

Combined Fellowship: Eschatology

BPCWA COMBINED FELLOWSHIP (14th Mar 2014)

1) Definition of Eschatology

The branch of theology that studies:

- a. last events of world history and humankind
- b. death and Last Judgment;
- c. Heaven and Hell;
- d. the ultimate destiny of humankind

2) Why study Eschatology?

- a. Comforts
- b. Warns
- c. Blessing if read, heard, and kept Rev 1:3
- d. Prepares 2 Pet 3:11, 1 John 3:3

CHURCH AGE

Signs of End Times

3) 4 Areas of End Times Signs (Matt 24 compared with Rev 6)

Jesus' reply to His disciples in Matt 24 regarding signs:

- a. 4 Areas¹ covered : Ecologic, Economic, Political, Ecclesiastical
- b. Ecologic: pestilences (eg plagues, epidemic, AIDS, etc) and earthquakes (increasing frequency and scale)
- c. Economic : Asian then now Western Economic crisis unprecedented in impact, extent, and magnitude; Extremes of poverty in Third World
- d. Political : International Terrorism, breakdown in relations between countries
- e. Ecclesiastical : Falling away (2 Thess 2:3), false doctrines (1 Tim 4:1), false teachers (2 Pet 2:1), false prophets and spirits (1John 4:1), false brethren (2 Cor 11:26), false Christs (Matt24:24).
- f. This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come (2Tim 3:1). But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived (2Tim 3:13).
- g. Occurrences from now until second coming of Christ but will be intensifying as represented by the four horsemen of peace, war, pestilence, and death (Rev 6:1-8).
- h. Israel gathered back to her land and reinstated as nation (1948, 6 Days war in 1967)

RAPTURE

4) First Resurrection

- a. Believers meet Christ midway in the air, sudden, and in split second (1 Cor 15:52)
- b. Rapture of living believers (1Thess 4:13-18)
- c. 1st resurrection of believers
- d. Bodies of dead believers and their soul of (soul in heaven all the while) reunites
- e. All believers obtain glorified tangible, corporeal bodies, (1 Cor 15:43). Christ first to have glorified body.

¹ Timothy Tow and Jeffrey Khoo, *Theology for Every Christian* (Singapore: Far Eastern Bible College Press, 2007), 371-378

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- f. This resurrected glorified body is incorruptible (1 Cor 15:42), flesh and bones (Lu 24:39), immortal (1 Cor 15:53) ie without sin, without diseases or sicknesses, without weaknesses, cannot be tempted
- g. Supernatural, heavenly bodies can eat, commute between heaven and earth (John 20:19, Lu 24:31)
- h. Doctrine of rapture, resurrection, and second coming are comforting. It reminds us that sufferings are but for a little while - so press on.

5) Views on Rapture

- a. 5 views of Rapture (Pre, Mid, Post, Pre-wrath, ongoing)
- b. This writer takes the Pre-Tribulation Rapture view because of 1 Thess 5:9 - For God hath not appointed us to wrath i.e. raptured before the period of "great wrath" of Satan (Rev 12:12)
- c. Pre, mid, and pre-wrath are plausible from Scriptures but post and ongoing poses much difficulties.

Events in Heaven after Rapture

6) The Judgment Seat (Bema) of Christ (2 Cor 5:10-15, 1 Cor 3:11-15)

- a. Bema seat judgment of believers
- b. Judgment seat of Christ is regarding the works of believers - for rewards, not punishment
- c. Salvation is common, but not all will be equal in rewards in heaven- Nazarenes (salvation by works, Judaizers)
- d. Whether rewards will be gold, silver, precious stones or wood, hay, stubble will be dependent upon and based upon motives
- e. Are you saved, are you serving, are you serving with the right motives?

7) Wedding Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9)

- a. The Bride, ie the Church, with Christ
- b. No more church on earth
- c. Israel will bear testimony for God on earth

GREAT TRIBULATION

8) Great Tribulation Period lasting 7 years (Daniel's 70th week)

- a. Tribulation period prophesied in Daniel 9:25-27, Is 13:6-11, Joel 2:1-2, Matt 24:21
- b. 7 years of Tribulation period divided into 2 equal halves (Dan 9:25-27)
- c. First 3½ years of peace
- d. Followed by next 3½ years of war and persecution (42 months in Rev 13:5)
- e. This period is also known in Scriptures by other terms for example:
 - i. The time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30:7)
 - ii. The day of the LORD (Is 13:6-9)
 - iii. The time of trouble such as never was (Dan 12:1)
 - iv. The seventieth week (Dan 9:24-27)
 - v. The great day of His wrath (Rev 6:17)
 - vi. The hour of His judgment (Rev 14:7)
 - vii. The end of this world (Matt 13:40,49)

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First 3½ years

Antichrist Arises

9) His Profile

- a. Antichrist is the brain child of the Devil, the great dragon, that old serpent, the deceiver of the whole world, i.e. of Satan (Rev 12:9).
- b. A human global leader inspired by the "red dragon" who is Satan (Rev 12:13, Rev 13:4, 7).
- c. Has great military, political prowess which none can equal (Rev 13:4).
- d. Likely of European descent (Dan 8:23-26, Rev 13:1-8) because he is the little horn that emerges from the fourth beast of Daniel's dream. This fourth beast refers to the Revived Roman Empire (Dan 7:23-24).
- e. He is also called "that man of sin", "son of perdition" lawless one (2 Thess 2:3).

10) His Actions

- a. Antichrist will deceive many and imitate the coming of Christ (2 Thess 2:9-12).
- b. Sets up Peace Treaty with Israel which begins the 7 years (Dan 9:27).
- c. Will solve world problems, bring temporary man made false peace (World Council of Churches aiming for unity of all religions already today)²
- d. He will be admired and worshiped by the world and is the beast mentioned in Rev 13:1-8
- e. Appears to give Israel religious freedom and even protects it
- f. He will rule the world aggressively (Dan 7:23-24)
- g. He will speak against God and change laws (Dan 7:25)
- h. He will oppose Christ and usurp Christ's position

11) Events Arising

- a. Seven seals Rev 6:1 - Rev 8:5
- b. Seven Trumpets Rev 8:7 – Rev 11:19
- c. 144,000 i.e. 12 thousand³ from each of the 12 Tribes of Israel sealed (Rev 7:1-8) i.e. sign of Divine protection upon these Jews who are specially chosen by God to bear witness during the Great Tribulation.
- d. God will put a heart of flesh in all Jews and they will come to believe in the Saviour they have rejected all the while (Ezek 36:24-26)
- e. But the 2 Prophets will be sent by God in the second 3.5 years. They return to bear testimony and preach (may likely be Moses and Elijah based upon description of Rev 11:3-13).

² WCC was formed in 1948. National Council of Churches is part of WCC. Is your church a member of NCC? Check their website to find out at <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/asia/australia/ncca>. The Roman Catholic and Uniting Church are already members of WCC. God warns us to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you" (2 Cor 6:17), " And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev 18:4)

³ The number 12 in Prophetic numerics is usually used to mean representation. So the number here may simply refer the representation of the 12 tribes rather than the absolute number of 144 thousand. Hence the number could be greater.

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- f. 2 Prophets killed, their dead bodies broadcast around the world, world celebrates the "good riddance", but God resurrects them and calls them to heaven, great earthquake and many dies, fear comes over the world, remnant glorifies God (Rev 11:8-13).
- g. Gentiles who come to believe in the witness of the Jews and the 2 Prophets can be saved. God is merciful.
- h. But it is the most difficult and terrifying time to be a Christian - come and believe now!

12) At the end of 1st 3½ years

- a. Nations will rise against Antichrist at the end of the first 3.5 years
- b. Mid tribulation War against Antichrist from Northern, Eastern, and Southern nations (Eze 38, 39)
- c. 1st Gog and Magog (nations north of Israel) battle. Northern nations today are Russia, Turkey, Armenia
- d. Persia (nation north of Israel): Iran today and its neighbors like Iraq and Afghanistan.
- e. Ethiopia, Libya (nations south of Israel).
- f. This battle will take place in Israel (Rev 16:12-16)
- g. Great carnage which will take 7 months to bury the dead bodies (Eze 39:11-16)
- h. Antichrist will win the battle (Dan 11:36-45)
- i. But Antichrist will be fatally wounded to death (Rev 13:3)

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