

Curious – What’s God’s Plan for the End?

5/2/21

Various Scriptures

Sunday AM

I’ve always enjoyed **optical illusions**. An OI is a pic or object that deceives the eye by appearing to be more or different than what it is. (show pics)

Prophecy can sometimes appear to be an OI, b/c (2) people can look at the same passages, yet see (2) different ideas. In fact, many brilliant theologians have differed about God’s plan for the end. For example, DYK there are at least (6) views of the rapture.

- PRE-Tribulation View
- MID-Tribulation View
- Pre-Wrath Tribulation View
- POST-Tribulation View
- No Rapture View
- PAN-Tribulation View

WTM – it’s critical to remember that in the end, our job isn’t to die on the hill of one view but on the hill of being prepared for His return no matter His return.

We’re in a series of lessons answering questions from our church pertaining to faith, religion, and culture. So far, we’ve looked at questions about the existence of God’s, Jesus as the way, and doubt. Today I we’re going to delve into the question – *What is God plan for the end?*

This will be a daunting task to do in 30 min., yet I hope I can offer enough basic info to help you to understand that Jesus is returning, and when he does, you’ll want to be living in the light of His return.

There are (4) primary views for the end: (see chart)

- Historic Pre-Millennialism
- Dispensational Pre-Millennialism
- A-Millennialism
- Post-Millennialism

Since I have limited time, I’m not going to delve into the various views, but share w/ you the view I believe is the most Biblically sound. This view is known as the Dispensational Pre-Trib/Pre-Mil view of eschatology.

Meaning the rapture will occur before the tribulation; and the trib. will take place prior to the Mil. Kingdom.

I A Few **KEY** Terms

Daniel’s 70 Weeks – An OT prophecy found in Daniel 9 declaring that God has issued (70) 7 yr segments (or 490 yrs) in which He was going to make an end to sin and restore His promises to Israel.

“(70) ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place. “Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be (70) ‘sevens,’ and (62) ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt w/ streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. After the (62) ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The

end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. He will confirm a covenant w/ many for (1) 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple, he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

Anti-Christ – Man of lawlessness – he's apart of the unholy trinity including Satan/false prophet. Under the influence of Satan, this person will gain worldwide control w/ a promise of peace and will offer a 7-yr peace treaty w/ Israel to initiate the Tribulation.

Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus and our being gathered to Him, we ask you, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by the teaching allegedly from us... Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that's called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4

Tribulation – the final 7-yr period prophesied in Daniel when God will finish his discipline for Israel and finalize His judgment on sin. This event begins w/ the signing of a treaty b/w Israel and the AC.

He will confirm a covenant w/ many for (1) 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. Daniel 9:27

Rapture – While not a Bible term, the idea is found in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17. The term means to **snatch away** or **carry off**. Scholars believe the rapture to be the event where God removes believers from the church age sparing them His wrath on sin and clearing the way for the Tribulation to begin.

According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who remain until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord will descend from heaven, w/ a loud command, w/ the voice of the archangel and the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together w/ them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will be w/ the Lord forever. 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

Judgment Seat of Christ (Bema Seat) – the judgment where Christians will give an account and be rewarded for their followship of Jesus on earth.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. 2 Corinthians 5:10

Marriage Supper of the Lamb – The glorious union and celebration of all who are in Christ.

Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" Revelation 19:6-9

Abomination of Desolation – the event mid-way thru the Tribulation when Satan fills the AC, then breaks the treaty w/ Israel. Then, Satan will enter into the Holy Place desecrating it by declaring himself as God.

When you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of thru the prophet Daniel. Matthew 24:15

Second Coming – At the end of the tribulation, Jesus will return w/ the armies of heaven at the Valley of Megiddo to defeat the nations fighting w/ the AC against Israel. He will capture the AC/false prophet and throw them into the lake of fire and establish a 1,000 yr reign.

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. W/ justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on Him that no one knows but He himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following Him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword w/ which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them w/ an iron scepter.” He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on His thigh, He has this name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, “Come, gather together for the great supper of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and the mighty, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, great and small.” Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the Rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and w/ it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. W/ these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest were killed w/ the sword coming out of the mouth of the Rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh. Revelation 19:11-21

Armageddon – the battle b/w God and the earthly forces of Anti-Christ that’ll take place at the end of the Tribulation in the Valley of Megiddo.

Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. Rev. 16:16

Millennial Kingdom – the 1,000-yr peaceful reign of Christ where Jesus will rule the world.

I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a 1,000 yrs. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the 1,000 yrs were ended. Revelation 20:1-3

Great White Throne – The final judgment where Satan will be condemned and where every person thru-out history who rejected Christ will stand before God in a final judgment,

I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. I saw the dead, great/small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death/Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:11-15

II A **BASIC** Overview

Based on the prophecy in Daniel 9, the Tribulation can’t begin until the man of lawlessness (AC) signs a treaty b/w Israel promising 7-yrs of peace.

NOTE – in 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8, Paul shares that the man of lawlessness can’t come to power until the **one** is removed b/c this **one** constrains him. I believe this **one** is the H.S. who seals every believer. This is why the rapture must occur before the tribulation.

Now you know what is holding him (AC) back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow w/ the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8

The rapture occurs first. Then, the Anti-Christ will arise to power/influence over the world w/ a major religious leader at his side (false prophet).

Due to world events, confusion, and chaos, the AC will offer a plausible explanation and solution to bring the perception of peace and will sign the treaty w/ Israel initiating the 7-yr Tribulation.

Those raptured will be w/ God in heaven and will experience the Judgment Seat of Christ followed by the Marriage Supper of the Lamb – while God begins pouring out his wrath on sin upon the world.

Back on earth, midway thru the Tribulation, the Anti-Christ will be slain; Satan will enter his body as if resurrected, and he will enter into the Holy of Holies in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem declaring himself to be God. This is the **Abomination of Desolation.**

Thru-out the final 3½ yrs, God will continue to pour out His judgment on the earth as all hell breaks loose and the AC wages war on God and God's people. This will culminate at the Battle of Armageddon where the forces of the AC will seek to defeat Israel. At this battle, Jesus will return at the 2nd Coming w/ His heavenly armies to defeat Satan and those who've pledged allegiance to him.

Next, Satan/the false prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire and Jesus will establish a 1,000-yr earthly reign. At the end of this time, Satan will be released for a season and will be defeated once-and-for-all.

At the point, God will judge all of creation who've rejected Him at the ***Great White Throne*** and they will be eternally separated from Him. This will lead to God establishing a new heavens/earth into eternity.

So, there you have it. A concise explanation of the end times based on a dispensational pre-trib/pre-mil view. Now w/ all of this said, while I know there are many questions, we must remember a few things...

III A Few **ESSENTIAL** Reminders

While all the differing views might seem confusing, the most essential detail is that Jesus has promised to return bodily, visibly, and gloriously to rule/reign w/ and over all of whom He has rescued/redeemed thru His death, burial, and resurrection.

The first challenge is that we don't know **WHEN**, but only that He has promised to return.

But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it'll be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating/drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That's how I'll be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding w/ a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. "Therefore, keep watch, b/c you don't know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he'd have kept watch and wouldn't have let his house be broken into. So, you also must be ready, b/c the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him. Matthew 24:36-44

So, what does this mean?

1 – It means you'd better be ready by knowing and receiving Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.

Don't put it off or think it doesn't matter. If you're sensing the wooing conviction of the H.S. – don't think, "Not now, maybe later." B/c there might not ever be a later.

Jesus could return before I finish this statement. He didn't this time, but He might next time.

2 – If you know Him as Savior/Lord, live to serve and honor Him thru your life so that upon His return you will be found faithful to His calling on your life.

Be steadfast, immovable, always giving yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, b/c you know your labor in the Lord is not in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58