

# Eschatology – A Study Of The Last Days

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Eschatology means the theology of last things. It struck me as I was preparing this study, that eschatology by definition does not apply just to what we as Christians believe. Everyone has some sort of eschatology. There are last things for everyone and what you mean by eschatology is determined by who your god is. Is your god evolution? Then the theology of last things for you is an end where everything stops and no longer exists. It's absolutely hopeless. Is your god the God of the Bible? Then the theology of last things for you is certain as described in our King James Bible. If you believe in the God of the Bible and you believe on Jesus as your only means of salvation, then you have hope for those last things. God has been perfect in His prophecies of previous things, so it can be certain He will be perfect in His future prophecies.

Interestingly enough though, even people who profess to be saved, profess to believe in God's word, somehow come to different conclusions on what these last things are. As Bible believing Christians, we believe in the pre-tribulation return of Jesus to gather His saints; we believe this return is also pre-millennial. Jesus will come for His saints before He comes to establish His kingdom here on this earth, and He will also come before the tribulation, which occurs before the establishment of his kingdom. He will come before the tribulation to gather His saints together with Him, so that they will not be a part of this time of tribulation. As Bible believing Christians, we believe God has set in place separate dispensations in His overall plan that has been, is being, and will continue to be worked out in time. While there is some overlap in these dispensations, each dispensation is marked with specific ideas and things that must be accomplished before the next dispensation is completely put in order.

The events we will look at will deal with those things yet to come. Things that will happen in future dispensations.

It is an important topic to study because it deals with prophecy. Those who refuse to believe on the Lord Jesus as their saviour will not enjoy the benefits that come from a study of eschatology. It, like other things in the Bible, is spiritually discerned and the natural man not only does not understand it, but considers it foolishness. As a result of this, there is much to be gained by the believer with eschatology.

1. It provides joy in the midst of affliction (2 Cor. 4:17 - 18)

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2. It cleanses and encourages holy living (1 John 3:2 - 3)

2 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.

3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

3. It is profitable, like all Scripture, for a number of important needs in the Christian's life (2 Tim. 3:16–17)

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16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

4. It gives facts about life after death (2 Cor. 5:6 - 8)

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

5. It gives truth about the end of history (Rev 10:6)

6 And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

### **Finally:**

6. It gives proof of the reliability of all Scripture, for the number of prophecies that have come to pass precisely as predicted cannot be accounted for by chance but only by God.
7. It draws our hearts out in worship to the God who is in complete control and who will accomplish His will in history.

So, we see this study is important, but how do we proceed? As Christians we are basing our hope of eternal life with God on Jesus' return. There is quite a bit that deals with Christ's return, so let's start our study with the return of Jesus Christ in mind.

Our study begins with a look at Acts 1:6 - 11,

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

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10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11 Which also said, 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.

Jesus, during those forty days between his resurrection and ascension, had been proving to his disciples that he was the resurrected Christ, as promised, and was speaking to them of things pertaining to the kingdom of God. As we see here, Jesus was fulfilling another promise that he had made to his disciples concerning his leaving and the coming of the Holy Ghost. Jesus told the disciples in John 16:7,

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

This study of the last days is a study of those times prior to the return of Jesus Christ. He left forty days after his resurrection, and it is sure that he will return because he has promised to do so. As we just read, though, Jesus has not left us comfortless during this time he is away. God is with us!

This idea that the Holy Ghost would be sent by Father once Jesus returned to heaven is mentioned several times in the section that contains John 16:7, which we just read. All throughout John in chapters 14 through 16 it is mentioned. This being the case, it must be important! As we saw in John 16:7, the Holy Ghost is our Comforter. John 14:16 - 17 tells us the Holy Ghost will abide with us that love Jesus. It says the world cannot receive the Holy Ghost because it does not see him, nor does it know him. But we as Christians do know him because he is in us. John 14:26 tells us the Holy Ghost will teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance that we have heard from Jesus. So, in order for all this to happen, Jesus had to leave and pray the Father to send the Holy Ghost to us.

We are currently in that time that the Holy Ghost is present with us and Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Jesus is currently working as our advocate against the enemy and preparing a place for us for when he comes back for us. The Holy Ghost is currently teaching us all things, bringing to remembrance those things spoken by Jesus and being our Comforter. I am so thankful to be saved and to have the Holy Ghost abiding within me!

We are in the last days. Just as Jesus promised his disciples that the world would hate them because they hated Jesus, we are dealing with that same hatred of the world. While the fire of hatred has been turned up in countries like China, North Korea, all of the Muslim controlled countries, Colombia and elsewhere, the fire is beginning to get turned up in our own country. That is encouraging for a Bible believing Christian. It indicates that Americans are starting to show up on the enemies radar. I understand that Scripture speaks of a great falling away in the last days, but we need to remember, also, that God always has a remnant of believers. Just as Elijah thought there was no one else, we need to remember what God told Elijah. There are just enough Christians in this country spreading the Gospel, baptizing those who believe in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and teaching them to go and do the same, that we are showing up as a blip on Satan's radar. Why do I say that we are showing up? The law of the world is showing up more and more in our country. Laws have been and are being put into place that attempt to silence our voice. God has been removed from our schools, courthouses, offices and buildings. Laws have been put in place that silence those churches who only wish to get along with everyone and not preach the Gospel. The law will pay those churches to be quiet

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and only spread a message of inclusiveness. Those of us who actually do go out and show our true love for Jesus by keeping his commandments are harassed, beat, jailed, fined and added to government lists as if we were terrorists. Many do this thinking they do God a service. We are told they know neither the Father, nor Jesus. Let's look at John 16:1 - 3,

1 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

All these things must happen and thankfully they are beginning to happen even in this country. The end is near!

The end is truly near and we are close to the time that we will see Jesus again. It will truly be a joyous time when Jesus comes again. Let's close out this first message with a look at John 16:16 - 22,

16 A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

The world is truly rejoicing because they do not see Jesus nor can they see the Holy Ghost. They are rejoicing over the idea that they believe they are without restraint in dealing with us Christians. As I stated earlier, the fire is being turned up, but it is only because the hour is come. It is only a short matter of time before Jesus comes for us and our sorrow will be turned into joy. We will no longer remember the anguish, but only the joy of being with our Lord, Jesus Christ! Look up, your redemption draweth nigh!