

# Eschatology

## Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you should be able to

- define “dispensationalism.”
- recognize the main differences between classical dispensationalism and progressive dispensationalism.
- comprehend the importance of understanding biblical prophecy.
- understand the basic outline of end times events.

## Dispensationalism

### The Distinctiveness of the Church

We are now in the unit titled, “We are Dispensationalists.” At this point, it is appropriate to pause and define exactly what we mean. Dispensationalism is much more than just a view of the end times. It is an understanding of salvation history and, specifically, how the stages of God’s saving plan and work have unfolded—especially as it relates to the church.

### History

Dispensationalism is part of a broader tendency within Christian theology, going all the way back to the early church, of dividing salvation history into different economies. This impulse tends to be a more marginal perspective and to be connected with literalism, millennialism, and moralism.

A formal system of dispensationalism was developed by John Nelson Darby (1800-82), who was a member of a Christian separatist group called the Plymouth Brethren.

Other important 20th century theologians include: James Gray, C.I. Scofield, John Walvoord, and Charles Ryrie. We can refer to the dispensationalism of figures such as these as “Classical Dispensationalism.” Major schools with a dispensational influence include Dallas Theological Seminary and Moody Bible Institute.

In the 1980s, a movement within the dispensational tradition emerged known as “Progressive Dispensationalism.” We will learn more about these perspectives below.

### Dispensationalism: A Theology of Distinctions

Dispensationalism is a theology of distinctions: it sees salvation history as divided into various divine stewardship arrangements, or “economies” (Gk *oikonomia*; Latin *dispensatio*).

Though all salvation occurs by means of faith in God on the basis of Christ’s shed blood on the cross, in different dispensations the content of faith has varied according to the revelation then given. For example, a different content of faith was required of a Jew under the Law of Moses than for those who now have access to the clear, explicit revelation of the crucified and resurrected Son of God.

In contrast, covenant theology in the Reformed tradition is a theology of uniformity. All salvation

basically occurs under the same arrangement, the covenant of grace.

The essential element of dispensationalism is a distinction between Israel and the church. However, the nature of this distinction is a matter of debate between classical dispensationalists (CDs) and progressive (PDs) dispensationalists:

- CDs believe it is important to distinguish “national Israel” from the Jews and Gentiles within the church, for each have different intended blessings (and Jewish Christians participate in the church’s blessings, not Israel’s). Thus, there are different “peoples of God” within the divine plan: Israel and the church.
- PDs believe that there are not separate redeemed communities; in fact, there is one overall “people of God” in salvation history. Jewish Christians do not lose their relationship to Israel’s promises, for there is a single kingdom being progressively worked out, of which the church is an intended part.
- Thus, the main difference between the two is that CDs make a very firm distinction between each dispensation as unique in its own right, such that one does not overlap with the others; PDs are “progressive” in that salvation history (though certainly divided into stages) is more unified, so that the dispensations serve as the gradual unfolding of a single kingdom plan.
- Yet, both understand the church as being a new dispensation, distinct from the dispensations of the Jewish patriarchs or of Moses. That is to say, dispensationalism always makes a fundamental distinction between Israel and the church. Covenant theology does not do this.

Dispensationalism also understands itself as committed to a consistently literal hermeneutic. This does not mean that covenant theologians are not often conservative, Bible-believing Christians. It does mean that dispensationalists apply a literal hermeneutic to prophetic texts and expect a literal fulfillment rather than a spiritual/Christological fulfillment in the church.

## Classical Dispensationalism vs. Progressive Dispensationalism

Classical Dispensationalism	Progressive Dispensationalism
<b>Seven Dispensations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innocence (pre-Fall)</li> <li>• Conscience (the Fall to Noah)</li> <li>• Civil Government (the Flood to Abraham)</li> <li>• Patriarchal Rule (Abraham to Moses)</li> <li>• Mosaic Law (Moses to Pentecost)</li> <li>• Grace (Pentecost to Second Coming)</li> <li>• Millennium (1000-year reign of Christ on earth)</li> </ul>	<b>Four Dispensations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patriarchal (to Sinai)</li> <li>• Mosaic (to Messiah’s ascension)</li> <li>• Ecclesial (to Messiah’s return)</li> <li>• Zionism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Millennial</li> <li>b. Eternal</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>An Entirely Future Kingdom</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus was offering the kingdom to the Jews as part of the Father’s plan for Israel. But because Israel rejected her Messiah, God went to a different plan.</li> <li>• The church is described as a “parenthesis” or “intercalation” (i.e., a space inserted into the divine calendar). It is a <i>temporary</i> divergence from God’s earthly plan for the Jews.</li> <li>• In the future, that earthly plan will be resumed when the Millennium ushers in the kingdom promised to the heir of David, the</li> </ul>	<b>Partially Inaugurated Kingdom</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The unifying motif of salvation history is God’s one kingdom. He has a single plan of salvation, though it is worked out in stages.</li> <li>• The church is not a parenthesis or a “plan B”; rather, it is an original, intended part of God’s holistic plan.</li> <li>• The progressive dispensationalist does not believe all the aspects of Christ’s reign as King are still future. Though the fullness of the kingdom of God will only be realized in the Millennium, the present reign of Christ on the throne of David in heaven means that believers already possess some of the blessings of the kingdom.</li> </ul>

Messiah. None of it is in effect now!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The church is a “functional outpost” of the coming kingdom, or a down payment” of that kingdom.</li> </ul>
<b>Dispensations as Distinct Stages</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While not denying some “carryovers,” classical dispensationalists typically see each dispensation as self-contained and unique</li> <li>• The aspects and requirements of a given dispensation end unless they are reincorporated into the next dispensation (Ryrie 57-58).</li> </ul>	<b>Complementary Dispensations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally speaking, the progressive dispensationalist sees more unity to salvation history than the classical dispensationalist.</li> <li>• The dispensations are contiguous, or emerge out of the previous one, and are not entirely distinct. This is the “progression” idea: there is a complementary expansion, not a total newness.</li> </ul>

Having laid out the general lines of dispensational thought, let us now address the issue of the church’s proper location within God’s plan of salvation history. Recall that we have said that dispensationalism’s essential element is the distinction between the church and Israel. We will see that CDs press this distinction emphatically, while PDs would like to see a distinction that maintains a substantial level of continuity as well.

## The Distinctiveness of the Church

### In Relation to Israel

#### Covenant Theology

Covenant theology understands the term *Israel* as a designation of the spiritual “people of God” in the Old Testament and the term *church* as the designation of the spiritual “people of God” in the New Testament. Thus, in effect, Israel is the Old Testament term for “church.” All people are part of one-and-the-same redeemed community.

#### Classical Dispensational Theology

Classical dispensational theology understands the term *Israel* as a designation of “the nation of the physical descendants of Abraham” and the term *church* as the designation of “the members of the body of Christ.” However, “believing Jews and believing Gentiles, which together make up the church in this age, continue to be distinguished in the New Testament,” and therefore should be distinguished today (Ryrie 127). In earlier forms of dispensationalism, the two even had different eschatological destinies; however, this is no longer held by classical dispensationalists. Nevertheless, the distinction between Israel and the church is still made, such that there are separate peoples of God at different times, each with their own promises.

#### Progressive Dispensational Theology

Progressive dispensational theology, like classical, understands the term *Israel* as a designation of “the nation of the physical descendants of Abraham.” However, *the church* is not the same kind of term: it is not an anthropological or racial or national term like “Jew” or “Gentile.” It is broader than that: it is the community of redeemed people in the present dispensation, both Jew and Gentile alike. Thus, there are not separate destinies for ethnic Jews vs. Jewish and Gentile believers in the church but, rather, a continuous stream of divine salvation in which different stages are nevertheless visible.

## Why the Distinction?

Dispensationalists, whether classical or progressive, fundamentally differ from covenant theologians by making a distinction between Israel and the church. (Although, as we have seen, the distinction is made in varying ways.) So it is fair to ask: Why do dispensationalists make this distinction?

- In the New Testament, natural Israel and the church are contrasted after the church was clearly established” (Acts 3:12; 4:8, 10; 5:21, 31, 35; 21:19; Ryrie 462). In other words, once the church appears in Acts 2, Luke consistently uses the term *Israel* to refer to national Israel.
- Likewise, in 1 Corinthians 10:32, Paul lists the Jews, the Greeks, and “the church of God.” The distinction implicit in this list “would be meaningless if Israel were the same as the church” (Ryrie 462).
- Basically, dispensationalists believe that the New Testament teaches us to distinguish between God’s arrangement of salvation for Israel and His arrangement of salvation (with all its extra blessings, such as Spirit baptism) for the church.
- But what about texts that suggest the church has spiritually “replaced” Israel?
  - a. Galatians 3:29 does say that believers are spiritually descended from Abraham. But this means that they inherit justification by faith (cf. 3:6-9), not that they have supplanted Israel (Ryrie 138; Walvoord/Zuck 600).
  - b. Galatians 6:16 probably refers to ethnic Jews “within the church,” but even if it did refer to the church itself, it would be merely a metaphorical use of the term and not a very strong reason to equate the “nation of Israel” with the “body of Christ.”

## Summary

The church is not the new Israel. The consistent “distinction” of the nation of Israel and the church, the body of Christ, is essential to the dispensational point of view (Ryrie 39-40). Yet, the exact nature of the distinction is a debated issue within the dispensational tradition.

## The Study of Prophecy

### The Value of the Study of End Times Prophecy It Is a Stimulus to Right Living

- Sobriety of life (1 Thess. 5:2-6; 1 Peter 1:3; 4:7)
- Faithfulness in service (Matt. 25:19-21; Luke 12:42-44)
- Moderation (Phil. 4:5)
- Patience in trials (Heb. 10:36, 37; James 5:7-8)
- Personal sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23)
- Obedience (1 Tim. 6:13,14)
- Godliness (2 Peter 3:11-13)
- Purity in Christian life (1 John 3:3; cf. Matt. 24:48-51)
- It is a source of comfort (1 Thess. 4:18) and hope (1 John 3:3) and joy (Rev. 19:7).
- It is a source of knowledge about God (theology proper).
- It tells us He is in control, that He is sovereign (Ps. 2; Isa. 40; Rev. 1).
- It tells us He is all-powerful and all-knowing.

- It tells us He is good (Rom. 8:18).

## The Challenge of the Study of End Times Prophecy Prophecy Was not Given to “Cause Problems”

Some of the content in this section is taken from Benware 18.

- It is not something to argue about with harsh words.
- It is not something over which we should split a church.
- It is not something upon which the essential elements of salvation depend.

## A Few “Rules” for Interpreting Prophecy

Some of the content in this section is taken from Benware 19-29

- **Interpret literally:** But, this means figurative language, when used, should be interpreted figuratively.
- **Compare the Word with itself.** Prophecy must take the whole Bible into account, not just the obviously prophetic books.
- **Recognize “time intervals”:** Sometimes a prophecy that says “The day is coming when ...” may be referring to a much later period.
- **Recognize “double reference”:** Sometimes a prophecy has a near application to the time of the prophet and a later fulfillment as well.

## Dispensational Eschatology Definition

The term *eschatology* comes from the Greek *eschaton*, which means “last.” “Eschatology is the theological study that seeks to understand the ultimate direction of history.” Or simply, “the study of future things” (Ryrie 145).

- Dispensationalism is an interpretive grid that understands salvation history as being divided into different redemptive arrangements (though all salvation is based on the work of Christ’s cross).
- One such divine arrangement is the future Millennium.
- Because of its interest in God’s future plans for Israel and the church, dispensationalism has traditionally been very interested in biblical eschatology.

## Dispensational Theology on Prophetic Fulfillment

- Israel and the church are distinct.
- The prophecies to Israel must be fulfilled literally. For example: a literal kingdom was promised to Israel, with certain boundaries.
- The promises to Israel are not given to the church or spiritualized away.

## Covenant Theology on Prophetic Fulfillment

- The covenant of grace subsumes all salvation.
- Prophecies in the church are understood to be spiritually fulfilled. For example: Christ spiritually “reigns” in our hearts.
- The church is the New Israel.

# Definition of Terms

## Rapture

The term *rapture* comes from the Latin *rapt us*, which means “having been caught up or carried away.” The biblical Greek term in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 is *harpazo*; it refers to that event in which believers are “caught up” to be with Christ

## The Tribulation

The tribulation is a period of seven years that completes the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks (Dan. 9:24-27); it is also called “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7).

## The Judgment Seat of Christ

The judgment seat of Christ is the Greek word *bema*; the *bema* was the dais or raised bench or platform at an athletic contest from which the winners were rewarded (1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10); here, Christ pronounces judgment on believers’ works and distributes rewards to believers. But it is not a judgment unto condemnation, for believers do not stand condemned before the Lord. This judgment only has to do with the level of rewards.

## The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Revelation 19:7-9 speaks of that event in which the promised union of the church with Christ will be made final and complete (cf. Eph. 5:25-33).

## The Second Coming

The second coming of Christ is His promised return to earth to set up the kingdom (Zech. 14:4, 9-21; Matt. 25:31; Rev. 20:4). When Christ returns to earth, He will put an end to the tribulation at the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:11—21).

## The Millennium

The Millennium is the 1000-year reign of Christ on the throne of David in Jerusalem (Rev. 20). It is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:18-21, 17:1ff.; 22:16-18; 26:5), Palestinian (Deut. 30:1-10), Davidic (2 Sam. 7:12-16) and New (Jer. 31:31-34) covenants. It will be a time of unprecedented peace, righteousness, and blessing on the earth. The great white throne judgment will take place at the end of the Millennium; Revelation 20:11-15 will be a judgment of all the unsaved from all ages; they will be sent to the lake of fire in eternal separation from God.

## The Sequence of Events

1. Increasing apostasy: will include these characteristics (Ryrie 536-537)
  - A denial of the Trinity (1 John 2:22-23)
  - A denial of the incarnation of Christ (1 John 2:22; 4:3; 2 John 7)
  - A denial of the doctrine of the return of Christ (2 Peter 3:4)
  - The rise of the ecumenical church—“mystery Babylon” (Rev. 17; Ryrie, 536-537)

2. Rapture of the church (first resurrection)
3. Bema seat judgment of believers' works
4. Marriage supper of the Lamb; believers celebrate union with Christ
5. The great tribulation
6. Revelation of Christ - The Second Coming
7. Armageddon
8. Millennium
9. Great white throne judgment
10. Eternal state

## The Rapture

### Various Views on the Timing of the Rapture

- Posttribulational; the view that the rapture will occur at the end of the tribulation.
- Midtribulational; the view that the rapture will occur at the mid-point of the tribulation.
- Pretribulational; the view that the rapture will occur before the tribulation.

### Arguments in Favor of the Pretribulational View

1. The distinction between Israel and the church p/us the stated purposes of the tribulation ... (a. to prepare Israel to receive her Messiah; b. to judge the nations) ... do not involve the church! The church is exempt from God's wrath (1 Thess. 1:10)
2. The imminency of Christ's appearing:
  - James 5:7-9
  - 1 Corinthians 1:7
  - Philippians 3:20-21
  - 1 Thessalonians 4:15
  - Titus 2:13
  - 1 Corinthians 16:22

### The Distinction Between the Rapture and the Second Coming

The following is a comparison of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 to Matthew 24:29-31.

"The first in the series of last-day events is the rapture of the church. The rapture begins the last-day period. There is no way to know when it will occur, but, when it does the other events can be expected to follow in a predictable schedule. This means that the rapture is the occasion for which the church looks, and it could happen at any time" (Wood 40).

### The Definition

As we have seen, the term *rapture* comes from the Latin translation, meaning "to be caught up" (1 Thess. 4:17).

We support our belief with the following texts:

See also: Titus 2:13, Philippians 3:20, and 1 Corinthians 1:7

Taken together, these texts seem to clearly teach a doctrine of the rapture. Those who hold to a rapture make a distinction between that event and the Second Coming. Consider, for example, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 compared to Matthew 24:29-31:

	<b>The Rapture</b>	<b>The Second Coming</b>
<b>Place</b>	Coming in the air	Coming the Mt. of Olives
<b>Purpose</b>	Coming to bless	Coming to judge
<b>Timing</b>	Imminent	Coming preceded by signs
<b>Outcome</b>	Takes saints to the Father's house (John 14:1-3)	Coming to establish His throne on earth (Zech. 14:1-5)

## Different Views Concerning the Timing of Rapture

As you are probably aware, the views on the rapture vary with different end-times interpretations. The following charts will help you understand the different views concerning the rapture.

### Posttribulational View

In this view of the rapture, the timing comes after the tribulation so that, essentially, the rapture is simultaneous with the Second Coming.

### Midtribulational View

In this view, the rapture takes place in the middle of the tribulation period, that is, in the second half of the tribulation when the most intense judgment will occur.

### Pretribulational View

In this view, the rapture comes before the tribulation. This is the view which is held at Moody Bible Institute. We believe that prior to the tribulation, Christ will return to retrieve His bride, the church (John 14:1-3), to save her from the coming time of wrath. He will descend from heaven to meet the church-age believers who will be "caught up" in the air (1 Thess. 4:17).

Though there are disagreements concerning the exact timing of the rapture in relation to tribulation, this is certainly not a matter upon which salvation depends. Moody Bible Institute's pretribulational view is based on the idea that the church will not be subject to the horrible time of tribulation since we have been spared from punishment in Christ. We feel the biblical purposes of the tribulation are (1) to prepare Israel to receive her Messiah and (2) to judge the nations. These things do not involve the church! According to 1 Thessalonians 1:10, the church is exempt from God's wrath. For further discussion of this point, see the tribulation material below.

## Why Do We Say the Rapture Is Imminent?

We say that the rapture is "imminent," which means it can happen at "at any moment." "The imminent coming of Jesus Christ means that there are no signs or events that must take place prior to His return. He could return at any moment" (Benware 176).

The following Scriptures support Christ's imminent return

- Romans 13:11-14
- 1 Thessalonians 1:10
- James 5:7-9
- 1 Corinthians 1:7
- Philippians 3:20-21
- 1 Thessalonians 4:15
- Titus 2:13
- 1 Corinthians 16:22

## What Will the Rapture “Look Like?”

According to 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, these are some events of the rapture:

- The inaugural “sounds” (v. 16): a shout, the voice of the archangel, the trumpet of God
- The location (v. 17): in the clouds, in the air
- The event itself (v. 17): to meet the Lord!

## Who Will Be Involved in the Rapture?

- According to 1 Thessalonians 4, it will be all redeemed Christians “who are alive on the earth and remain until the coming of the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:15, 17). “Together with”
- Those who have “fallen asleep,” that is, believers who have died. They are referred to as the “dead in Christ,” which is a specific Pauline term referring to those in the body of Christ. Therefore, he is speaking about every Christian who has believed in Jesus during the church age.

## What Will Be the Results of the Rapture?

- It will mean bodily resurrection for the “dead in Christ,” and transformation (“we shall be changed”) for the living who are caught up (1 Cor. 15:51-53).
- Christ's promises to bring us to His Father's house will be fulfilled.
- The completion of our salvation will occur at the wedding feast of the Lamb.
- The uniting/reunion of all believers for all time will finally take place (Benware 164).

## Terms Used to Describe the Tribulation

- “Day of the Lord” (Joel 2: 1ff)
- “Great Tribulation” (Matth. 24:21)
- “Time of Jacob's Trouble” (Jer 30:7)
- “The Seventieth Week of Daniel” (9:24-27; Benware 244-246)

## The Events

### First Half = 3 ½ Years

- Restoration and peace for Israel through a covenant made by Antichrist
- Judgments on the earth (Rev. 5:1-2; 6:1-17)
- The “Seals” (Matt. 24:4-14)
- Apostate religion grows (Rev. 17:1—18:24)

## Middle

- Abomination of desolation: the Antichrist breaks his covenant of peace with Israel and demands the world's worship (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15; Rev. 13:14-15).

## Second Half = 3 1/2 Years

- Great Tribulation for Israel (Math 24:16-28)
- The "Trumpets" (Rev. 8:1—9:21)

## End

- The "Bowls" (Rev. 16:1-21)
- Armageddon (Rev. 19:17-19)
- Second coming of Christ (Math 24:29-31)

## The Personalities

- Antichrist
- False Prophet
- 144,000 Jews who believe in Christ and bear witness to Him
- Two Witnesses (Benware 248-254)

## Why Will the Church *not* Go through the Tribulation? The Nature/Purpose of the Tribulation (Dan. 9:24; Zech. 13:9)

### *For Israel*

- It is the seventieth week of Daniel (9:24), a period of prophetic time pertaining to Israel.
- It is a period of God's chastisement on Israel (Jer. 30:7; Dan. 9:24).
- It is a time to prepare Israel for her Messiah (Ezek. 36:18-32; Mal. 4:5-6)

### *For the Nations*

- It is a time of unprecedented judgment on the people and the nations of the earth (Rev. 6; 11:10, 18; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6, 19; 16:1, 17:1).

## That Purpose Is not for the Church (See Rev. 3:10)

- The church is not a nation: The church is the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, a people "from every tribe and tongue and people and nation (Rev. 5:9). "It would be a contradiction of the very relationship of Christ and the church for the church to go through the punishments of the tribulation" (Enns 391).
- The church is the object of Christ's love, not wrath, because He has already taken the wrath for her

sins on Himself when He died for her (Eph. 5:25).

- The church is not Israel: “The focus of Daniel 9:24-27 is exclusively Jewish. [This is the passage that speaks of the seventieth week of Daniel = the tribulation]. The passage deals only with those matters that concern the Jewish people, not the church. The covenant that is made is made with Israel; it is the Jewish temple that is rebuilt with its accompanying sacrifices; it is the desecration of that temple with the ‘abomination of desolation’; and it is the repentance and blessing of Israel in their land that is in view. ...The conclusion is that, since the church does not fit into the declared purposes of God for the tribulation, the church will not be a part of that time period. There is simply no need for the church to be present during a time when God focuses so completely on the nation of Israel” (Benware 170).
- The church will not face “wrath”: Revelation 3:10 = believers will be kept from that hour (*terso ek tes horas*; note—not merely “from” *ek* but “from that hour, namely the time period of tribulation (See Ryrie 563-64). 1 Thessalonians 1: 10—here the Greek preposition *ek*”out from” not merely “from.” 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10—”It is not God’s intention for the believer to experience wrath” (Benware 174).
- The church will not face “wrath”:
  - Revelation 3:10 = believers will be kept from that hour (Ryrie 5 63-64).
  - 1 Thessalonians 1:10—here the Greek preposition *ek* means “out from” not merely “from.”
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10—”It is not God’s intention for the believer to experience wrath” (Benware 174),

## Self-Check

In order to gain a firm grasp on the important terms and Scripture references in this course, we suggest that you make flashcards with the following information by writing the term or Scripture reference on one side of a note card and the definition on the other. These activities will assist you in remembering essential course information.

### Recognition Activity

Term:	Definition:
The marriage supper of the Lamb	In this event, the promised union of the church with Christ will be made final and complete (Rev. 19:7-9).
The Millennium	The 1000-year reign of Christ on the throne of David in Jerusalem; the fulfillment of the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, and New covenants. A time of unprecedented peace, righteousness, and blessing on the earth.
The spiritual kingdom	Of the four concepts of the kingdom, this is the “kingdom” into which all believers in Christ are placed; it is entered by the new birth (Col. 1:13). The “Ruler” is Christ; the “ruled” are Christians.
The Davidic/Messianic Kingdom	Of the four concepts of the kingdom, this is the kingdom promised to David, which promise will be fulfilled by the Messiah. This is the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20).
Progressive Dispensational Theology	In this understanding of theology, the term <i>Israelis</i> though of as a designation of “the nation of the physical descendants of Abraham.” However, <i>the church</i> is not the same kind of term: it is not an anthropological or racial or national term like “Jew” or “Gentile.” It is broader than that: it is the

	community of redeemed people in the present dispensation, both Jew and Gentile alike. Thus, there are not separate destinies.
Covenant Theology	In this understanding of theology, the term <i>Israelis</i> thought of as a designation of the spiritual “people of God” in the Old Testament; the term <i>church</i> as the designation of the spiritual “people of God” in the New Testament.
The Universal Kingdom	Of the four concepts of the kingdom, this is God’s universal rule over everything.
The mystery form of the kingdom	Of the four concepts of the kingdom, this is a new revelation of how God is working among human beings (Matt. 13:39-40). The “Ruler” of this kingdom is God; the “ruled” are the people living on the earth.
Rapture	From the Latin in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 ( <i>rapiemur</i> ; “caught up”); Greek = <i>harpazorapiemur</i> ; that event in which believers are “caught up” to be with Christ.
The Tribulation	A period of seven years completing the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks in Daniel 9:24-27; also called “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7)
The judgment seat of Christ	From the Greek <i>bema</i> ; here Christ pronounces judgment and distributes rewards to believers.
The Revelation	In the context of the end-times outline of events this refers to the second coming of Christ, when He returns to earth to end the tribulation (at the battle of Armageddon; Rev. 19:11-21) and establish the millennial kingdom.

# Millennium and Resurrection

## Lesson Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, you should be able to

- understand the features and the biblical description of the Millennium.
- identify different views of the Millennium.
- recognize all parts of humanity's and the world's final destiny.

## The Millennium

### Definition of the Millennium (Rev. 20)

- The word *millennium* means “a thousand years.”
  - *mille* = 1000
  - *annus* = year

*Definition:*

- The idea of a “golden age” of God's blessing is found in numerous Old Testament passages (Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah).
- The idea of 1000 years comes from Revelation 20, where the text tells us six times that the reign of Christ will be 1000 years. “The repetition of this figure underscores both its literalness and its importance” (Ryrie 592).

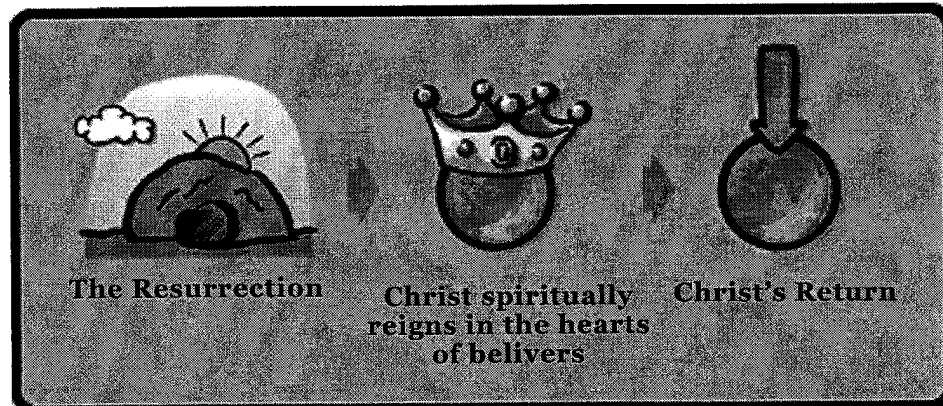
## Why Your View of the Millennium Matters

*Many people do not think one's view of the Millennium is an important matter, to the contrary, one's view of the Millennium is of great practical consequence.*

- Our worldview is significantly affected by the millennial view we embrace. Are we to “bring in the Millennium” ourselves through social efforts, or are we to “look for His return and His establishment of the kingdom”? Is the world getting better and better as the gospel advances around the world, or do we expect a general decline in culture and society that will only be overcome by the judgment of Christ and the inauguration of His earthly kingdom? Is the kingdom being established now, or is it yet future?
- How we read and understand a very large portion of Scripture is affected by our view of the Millennium. Are the promises to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3) and Moses (Deut. 30:1-10) and David (2 Sam. 7:1-16) and to Jeremiah (Jer. 31:31-34) to be kept literally, or are they to be interpreted as “spiritually fulfilled” in the church?

So, one's view of the Millennium certainly does matter. At the same time, we should remember that good conservative Bible-believing Christians have differed on this issue. As with other matters of eschatology, it is unwise to treat this subject as something that should divide the body unnecessarily.

# Ammillennialism



## *Definition:*

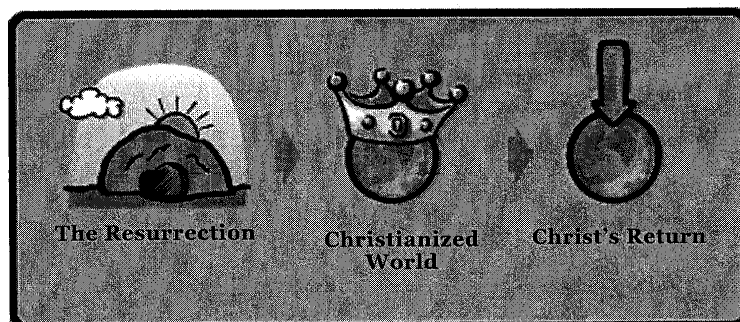
The prefix “a” indicates a negative; but it does not necessarily mean those who hold this view reject the idea of the kingdom is ruled by Christ. They do reject a future and literal earthly reign of Christ; but the amillennialist understands the Millennium (as described in Revelation 20) as a picture—in some sense—of the present reign of Christ. This began at the resurrection of Christ.

“According to amillennialists, Revelation 20:4-6 refers to ‘the present reign of souls of deceased believers with Christ in heaven’ while the kingdom of God ‘is now present in the world as the victorious Christ is ruling his people by His Word and Spirit, though they look forward to a future, glorious and perfect kingdom in the new earth and in the life to come’ “(quoted in Enns 380).

## *Features:*

- There is no distinction between Israel and the church.
- The 1000 years of Revelation 20 is symbolic number of a long period of time, namely, the time from Christ’s resurrection to His return.
- Satan is bound in this present age (Rev. 20:1-3), meaning he is severely limited in his activity.
- The Second Coming is a single event that is preceded by signs of Christ’s coming.
  - The calling of the Gentiles (Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10; Rom. 11:25)
  - The conversion of Israel
  - Apostasy and tribulation (Matt. 24:9-12; Mark 13:9-22)
  - The appearance of the Antichrist and various signs and wonders (Berkof 696-708).
- The return of Christ occurs at the end of the age and inaugurates the eternal state.
- There will be one general resurrection and judgment of all people (believers and unbelievers) at the end of the age.

# Postmillennialism



### *Definition:*

The prefix “post” indicates that according to this view, Christ returns “post” or after the Millennium. The key word of postmillennialists is “progress.”

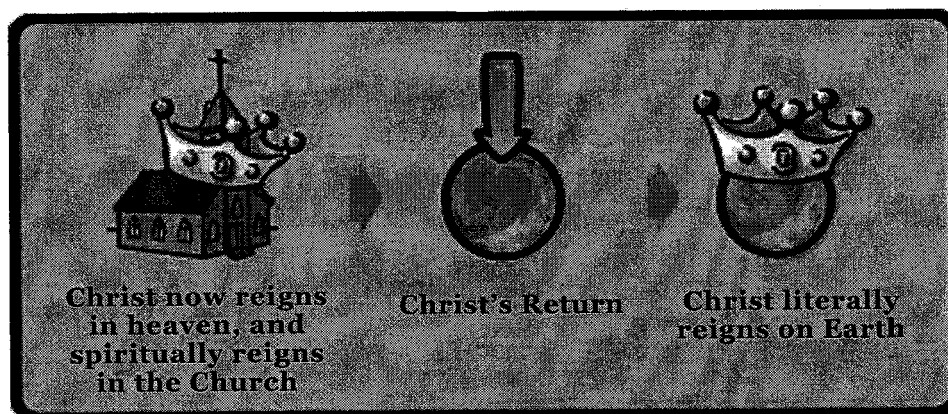
“Postmillennialism now being extended in the world through the preaching of the Gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of individuals, that the world is being Christianized, and that the return of Christ is to occur at the close of a long period of righteousness and peace commonly called the Millennium” (quoted in Enns 384).

### *Features:*

- There is no distinction between Israel and the church.
- The present age will gradually give way to the millennial age by the progress of the gospel and the progress of human culture, learning, science, etc.
- The 1000 years in Revelation 20 is symbolic number of a very long period of time. The beginning of the Millennium will be gradual; the close will occur when Christ returns.
- There will be one general resurrection and judgment of all people (believers and unbelievers) at the end of the age.

Another form of postmillennialism is called “dominion theology” or “theonomy” (*theos* = God; *nomos* = law, hence “God’s law”). This view suggests that the means to “Christianize” the world is through the application of the Mosaic Law as the continuing (ethical) norm for individuals and nations. “Theonomists” hold that it is the duty of believers to “promote and enforce obedience to God’s law in society” (Bahnsen 84).

## *Preiniliennialism*



### *Definition:*

The prefix “pre” indicates that this view holds that Christ will return “pre” that is before the Millennium, indeed, it is Christ who establishes the Millennium.

## **Historic/Covenant Premillennialism**

*Features:*

- This view shares features with amillennialism and dispensational premillennialism.
- There is some distinction between Israel and the church, but “the New Testament applies Old Testament prophecies to the New Testament church and in doing so identifies the church as spiritual Israel” (Ladd 23).
- Holds to a posttribulation rapture.
- Christ is reigning now in heaven and will reign on the earth; however, the kingdom will not be the literal Davidic kingdom but the visible expression of the present invisible reign of Christ.
- The main point is that the Millennium is not the kingdom promised to the Jews in the Old Testament. It is oriented more toward giving promised blessings to Christians.

## Dispensational Premillennialism

*Definition:*

As seen above in the historic premillennial view, the same idea is present here: the return of Christ occurs *prior to the Millennium*.

As you will recall, the two basic features that distinguish dispensational premillennialism are

1. A consistently ***literal hermeneutic*** that always interprets prophecies literally and, thus, insists the kingdom promised in the Bible must be a socio-political entity.
2. A distinction between ***Israel*** and the ***church***, so that promises made to one group are not transferred to another. The kingdom is promised to Israel in Scripture; the term *Israel* always refers to the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the term *church* refers to the “body of Christ,” the entity born on the Day of Pentecost (1 Cor. 12:13).

Therefore, dispensational premillennialism sees the Millennium as a real, physical, earthly kingdom just as was promised to God’s chosen people, the Jews. He has never yet fulfilled that promise or given it to another group. For that reason, it must still be future.

## The Covenants

Beginning with these two key assumptions, dispensational premillennialism holds that the covenant promises—the promises made to Israel through Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3) [Abrahamic covenant] and Moses (Deut. 30:1-10) [Palestinian covenant] and David (2 Sam. 7:1-16) [Davidic covenant] and Jeremiah (Jer. 31:31-34) [New covenant]—are to be fulfilled literally.

For classical dispensationalists, these covenants are all future, even though Christians are now able to share in the blessings of the Abrahamic and New covenants.

For progressive dispensationalists, the covenants are part of a single plan of salvation and are now inaugurated in Jesus Christ; yet, there is a future aspect as well with much more blessing to come. In what way are the covenants now partially inaugurated?

PDs holds that the covenants are now fulfilled as follows:

1. Abrahamic—Messiah came from Abraham’s line
2. Mosaic—Messiah has fulfilled and terminated it, inaugurating the New covenant
3. Davidic—Messiah is now reigning on the throne of David in heaven
4. New—Messiah has inaugurated the promised New covenant, though fuller blessings await His return.

In contrast, classical dispensationalists are less willing to see these covenants as being partially fulfilled already. But, all dispensational premillennialists agree that God made the following divine promises:

1. To form a *nation* = a people (Jacob’s descendants), their constitution (the Law), and their Promised Land. The Land promises are key promises that have yet to be literally fulfilled!
2. To send an eternal *king* = a literal throne in a literal (historical) kingdom.

These promises are unconditional, irrevocable, non-exchangeable, literal, and eternal!

The Millennium—a literal, earthly kingdom located in the Promised Land—is necessary to the fulfillment of these promises (Enns 393).

## Features/Description of The Millennium

Duration—Revelation 20; 1000 literal years!

“There is no reason to reject the literal meaning of 1000 as indicating the length of the millennial reign of Christ” (Ryrie 593).

### Who Will Be in the Millennium?

All Christians who had been taken to be with Christ at the rapture will return to reign with Him on earth. They will have already received resurrection bodies in which to dwell. Therefore, if you are a Christian, you will one day return to this earth in a time of great blessing! Old Testament believers will also be raised at the Second Coming and will enter the Millennium with us.

In addition, “The subjects of the government ...will be the Jews and Gentiles who survive the tribulation and enter the kingdom in earthly bodies” (Ryrie 593-94). Among those people, there will be some who harbor secret resentment in their hearts against the King and who will rebel at the end of the Millennium.

Purpose—The purpose of the Millennium is to fulfill the Bible’s promises! Why must Christ reign in an earthly kingdom? Because He must show Himself victorious over the earth. “He must be triumphant in the same arena where He was seemingly defeated. His rejection by the rulers of this world was on this earth (1 Cor. 2:8). His exaltation must also be on this earth” (Ryrie 596).

### Characteristics/Conditions

**Physical**—The curse on the creation will be lifted and there will be peace in the animal kingdom (Isa. 32:13-15) and abundance of produce (Isa. 35:13-15). There will be no sickness or disease (Isa. 33:24; 35:5-6; 61:1-2; Ezek. 34:16).

**Spiritual**—The presence of the risen, reigning Christ will make this a glorious time of spiritual refreshment

and the knowledge of the Lord (Isa. 22-3; Jer. 31:34). Satan will be bound, and his nefarious influence will be absent (Rev. 20:1-3). There will be righteousness (Isa. 11:4-5; 32:1; 33:5) and peace (Isa. 2:4; 11:6-9; 19:23-25; 32:18) and joy (Isa. 9:3-4) and prosperity (Isa. 35:1-7; Amos 9:13-14) like no other time on earth since the Fall.

**Government**—“*Jesus* the Messiah will reign as King, fulfilling the Davidic covenant(cf. Ps. 2:1-9; Isa. 9:6-7; 11:1-2; 55:3, 11; Jer. 23:5-8; 33:20-26; Ezek. 34:23-25; 37:23-24; Luke 1:32-33). The Lord Jesus will rule over a united Israel, with Jerusalem as the center of His kingdom” (Benware 281).

In addition, King David and the twelve apostles will have a role in government.

- “David will apparently be a regent in the millennial kingdom” (Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 37:24-25).
- “Authority over the twelve tribes of Israel will be vested in the hands of the twelve apostles” (Matt. 19:28).

**Worship**—“Apparently sacrifices will again be offered in a temple which will be built and in operation during the Millennium” (Ezek. 40-48). These sacrifices will be offered as memorials of Christ’s death, similar to communion today (Ryrie 595).

## Final Destiny The Judgments

There will be no one great “judgment day.” Instead, there will be a series of judgments at different times involving different groups of people.

The One who judges is Jesus Christ. “The Judge in the end times is the Lord Jesus Christ. All judgment has been given to the Son of God, and all those who do not come to Him as the giver of life will have to face Him as their judge” (cf. John 5:21-23, 27; Benware 270).

### Phase 1: Judgment at the Time of the Rapture

There will be no one great “judgment day.” Instead, there will be a series of judgments at different times involving different groups of people.

The One who judges is Jesus Christ. “The Judge in the end times is the Lord Jesus Christ. All judgment has been given to the Son of God, and all those who do not come to Him as the giver of life will have to face Him as their judge” (cf. John 5:21-23, 27; Benware 270).

### The Judgment of Believer’s Works

This is called the *bema* or judgment seat of Christ. This is **not** a judgment of one’s salvation but of one’s faithfulness. “The nature of the believer’s works will be examined in this judgment to distinguish worthy works from unworthy ones. These works are the deeds done by the believer during his Christian life” (Ryrie 597).

### Key Passages

## Principal Verses

- 1 Corinthians 3:10-15: “By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.”
- 2 Corinthians 5:10: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”

Additional verses: Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:1-5; 9:24-27; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10; 3:11; 4:4, 10.

## Basis of the Judgment

- **On** the quality of our Christian lives compared to the Word of God.
- **On** the degree of our faithfulness (1 Cor. 4:2)
- **On** the motives behind our service (1 Cor. 4:5) (Benware 272)

## When

After the rapture and before the end of the tribulation.

## The Outcome of This Judgment

“The outcome will be either reward or deprivation of reward. Salvation is not in question, for those deprived of reward ‘shall be saved, yet so through fire’ “(1 Cor. 3:15; Ryrie 598).

The situation will be similar to a graduation commencement ceremony. There will be “loss” for those who know they could have done more; there will be “reward” for the honor students. Perhaps there will be a moment of remorse in the former and greater the joy for the latter, but ultimately all will rejoice together at the celebration of accomplishment.

“Those who are rewarded have opportunity to serve Christ in greater ways in His future kingdom (e.g., Matt. 25:1 9-23; Luke 19:16-19), experience a special joy and fellowship (Matt. 25:21, 23; 1 Peter 4:12-13), receive divine commendation (Matt. 25:21) and obtain a variety of ‘crowns’ “(e.g., 1 Cor. 9:25; 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; Benware 273).

## Phase 2: Judgment at the Second Coming

### The Judgment of Old Testament and Jewish Saints Who Died in the Tribulation Period

#### Key Passages

- Daniel 12:1-3

- Matthew 16:27
- Revelation 20:4-6

### **Basis of the Judgment**

The basis of the judgment will be the individual's faith in God and His Word

### **When**

This judgment will occur at the end of the tribulation at the second coming (revelation) of Jesus Christ.

### **The Judgment of Believing Jews/Gentiles Who Survived the Tribulation**

These believing Jews and Gentiles will enter into and populate the millennial kingdom.

#### **Key Passages**

- Jews: Ezekiel 20:34-38
- Gentiles: Joel 3:1-2; Matthew 25:31-46

### **Basis of the Judgment**

The basis of the judgment will be the individual's faith in Christ during the time of testing.

### **When**

This judgment will occur at the end of the tribulation at the second coming (revelation) of Jesus Christ.

## **Phase 3: Judgment at the End of the Millennium**

### **The Judgment of Satan and the Fallen Angels**

#### **Key Passages**

- Matthew 25:41
- Revelation 20:10
- 2 Peter 2:4
- Jude 6

### **The Judgment of the Unsaved Dead**

The dead will be judged at the great white throne judgment. The names of all unbelievers will be determined to be missing from the Book of Life, and they will all go to eternal punishment.

#### **Key Passages**

- John 5:29
- Revelation 20:11-15

## **Basis of the Judgment**

The basis of this judgment will be the individual's rejection of God, Christ, and His Word.

When

This judgment will occur at the end of the Millennium.

## **The Resurrections**

### **The Fact of Resurrection: We Will Be Given New, Glorious Bodies One Day!**

- In the Old Testament: Job 19:25-27; Exodus 3:6 (cf. Matt. 22:31-32); Psalm 16:8-11 (cf. Acts 2:25-28, 31); Psalm 49:14; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2; Zechariah 14:5
- In the New Testament: Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 22:31-32; John 11:25-26; 1 Corinthians 15

### **The Order of the Resurrections**

- Christ, the first fruits (Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1:18; Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 15:23)
- Those who are Christ's
  - At the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:16)
  - At His Coming (Dan. 12:2; Rev. 20:4)
- "These resurrections of the saints of all ages constitute the first resurrection (Rev. 20:6), the resurrection of life (John 5:29), or the resurrection of the righteous" (Luke 14:14; Ryrie 604).
- The unsaved dead at the end of the Millennium at the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-14)

The resurrections basically correspond to the three phases of divine judgment: Church age saints receive bodies at the rapture, Old Testament saints receive bodies at the Second Coming to go into the Millennium, and the wicked receive bodies to stand before the great white throne and go into judgment.

## **Individual Eschatology**

### **The Reality of Death**

"Though death is both real and inevitable, it is unnatural...eventually death will be finally conquered (1 Cor. 15:26) and banished from the new creation—' And death and hades were thrown into the Lake of Fire' "(Rev 20:14; Benware.

The essence of death is separation; there are three kinds of death according to Scripture:

1. physical death = the separation of the material from the immaterial parts of a man (Gen. 35:18- 19)
2. spiritual death = the separation of the creature from the Creator (Eph. 2:1)
3. eternal death = the final and permanent separation of the unsaved from God (Rev. 20:14)

### **Death and the Believer**

The ultimate destiny of the believer is eternal life lived in the presence of God.

1. Nothing, not even death, can separate a believer from Christ (Rom. 8:38-39).
2. Believers need not fear death (Ps. 23:4) because the Lord Jesus Christ has gained victory over death (1 Cor. 15).
3. Death still has a sting; it is okay to grieve, though we grieve as those who have hope.
4. The believer who has died in Christ is said to “sleep” (1 Thess. 4:13-15).
5. When a believer dies, he or she is instantly in the “presence of the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:6-8).

## Death and the Unbeliever

The ultimate destiny of the unsaved is separation from God in hell.

## The Eternal State

“It is impossible for a sober-minded person to be casual about hell, and it certainly should not be the subject of jokes. It is a terrible place of punishment originally created for the devil and the fallen angels. There is no way to exit hell once there. The only way to avoid the horrors of eternal separation from the Lord is to receive God’s gracious gift of salvation in Christ.” “How important it is for believers to carry the good news of Christ to unbelievers!” (Benware

## What Is Hell?

Hell *is not* something to be spoken of casually. The word is not to be taken lightly. Nor are we to speak of it with a sense of vengeance, as if relishing the fact that the “bad guys” will finally get their just desserts. We do not possess that perfect balance of divine justice and love to allow ourselves to feel this way. Sinners deserve our pity and outreach.

Hell *is* the real, tragic, and just consequence of sin. It is truly horrible and tragic and needs to be treated with all seriousness and be a believer’s spur to evangelism. We must always remember that without the grace of God, we would all be going to hell. But we have been chosen; we are elect. Why were we chosen and redeemed in Christ? We receive no final answer except to fall back on God’s inscrutable will. This awareness must awaken in us a profound sense of gratitude for our deliverance and awe in the face of mystery and rejoicing in our inheritance.

## The Intermediate State

(see Erickson 1174-84; “instantaneous resurrection” omitted)

What happens between death and resurrection? The question is not idle speculation. It carries profound pastoral implications.

- How should we comfort someone in grief?
- Where are our loved ones right now?
- Are the reunited with other deceased believers?
- Are they with Jesus?

The Scriptures do not offer extended treatment of the issue, but several views have been proposed:

## Soul Sleep

This view proposes that the soul is separated from the body and exists in a dreamlike state until it is reunited with the body at its resurrection. This view is held mostly by Anabaptists, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

The idea of soul sleep is based on 1 Corinthians 15:20: "But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep."

While "sleep" is a common metaphor for death in the Bible, it is only a figure of speech.

## Purgatory

(see Crockett 95-99)

This view is based on Catholic ecclesiology of the Holy Church, the "communion of saints," the spotless and pure bride of Christ. Because many people die with unconfessed sin in their lives, they are thought to be "flawed lovers" who are unable to love God perfectly quite yet. Heaven is assured, but they need to undergo a suffering that cleanses them before they are fully ready to meet their Spouse. In this view, prayer and masses on behalf of the dead can mitigate the time spent in purgatory.

The idea of purgatory is based on the following Bible (and other non-canonical writings) passages:

- Judas Maccabeus collects money for a sin offering for the dead in 2 Maccabees 12:43-45: "Therefore he made atonement for the dead, so that they might be delivered from their sin." Of course, evangelicals do not believe this work is part of the canon of Scripture.
- Matthew 12:32: "Whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come." The verse is said to imply that some other sins can be forgiven in the future age.
- 1 Corinthians 3:15: "If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." The idea is that a Christian who is not quite pure will be saved, but needs to be further purified or "purged" by fire.

The textual evidence for purgatory is weak. It is an unbiblical doctrine that contradicts atonement in Christ's death alone.

## Separate Destinies

This view holds that believers and non-believers go to different intermediate states.

- Unbelievers go to "hades" (which is not the same things as *gehenna* or the lake of fire). It is a place of torment, yet temporary. Eventually, unbelievers will be judged unto eternal punishment in the lake of fire.
- Believers, on the other hand, are with the Lord always.

The Bible speaks of separate destinies in the following passages:

- Unbelievers go to hades:
  - The Rich Man is in torment (Luke 16:23)

- Fallen angels are imprisoned there (2 Peter 2:4)
- Hades will be destroyed (Rev. 20:14)
- Believers go to be with Christ:
  - “Abraham’s Bosom” (Luke 16:22)
  - “Paradise” (Luke 16:43)
  - “At Home with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8)
  - “Depart and be with Christ” (Phil. 1:23)
  - “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21).

## **The Eternal State Of the Unredeemed**

Our English word hell can translate several Greek words in the Bible. It can either refer to hades (intermediate state), or to gehenna/the lake of fire (eternal state). From Scripture we learn that:

- Hell is a real place (Matt. 24:51; Luke 16:28; Rev. 21:8).
- Hell is a place of separation from God (Matt. 7:23; 2 Thess. 1:8-9).
- Hell is a place of unending torment and punishment (Matt. 8:12; 13:50; 11:22-24) that is to be avoided at all costs (Matt. 5:22, 29, 30).
- Hell is a place we will never go because Christ endured Hell for us!

## **Of the Redeemed**

### **The New Heaven and the New Earth**

“One of the final judgments following the millennial kingdom will be the destruction of the heavens and the earth (2 Peter 3:7, 10; Rev. 20:11). When these have been destroyed, God will call into existence new heavens and a new earth” (Benware 287).

In the end, our universe will be done away with, replaced by a brand new cosmos. This is a “re-creation” of the world as it was intended to be. What was lost in the Garden will be restored in the new heavens and earth!

The following are characteristics of the new heaven and new earth:

- There will be a full, unhindered fellowship with God.
- There will be no sin, sickness or death.
- There will be a New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:1-22:5).

“Throughout these last two chapters of Revelation the discussion concerns a city, the new Jerusalem. That this is the description of eternity seems apparent from the phrases in 21:1 and the close association between verses 1 and 2.” “Perhaps the best way to understand this entire section is to regard the new Jerusalem as the abode of the redeemed of all ages. Conditions within the new Jerusalem are conditions of eternity” (Ryrie 118).

### **The Descent of the City (Rev. 21:1-8)**

- It is “new” “it suggests fresh life” (v. 1).
- The “old” has passed away.

- There is no more sea!
- “The first characteristic of the new condition is God with men (v. 3). God Himself will dwell with men during eternity” (Ryrie 119).
- “Old experiences will be excluded” (vv. 4-5).
- “New things will be experienced” (vv. 6-7).
- “Certain people are excluded” (v. 8).

### **The Description of the City (Rev. 21:9-27)**

- It is glorious.
- Its measurements are immense.

### **The Delights of the City, 22:1-5**

- Fullness of life and blessing (vv. 1-2)
- Fullness of paradise (vv. 3-5)

## **Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!**

### **Recognition Activity**

<b>Term:</b>	<b>Definition:</b>
Separate Destinies	This view of the intermediate state is based on the idea that believers and non-believers go to different intermediate states. Unbelievers go to “hades” (which is not the same thing as <i>gehenna</i> or the lake of fire). Believers go to be with Christ. For the unsaved: a place of torment, yet temporary.
Soul Sleep	This view of the intermediate state proposes that the soul is separated from the body and exists in a dreamlike state until it is reunited with the body at its resurrection. This view is held mostly by Anabaptists, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Jehovah’s Witnesses.
Eternal Death	The final and permanent separation of the unsaved from God.
Physical Death	This view of the intermediate state is based on Catholic ecclesiology of the Holy Church, the “communion of saints,” the spotless and pure bride of Christ. Because many people die with unconfessed sin in their lives, they are “flawed lovers” who are unable to love God perfectly. Heaven is assured, yet they need to undergo a suffering that cleanses, before they are ready to meet their Spouse. Prayer and Eucharist’s on behalf.
Spiritual Death	The separation of the creature from the Creator.