

Wednesday Night Bible Study
Eschatology Reference Notes

Key Terms:

- **Church Age** – Human history from Acts 1 thru the present to at least the beginning of the Tribulation or Second Coming depending on one's view of the Millennium.
- **Eschatology** – from *last things* and the *study* of, means the study of final/last/end things.
- **Rapture** – from Latin *Rapio* meaning *to take away* or *catch up*. This comes from the Latin translation of the Greek *arpagēsometha* in 1 Thess. 4:17.
- **Eternal State** – The New Heaven and the New Earth and the Lake of Fire.
- **Dispensationalism** – a theological framework centering around different dispensations in human history where God's revelation to and governance of mankind has progressed from one way or thing to another.

Key Questions:

- **How do we interpret and understand Revelation?**
 - Preterist: Revelation is literally fulfilled in the days and lifetime of the original author and readers in the latter half of the First Century.
 - Historicist: Revelation is filled with symbols and prophecy that are literally fulfilled thru historical events from the time of John to whatever end point the interpreter concludes.
 - Idealist: Revelation is filled with symbolism that must be understood in a spiritual sense. It refers to spiritual issues and challenges endured by Believers of all ages in all centuries. The primary purpose is to provide hope and assurance through Spiritual and Eternal Truth.
 - Futurist: Revelation is filled with prophecy that has primarily been unfulfilled but will be in the future. It demands a literal interpretation as does all Biblical prophecy though the prophecy is communicated in varying levels of symbolism and imagery.
- **How do we interpret and understand the 1,000 Reign of Jesus in Revelation 20:1-10?**
 - Postmillennialism: The 1,000 years of Revelation 20:1-10 are literal in the sense they are fulfilled in the Age of the Church as society comes to faith in Jesus thru the Gospel and world history is ushered into a golden age of utopia where most if not all the world believes in Jesus. Jesus "returns" following this Millennial age.
 - Amillennialism: The 1,000 years of Revelation 20:1-10 are symbolic and therefore no Millennial Kingdom exists. Satan is bound by Jesus work on the cross and resurrection. The Church Age is parallel with the time of Tribulation until the Return of Jesus, Final Judgment, and New Creation.
 - Premillennialism: The 1,000 years of Revelation 20:1-10 are a literal time of Jesus reigning on the present earth following His Second Coming. Satan will be completely bound and the world freed from his deceiving influence. The Saints are resurrected bodily and reign with Jesus in this kingdom. This is the view of the early church for the first 300 years of her existence. Various forms of Premillennialism exist from Historic to Dispensational. One's Premillennial view will further expand on the timing of the Rapture.
- **When does Jesus return for His Bride, the Church?**
 - Pre-Tribulation: *believe that Christ will be revealed at the outset of the tribulation period of seven years. The dead in Christ will rise, and every true believer will be caught up to be with the Lord in the air. A period of seven years of the outpouring of the wrath of God upon the earth, which will conclude with the return of Christ to establish His millennial kingdom, will follow.*

Hence, Christ comes for the church prior to the tribulation and prior to the millennium to establish His kingdom. (Holman Bible Dictionary)

- Church Age — Rapture — Tribulation (7 Years) — Second Coming — Millennium — Judgment — Eternity
- Mid-Tribulation/Pre-Wrath: *notes that the Apocalypse divides the tribulation into two periods of three and one-half years each. Midtribulationists suggest that Christ will return for the church after the first half of the tribulation. The church, therefore, will have to experience the first forty-two months of the tribulation period but will be rescued from the most debilitating portion of it.* (Holman Bible Dictionary)
 - **Mid-Trib:** Church Age — Tribulation (3.5 Years) — Rapture — Tribulation (3.5 Years) — Second Coming — Millennium — Judgment — Eternity
 - **Pre-Wrath:** Church Age — Tribulation (Until God's Wrath) — Rapture — Tribulation (God's Wrath) — Second Coming — Millennium — Judgment — Eternity
- Post-Tribulation: *argues that the church endures the Great Tribulation but is not the object of God's wrath poured out on the wicked. They see only one return of Christ in Scripture, in opposition to the two posited by either pretribulationism or midtribulationism. Therefore, Christ comes at the end of the tribulation to receive the church to Himself and then returns immediately to the earth to establish the kingdom age.* (Holman Bible Dictionary)
 - Church Age — Tribulation (7 Years) — Second Coming — Millennium — Judgment — Eternity