth method of discerning truth is the "Thus saith the LORD" method. This is not the religious method. Indeed religions source of their truth is generally some ugly combination of the previous three mentions. Even in Dr. Chafer's Systematic Theology this "Thus saith the LORD" method to often takes a back seat to religion and survey. One would expect that a section on Ecclesiology would begin with God's notable definition of the Church and its formation. Instead Dr. Chafer first philosophizes about angels, Jews, Gentiles and Christians. He then gives the scientific method a spin and presents theories that have been advanced. Chafer then presents a statistical survey of who believes what. Organizing theology systematically requires that a baseline of truth be established up front. That base line must proceed with a "Thus saith the LORD" as its sole source. All other methods are fraught with blunder. Dr. Chafer's eight volumes make up example "A" in that blundering.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer has purposed to "collect and systematically arrange, compare, exhibit and defend all facts concerning God and his works from any and every source." Systematically such an approach is theological malpractice. To be Biblical and Systematic there must be a sole source. His lack of organizing thoughts and direction is serious, but his total miss-organizing the "system" in systematic, coupled with his strong reliance on extra Biblical sources make this volume, and his previous three, inexcusable.

It is reiterated here that Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder of Dallas Theological Seminary in 1924, does not use the sharpest language and does not expose the error of the 70+ denomination that he is pandering to. He is the epitome of neoevangelicalism as herein defined.

## A Critique of Dr. Chafer's Eschatology

If there was an area where Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's premillennial, dispensational position could over power Reformed Theology's shortcomings, it would be in his Eschatology. The Covenant Theology of John Calvin, the Presbyterian Church, and the Roman Catholic Church, could finally take its proper position in the theological trash can. The Replacement Theology of the Roman Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church and John Calvin, could finally hold its justified label of Apostasy<sup>15</sup> Alas, however, it has already been shown that Dr. Chafer is, in his heart, leaning into neoevangelicalism and not truly a militant Fundamentalist. Otherwise he would engage in rebuke, reproof, and separation from the certain apostasy found in these theologies, and more particularly the Presbyterian Church which he targeted for *correction*, instead of *reproof*.

Dr. Chafer does cite the total ignorance of Protestant Theologians where Biblical prophecy is involved. Without calling it gross, he points to the negligence of Dr. Charles Hodge, Dr. B.B. Warfield, and Dr. R.L. Dabney.<sup>16</sup> The root cause of the gross negligence of these protestant theologians when it comes to Bible prophecy, is their subtle acceptance of the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine of Replacement Theology and John Calvin's doctrine of Covenant Theology. It is subtle because in all their writings they never detail what John Calvin's Covenant Theology is all about, and never, ever broach the grotesque error of Replacement Theology, which is wholly encapsulated in Covenant Theology. Albeit the Presbyterian Denomination, which was Chafer's primary target, is by no means subtle in its acceptance of Calvin and

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15 [www.wiktionary.org](http://www.wiktionary.org) s.f. *Apostasy* The ancient criminal offense of heresy or non-belief in religion. (Herein used that definition includes non-belief in the inerrant, infallible, plenary, verbally inspired Holy Bible, rather than non-belief in mere religion.)

16 Chafer, Systematic Theology, Volume IV, 255-256

rejection of premillennialism. These theologians "have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the works of unrighteousness; But was rebuked for his iniquity; the dumb ass speaking with mans voice forbade the madness of the prophet." (2Pet 2:15-16) Dr. Charles Hodge is an intellectual giant. Perhaps dwarfing Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, and certainly dwarfing this author, even as much as Balaam's ass was dwarfed by the prophet that rode him. But when a rebuke is in order the dumb should speak out. Dr. Chafer did not, at least he did not with enough force (militantism) to curb the 70+ denominations which frequent Dallas Theological Seminary.

Dr. Chafer attempted to champion the premillennial position in a Presbyterian Denomination which rejected it. Champions cannot tip-toe. His section on Eschatology, the doctrine of last things, tip-toes through seven important facts. 1. "The neglect of the prophetic Scriptures on the part of theologians is all but complete."<sup>17</sup> Implicit here is that Chafer is referencing Protestant, non-Baptist theologians. George Dollar cites a host of stalwarts of Fundamentalism, all of which are premillennial. Perhaps they fall short of Chafer's definition or circle of *theologians*.

2. "It is a common practice with some theologians to brand *chiliasm*<sup>18</sup> as a modern theory... Reformers did not restore all features of doctrine... they retained the Romish notion that the Church is the Kingdom, fulfilling the Davidic covenant, and appointed to conquer the world by bringing it under the authority of the church."<sup>19</sup> Although Chafer does not say it out loud, this is in the doctrine of Covenant Theology, and Replacement Theology. Both contest the literal

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17 Ibid., 255

18 Chafer uses this Greek word *Chiliasm*, Greek for 1,000, to soft shoe the brazen literalness of a millennial reign of Christ, a millennial reign which is preceded by his 2nd Advent, i.e. premillennialism.

19 Ibid., 257

1,000 year millennial reign of Christ on the throne of David from the city of Jerusalem, on the hills of Zion, clearly referenced in Psalm chapter two. Any, and every denomination holds to some aspect of this error in its denominational control of churches. The error is wholly engulfed in John Calvin's doctrine.

3. "What is declared in Scriptures respecting prophecy is as credible as those portions which are historical. The language is no more complex, nor is the truth any more veiled." Also "(The prophetic message) is dependent upon language - simple terms known to all - for its conveyance... let the Bible's simple prophetic terminology bear the message that it naturally conveys"<sup>20</sup> Although Dr. Chafer, again, does not say it out loud, this is his argument against the Romish and Reformed use of the allegorical method. The mainstay of Covenant Theology, ergo Reformed Theology, is its use of the allegorical method of hermeneutics. Any denomination or religion, for that matter, which maintains a clergy class, does so on the premise that commoners, often called laity, are not equip to interpret the secret allegorical communiques of Scripture. Rome took this separation of their clergy so serious that laity caught reading or memorizing their Bibles were burned with their Bibles. Protestants only occasionally took this murderous tactic, but they endorsed all of the clergy class vs laity class principles, and promote it still today, even in Dallas Theological Seminary's 70+ denominations.

4. "The Scripture presents but one system of truth... The word of God does not lend itself as support to postmillennial, amillennial,... schemes of interpretation."<sup>21</sup> This partial quote was extracted from Chafer's verbose explanation which, perhaps, was meant to communicate that several competing interpretations cannot exist together. Elsewhere in his verbose effort, it is

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20 Ibid., 258 and 259

21 Ibid., 261

surmised that he holds to a premillennial position.

5. "No decrees of councils; no ordinances of synods; no 'standard' of doctrines; no creed or confession, is to be urged as authority in forming the opinions of men... What is based on the authority of apostles and prophets is true, and always true, and only true."<sup>22</sup> This would have been an excellent place for Dr. Chafer to emphasize the infallible, inerrant, plenary, verbally inspired Word of God, but, alas, he does not.

6. "The whole Bible is harmonized only by the (literal millennial reign of Christ for 1,000 year, with a premillennial second advent) interpretation." Chafer continues, "(The Reformers) were Augustinian in their doctrine and gave no support to the idea of a millennium prior to the second advent."<sup>23</sup> Again, it was necessary to trim Chafer's verbose mannerisms and detail what he meant to say for his Greek code word *chiliasm*.

7. There is no denomination which holds a premillennial doctrine.<sup>24</sup>

With those seven truths delineated in his 1947 publication of Eschatology, my thesis that Dr. Chafer had more Neoevangelicalism in his heart than he had Fundamentalism in his heart needs to be reiterated. Such a thesis does have its crux in Chafer's desire to move the denominations, particularly the Presbyterian denomination, to an acceptance of the Biblical premillennial position, and his failure to accomplish this desire.

Make no mistake, Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer was a fundamentalist. The song leader under C.I. Scofield became a gifted teacher for the newly formed World's Christian Fundamentals Association (WCFA) and in 1924 his Evangelical Theological College became Dallas

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22 Ibid., 262

23 Ibid.267 and 278

24 Ibid., 282-283



Theological Seminary in Dallas, Texas, a fundamental seminary.<sup>25</sup> Evangelicals became Neoevangelicals when they scoffed at the Fundamental Separatist position and refused the Fundamentalists' militant attitude. Dr. Chafer never scoffed, but he never separated either. Dr. Chafer never mocked militantism, but he never became one, and he never camped with any.

Instead of rationalizing with these seven truths, Dr. Chafer could have very well rebuked and reproved. A reproof is in order when protestant/reformed theologians 1) reject Biblical prophecy, 2) reject premillennialism, 3) hold to Roman Catholic allegorical methods which elevate clergy in priestly garb, 4) advance amillennialism/postmillennialism, 5) reject the Bible as a sole inerrant infallible source, 6) reject the literal millennial reign of Christ on the throne of David from the Hills of Zion, substituting the Catholic Church in its stead. and 7) advance their apostasy with denominational controls. That is Chafer's list with bluntness and some measure of militantism.

One cannot say that had Dr. Chafer been a militant, separatist fundamental that he would have met more success. Protestants are no more likely to leave their reformed theology than any king was likely to leave "the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin."<sup>26</sup> There is a time to "answer a fool according to his folly, (Prov 26:4-5) and Dr. Chafer did not step up to the plate. Instead he settled in among them, he waxed just as scholarly as they, and he became a middle-of-the-road bridge which could conduct exploring minds into their ranks. The bridge is a one-way street. If one is to get back out of Reformed Theology's anti-whosoever will, anti-premillennialism, anti-Israel stance, Chafer's bridge will not lead the way.

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25 Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, 160

26 1Ki 14:16, 15:26, 15:34, 16:13, 16:26, 21:22, 22:52, 2Ki 3:3, 10:29, 10:31, 13:2, 14:24, 15:9, 15:18, 15:24, 15:28, 23:15

In its day, the GARBC<sup>27</sup> was, for Baptists, as fundamental as one gets. Dallas Theological Seminary was not on their approved list of schools and the perpetual warning to students who would go there is telltale. "Students who go to Dallas Theological Seminary come out middle-of-the-road evangelicals, never to be Baptist again."<sup>28</sup> Their emphasis on "never" was so pronounced that a graduate of Dallas would "never" get a recommendation from GARBC when he candidated as a pastor. The GARBC used careful syntax to make sure they were perceived as an association, or fellowship, and not a denomination. However, their ability to excommunicate often made that distinction blurry, and they too, in time, fell into neoevangelicalism.

What can be said of Dr. Chafer's Eschatology can be said of all seven volumes of his Systematic Theology. He uses three tactics to tip-toe around in the apostasy where he finds himself encamped. He attempts to generalize and detail each theory and belief of all men from every source. This warms him to his apostate audience, and displays a scholarly flare. He then enters into a tirade of verbiage, using passive sentence structures and run on sentences. This allows that none in his audience really understands all he is saying, but their favorite beliefs are in there somewhere, so they keep reading. This is really an aged tactic of intimidation, and Dr. Chafer uses it with great subtlety. Lastly, Chafer presents his truth as a gentle correction.

The difference between teaching and preaching, is in the level of the pressure for required change; teaching has none, preaching forces one to the very brink of a decision. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer was an exceptional teacher. But the protestant denominations do not need mixers, they need separators, they do not need smooth teachers, they need militant preachers. Although Dr. Chafer was listed as a fundamentalist, he was not a separator or a militant. That is a reasonable

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27 General Association of Regular Baptist Churches

28 Multiple sources from my childhood.

assessment of all seven volumes.

From Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer Systematic Theology, Volume 4, pages 390-401

1. Noah's prediction respecting his sons: Genesis 9:25-27.
2. Israel's bondage in Egypt: Genesis 15:13-14.
3. The future of Jacob's sons: Genesis 49:10, 24.
4. Israel in the land: Deuteronomy 4:14-20; 31:14-23; Genesis 15:13-14.
5. Israel's captivities:
  - a. Egyptian bondage: Genesis 15:13-14;
  - b. Assyrian and Babylonian captivities: Jeremiah 25:11-12;
  - c. Final scattering among the nations: Deut. 28:63-68 (many cross-references).
6. Judgments to fall upon surrounding nations:
  - a. Babylon: Isaiah 13:1-22; 14:18-27; Jeremiah 50:1-51:64;
  - b. Moab: Isaiah 15:1-9; 16:1-14; Jeremiah 48:1-47;
  - c. Damascus: Isaiah 18:1-14; Jeremiah 49:23-27;
  - d. Egypt: Isaiah 19:1-25; Jeremiah 46:2-28;
  - e. Tyre: Isaiah 23:1-18; Jeremiah 47:1-7;
  - f. Ammon: Jeremiah 49:1-6;
  - g. Edom: Jeremiah 49:7-22;
  - h. Elam: Jeremiah 49:34-39.
7. A partial restoration: Isaiah 44:28; Jeremiah 25:11-12; Daniel 9:2.
8. The coming and ministry of John the Baptist: Isaiah 40:3-5; Malachi 4:5-6; Luke 1:5-25.
9. The birth of Christ: (extensive number not listed here) Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:31-35.
10. The offices of Christ:
  - a. Prophet: Deuteronomy 18:15-19 (many cross-references);
  - b. Priest: Psalm 110:4; Zechariah 6:12-13; much of Hebrews;
  - c. King: 2 Samuel 7:16; Psalm 2:6-10; 72:1-19; Isaiah 9:6-7; Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:1-9; 27:11; Luke 1:32-33.
11. The ministries of Christ: Isaiah 49:1-7; 61:1-3.
12. The death of Christ:
  - a. Directly predicted: Psalm 22:1-21; Isaiah 52:13—53:12;
  - b. Prophesied by Christ Himself: Matthew 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22; 18:31-34; John 12:32-33.
13. The burial of Christ: (important part of the gospel: 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; and in the sanctification of the believer: Romans 6:1-10) Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60.
14. The resurrection of Christ: Leviticus 14:4 ff.; Psalm 16:8-11 with Acts 2:25-31; Psalm 22:22 with Hebrews 2:12; Psalm 118:22-24 with Acts 4:10-11. Christ's own expectation is also recorded: Matthew 12:38-40; 16:21; 17:9, 23; 27:63; Mark 8:31; 9:9; 10:34; 14:58; Luke 9:22; 18:33; John 2:19-22.
15. The ascension of Christ: John 20:17 with Psalm 24. Leviticus 23:9-12 as type.
16. The present age: Matthew 13; Matthew 24:4-8; Galatians 1:4; 2 Timothy 4:10.
17. The day of Pentecost: Leviticus 23:15-21 type.

18. The Church: Matthew 16:18.
19. The destruction of Jerusalem: Luke 21:20-24 with Matthew 24:2; Mark 13:1-2.
20. The last days for the Church: (not the last days for Israel, Acts 2:17) 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; James 5:1-10; 2 Peter 2:1 ff.; Jude 1:1-25; Revelation 3:14-22.
21. The first resurrection: 1 Corinthians 15:20-24; John 5:25-29; Revelation 20:4-6. (Note the three diverse resurrections and the timing of each: Christ, believers, unbelievers.)
22. The rapture of living saints: 1 Corinthians 15:35-57 (35-50 is about believers who have died). (Many cross references.)
23. The Church in heaven: Revelation 4:1 ff.
24. The believer's rewards: 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 9:16-27; 2 Corinthians 5:9-11; Revelation 3:11; 22:12.
25. The marriage of the Lamb: Revelation 19:7-9
26. The great tribulation per se: Deuteronomy 4:29-30; Psalm 2:5; Jeremiah 30:4-7; Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:9-28; 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12; Revelation 3:10; 7:13-14; 11:1—19:6.
27. The appearing of the Man of Sin: Ezekiel 18:1-10; Daniel 7:8; 9:27; 11:36-45; Matthew 24:15; John 5:43; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Revelation 6:2; 13:1-9; 19:19-20; 20:10.
28. Israel's final sufferings: Deuteronomy 28:63-68; Jeremiah 30:4-7; Matthew 24:21-27.
29. The destruction of ecclesiastical Babylon: Revelation 17.
30. The battle of Armageddon: Revelation 16:13-16; Zechariah 12:1-9; Isaiah 10:28-32; Matthew 24:29-30; Zechariah 14:2; Isaiah 63:1-6; 2:12; Daniel 2:35.
31. The destruction of political and commercial Babylon: Revelation 18-19.
32. The Day of the Lord per se: Matthew 24:42-44; 1 Thessalonians 5:4; 2 Peter 3:10.
33. The second coming of Christ per se: Revelation 19:11-16; Ezekiel 20:33-44; Isaiah 63:1, 4; Romans 11:26-27.
34. Satan bound and confined: Revelation 20.
35. The regathering and judgment of sorrowing Israel: Deuteronomy 30:1-8; Isaiah 11:11-2; Jeremiah 23:7-8; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Matthew 23:37; 24:31.
36. The judgment of the nations: Matthew 24:37—25:46 with Genesis 12:1-3; Joel 3:2-16; Psalm 96:13; 98:9.
37. Human life in the earthly kingdom: Psalm 72:1-19; Isaiah 11:1-10, 14:1-2; 60:12; 61:5; Jeremiah 31:31-33; Matthew 5:1—7:29; 25:34; Romans 8:18-23.
38. The loosing of Satan and the last revolt: Revelation 20.
39. The doom of Satan: Revelation 20:10.
40. The passing of the present earth and heaven: Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; Hebrews 1:10-12; 2 Peter 3:3-13; Revelation 20:11; 21:1
41. The Great White Throne judgment: Revelation 20:12-15; 21:8; 22:10-15.
42. The destiny of the wicked: Revelation 20:14-15.
43. The creation of a new heaven and a new earth: (see #40).
44. The destiny of the saved: \
  - a. New earth: Revelation 21:3-4; Isaiah 66:22;
  - b. New heavens: Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 21:9-22:7; John 14:1-3.
  - c. The day of God: 2 Peter 3:12 with 1 Corinthians 15:28.

Only major events have been included in this listing. Unnumbered lesser events all of them themes of prediction—should have their full and worthy consideration.



## **Critique of Geisler's 2002 Eschatology**

## ***Penny Pulpit Essays on Eschatology.***

### **Msg #1342 Prophetic Truth and Accuracy**

What The Bible Says  
Good Samaritan's Penny Pulpit by Pastor Ed Rice

For us it is a minor thing to comprehend how two witnesses slain in the streets of Jerusalem are seen all over the world for three days. For Martin Luther and other Protestant Reformers it was so incomprehensible that they thought the Revelation of Jesus Christ and its companion book, Daniel, were not inspired or belonging in the Bible, at best calling them allegorical, apocalyptic fiction. Protestants believed so little of these books they carried Roman Covenant Theology right into their reformation where it presently leavens as Reformed Theology. For the Bible believer, however, these books are true and accurate. Daniel has six chapters of history and six chapters of Biblical Prophecy. The first six teach us how to accurately read the last six. The interpretation of Neb's dream, and its exact unfolding in history reveals that the Stone Cut Out without hands, which smashes all previous kingdoms into chaff, is indeed the Christ who will come as King of kings and Lord of lords to a battle called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. He is the Ancient of Days, with hair like pure wool, and he is the Son of man come with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days. All power is given to him. Likewise, in the literal, grammatical, historical understanding there is a little horn which, in separate visions, replaces three of ten, and comes out of one of four. It waxes great, has eyes of a man, speaks great things, and desecrates the daily sacrifice in the Temple at Jerusalem. He casts down hosts of heaven and is called the King of Fierce Countenance. He persecutes the Woman, Israel for 3 ½ years of a seven year tribulation. Jesus calls him the Abomination of Desolation. I'd sooner believe Jesus than a Reformed Theologian.

An Essay for week #42 Sun, Oct 20, 13  
In paperback at <http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/GSBaptistChurch>

### **Msg #1440 Don't Be Left Behind**

What The Bible Says  
Good Samaritan's Penny Pulpit by Pastor Ed Rice

There is coming a Last October. "In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation... Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: ...and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD... The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles..." (Lev23:23-24,27,34). Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and the Feast of Tabernacles mark the important fall memorial of blowing of trumpets. Bible believing Christians are listening for the trumpet symbolized in this feast. It will be a voice "as it were of a trumpet, talking with me; which said, Come up hither" (Rev 4:1). "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible" (1Cor 15:52). "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and (we) shall be caught up... to meet the Lord in the air" (1Thes 4:16-17). This is the rapture of the Church, and one must here distinguish between Bible believers and the Bible allegorizers. The Roman Religionists taught their reformers to

allegorize away Jews and the premillennial return of Christ. Consequently Protestants do not perceive the rapture in these verses, and the Reformed cannot conceptualize our Christ on the Throne of David, in Jerusalem, for a 1,000 year dispensation. The truths in the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent of Christ are reserved for those with ears to hear, and eyes that don't allegorize. Bible believers often “stand gazing up into heaven” (Acts 1:8-11). A “Hunt for the Last October” begins, don't be left behind.

An Essay for week #40 10/05/2014

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## **Msg #1441 The 7 Year Tribulation is not Allegorical!**

What The Bible Says

Good Samaritan's Penny Pulpit by Pastor Ed Rice

The seventieth week of Daniel marks a seven year period where Jesus tells us, “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor even shall be” (Matt 24:21). Roman and Reformed Theologians try to allegorize the reality of a premillennial advent and a literal seven year tribulation period into disbelief, but when Christ divides the seven years in half, seven distinct times, their false teachings come unraveled. A Hebrew calendar has twelve, thirty day months, and they add an extra month in seven years. Daniel 12 divides the seven year tribulation into 1260 days and then 1290 days, calling them time, times, and half a time. The times of the Gentiles in Revelation 11 is forty-two months, or half the tribulation period. The two indestructible witnesses in Jerusalem prophecy for 1,260 days before Satan destroys them and God tells them, “Come up hither.” (Rev 11:3-12) After the seven seals and the seven trumpets, halfway through the tribulation, and exactly halfway through the 404 verses of Revelation, Satan is booted from heaven and torments the earth, knowing his time is short. The persecuted Israel is fed in the wilderness for 1,260 days of Satan's vile persecution. The commercial Babylon is fallen is fallen, halfway through the 7 year period. And Mystery Babylon, the false church and Jezebel is devoured and destroyed by the Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet of the new world order. Mid-trib is a very busy time indeed, and the week of tribulation, the literal 7 years such as was not since the beginning of the world, is not an allegorical pretense, it is a Bible reality. You can only be saved from the wrath to come, by first calling on Christ, the soon coming judge.

An Essay for week #41 10/12/2014

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## **A Systematic Theology for the 21st Century**

### **Part 12 Epilogue**

The

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