

# END TIMES

**“Our future, the second coming of Christ and help understanding it all.”**

Eschatology—literally, ‘teachings about the last things’—is the study of the final end of man and all things

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Scriptures are printed verbatim with references noted but highlights and underlines are added. Quotes and all primary sources are footnoted.

## A. SUMMARY—WHAT ‘THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE’ SAYS

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.



**Jesus Christ first came to Earth in the form of a servant. He will return—a second time—as the savior of His people. He will be the judge to those who rejected Him and the rewarded of those who surrendered their life to him. His “second coming” will be a literal, visible, and glorious event.**

## B. FIVE FACTS ABOUT OUR FUTURE (ON EARTH)

### 1. It will be a time of apostasy. i.e., “A falling away from *truth*”

Matthew 24:4-5, 11 NLT - <sup>4</sup>Jesus told them, “Don’t let anyone mislead you, <sup>5</sup>for many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah.’ They will deceive many. ... <sup>11</sup>And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people.

- The rise of false prophets
- The rise of false teachings

*“Sometimes I feel like a backwoods fundamentalist or somebody carrying a sign around Times Square that says REPENT. But I’ve been a pastor for thirty-five years, and I don’t trust people one inch in defining what they need. We don’t know ourselves apart from God’s Holy Word ... for me, being a pastor means being attentive to people. But the minute I start taking my cues from them, I quit being a pastor.”*

– Dr. Eugene H. Peterson

*“Unfortunately, the market-driven ministry philosophy appeals to the very worst mood of our age. It caters to people whose first love is themselves and who care not for God—unless they can have Him without disrupting their selfish lifestyles. Promise such people a religion that will allow them to be comfortable in their materialism and self-love, and they will respond in droves.”*

– Dr. John MacArthur

2 Timothy 4:3, NIV - <sup>3</sup>For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

<sup>1</sup> 2000 “The Baptist Faith and Message”—The Doctrinal Statement of the Southern Baptist Convention and SRBC. (cf., Section X, “Last Things”)

## 2. It will be a time of ***anarchy***.

Matthew 24:6-8, NLT - <sup>6</sup> *And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don't panic. Yes, these things must take place, but the end won't follow immediately.* <sup>7</sup> *Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world.* <sup>8</sup> *But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come.*

## 3. It will be a time of ***apathy***.

Matthew 24:12-13, NLT - <sup>12</sup> *Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold.* <sup>13</sup> *But the one who endures to the end will be saved.*

## 4. It will be a time of ***affliction***.

Matthew 24:9-10, NLT - <sup>9</sup> *Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers.* <sup>10</sup> *And many will turn away from me and betray and hate each other.*

## 5. It will be a time of ***accomplishment***.

Matthew 24:14, NLT - <sup>14</sup> *And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.*

## C. THE STORY OF THE “EASTERN GATE”



A view of Jerusalem as seen from the Mount of Olives

## D. WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

Primary Sources: "What does the Future Hold?" (Art.) by Dr. Edward Hindson, Dean, Institute of Biblical Studies, Liberty University, N.L.J., Feb. 2001.  
"What does the Bible say about our Future?" (Art.) by Dr. Lorin Cranford, NT Professor of NT, SWBTS, SWBT-Journal of Theology, Nov. 1976

### 1. The Growth of the Church

Jesus established the church and promised to continue to build it until He returns:

**Matthew 16:18** - *"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it."*

**Matthew 24:14** - *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come."*

## 2. An Increase of Evil

The Bible also predicts that the “increase of evil” will continue until the end of the age.

**Matthew 24:12** - *“And because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold.*

**2 Timothy 3:1-5** - <sup>1</sup> *But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. <sup>2</sup> For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; <sup>5</sup> holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these.*

## 3. The Rise of False Prophets

Jesus himself warned about the coming of “false christs” and “false prophets.”

**Matthew 24:4,24** - <sup>4</sup> *And Jesus answered and said to them, “See to it that no one misleads you. <sup>24</sup> “For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.*

**2 Peter 2:1** - *But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.*

**2 Corinthians 11:13** - *For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.*

**Jude 17-18** - <sup>17</sup> *But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>18</sup> that they were saying to you, “In the last time there shall be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.” (i.e., “It gets worst in the end.”)*

## 4. The Promise Land

In 1948, the ancient Bible prophecies were fulfilled when Israel became a nation again after nearly 1,900 years in exile. Ezekiel predicted a two-staged return: (1) physical *regathering*; and (2) Spiritual rebirth (cf. Ezekiel 37:1-14).

**Ezekiel 20:34** - *“And I shall bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; ...*

**Isaiah 43:5-6** - <sup>5</sup> *“Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, And gather you from the west. <sup>6</sup> “I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ And to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’ Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth, ...*

**Ezekiel 37:1-14** - <sup>1</sup> *The hand of the Lord was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of bones. <sup>2</sup> And He caused me to pass among them round about, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley; and lo, they were very dry. <sup>3</sup> And He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered, “O Lord God, Thou knowest.” <sup>4</sup> Again He said to me, “Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.’” <sup>5</sup> “Thus says the Lord God to these bones, ‘Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life. <sup>6</sup> ‘And I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin, and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you will know that I am the Lord.’” <sup>7</sup> So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold, a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to its bone. <sup>8</sup> And I looked, and behold, sinews were on them, and flesh grew, and skin covered them; but there was no breath in them. <sup>9</sup> Then He said to me, “Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they come to life.’” <sup>10</sup> So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they came to life, and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army. <sup>11</sup> Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.’” <sup>12</sup> “Therefore prophecy, and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel.” <sup>13</sup> “Then you will know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves, My people. <sup>14</sup> “And I will put My Spirit within you, and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken and done it,” declares the Lord.”*

## 5. Middle East Conflict

The general picture of the future is one of turmoil between the Jews and Arabs in the Middle East. Collectively, the prophets foresee Israel back in the Land, but under constant threat of attack.

**Matthew 24:6-7** - <sup>6</sup> *“And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.* <sup>7</sup> *“For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.”*

**Joel 3:2-14** - <sup>2</sup> *I will gather all the nations, And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there On behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; And they have divided up My land.* <sup>3</sup> *“They have also cast lots for My people, Traded a boy for a harlot, And sold a girl for wine that they may drink.* <sup>4</sup> *“Moreover, what are you to Me, O Tyre, Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia? Are you rendering Me a recompense? But if you do recompense Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your recompense on your head.* <sup>5</sup> *“Since you have taken My silver and My gold, brought My precious treasures to your temples, <sup>6</sup> and sold the sons of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their territory, <sup>7</sup> behold, I am going to arouse them from the place where you have sold them, and return your recompense on your head.* <sup>8</sup> *“Also I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the sons of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a distant nation,” for the Lord has spoken.* <sup>9</sup> *Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare a war; rouse the mighty men! Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up!* <sup>10</sup> *Beat your plowshares into swords, And your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, “I am a mighty man.”* <sup>11</sup> *Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations, And gather yourselves there. Bring down, O Lord, Thy mighty ones.* <sup>12</sup> *Let the nations be aroused And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, For there I will sit to judge All the surrounding nations.* <sup>13</sup> *Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.* <sup>14</sup> *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.”*

**Ezekiel 38:1-6** - [Describing a massive invasion of Israel in the “latter days” by a coalition of nations] <sup>1</sup> *And the word of the Lord came to me saying,* <sup>2</sup> *“Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him,* <sup>3</sup> *and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.* <sup>4</sup> *“And I will turn you about, and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them splendidly attired, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them wielding swords; <sup>5</sup> Persia, Ethiopia, and Put with them, all of them with shield and helmet; <sup>6</sup> Gomer with all its troops; Beth-togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops—many peoples with you.*

## 6. Rapture of the Church

At some undated time in the future, Jesus will return to rapture the church (i.e., Believers) to heaven. The rapture precedes the tribulation period and fulfills the Lord’s promise to keep us from the “hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world” (cf., Rev. 3:10).

**John 14:3** - *“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”*

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-17** - <sup>13</sup> *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope.* <sup>14</sup> *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.* <sup>15</sup> *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep.* <sup>16</sup> *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.”*

**1 Corinthians 15:50-58** - <sup>50</sup> *Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.* <sup>51</sup> *Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,* <sup>52</sup> *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.* <sup>53</sup> *For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.* <sup>54</sup> *But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put*

on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory."<sup>55</sup> "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"<sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;<sup>57</sup> but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

## 7. The Marriage of Christ

After the rapture and prior to the return of Christ to the earth, the "wedding of the Lamb" will take place in heaven (cf., Rev. 19:7-9). This *description* follows the pattern of traditional Jewish weddings in biblical times.

**Revelation 19:7-9** - <sup>7</sup> "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."<sup>8</sup> And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.<sup>9</sup> And he \*said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he \*said to me, "These are true words of God."

**Ephesians 5:25-27** - <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;<sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,<sup>27</sup> that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.

**2 Corinthians 11:2** - For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.

**Matthew 25:1-6** - <sup>1</sup> "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom.<sup>2</sup> "And five of them were foolish, and five were prudent.<sup>3</sup> "For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them,<sup>4</sup> but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps.<sup>5</sup> "Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep.<sup>6</sup> "But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'

## 8. The Rise of the Antichrist

John calls him "the beast" (cf., Rev. 13:1-10) and "the antichrist" (cf., 1 Jn. 2.22). John also pictures this last great political leader being assisted by the "false prophet" (cf., Rev. 13:11-18). Together, they deceive the whole world during the tribulation period.

**2 Thessalonians 2:3-8** - <sup>3</sup> Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,<sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.<sup>5</sup> Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?<sup>6</sup> And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed.<sup>7</sup> For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way.<sup>8</sup> And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; ...

**Revelation 13:1-10** - <sup>1</sup> And he stood on the sand of the seashore. And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.<sup>2</sup> And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.<sup>3</sup> And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast;<sup>4</sup> and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?"<sup>5</sup> And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.<sup>6</sup> And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven.<sup>7</sup> And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.<sup>8</sup> And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.<sup>9</sup> If anyone has an ear, let him hear.<sup>10</sup> If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.

**1 John 2:22** - *Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.*

**Revelation 13:11-18** - <sup>11</sup> *And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. <sup>13</sup> And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. <sup>14</sup> And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. <sup>15</sup> And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. <sup>16</sup> And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, <sup>17</sup> and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. <sup>18</sup> Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.*

## NOTES / QUESTIONS

## 9. The Global System

The book of Revelation clearly predicts the world of the future will combine a global economy (cf., Rev. 13:16-18) with a world government (cf., Rev. 13:8; 17:1-18) and a world religion (cf., 13:8-12).

**Revelation 13:16-18** - <sup>16</sup> And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, <sup>17</sup> and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. <sup>18</sup> Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

**Revelation 13:8** - <sup>8</sup> And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

**Revelation 17:1-18** - <sup>1</sup> And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, <sup>2</sup> with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality." <sup>3</sup> And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. <sup>4</sup> And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, <sup>5</sup> and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." <sup>6</sup> And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered greatly. <sup>7</sup> And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. <sup>8</sup> "The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. <sup>9</sup> "Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, <sup>10</sup> and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. <sup>11</sup> "And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction. <sup>12</sup> "And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. <sup>13</sup> "These have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast. <sup>14</sup> "These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful." <sup>15</sup> And he \*said to me, "The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. <sup>16</sup> "And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. <sup>17</sup> "For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be fulfilled. <sup>18</sup> "And the woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth."

**Revelation 13:8-12** - <sup>8</sup> And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. <sup>9</sup> If anyone has an ear, let him hear. <sup>10</sup> If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints. <sup>11</sup> And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. <sup>12</sup> And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.

## 10. The Tribulation Period

Despite efforts at world peace, the rule of the antichrist will be marked by wars of mass destruction, environmental disasters and divine judgments (cf., Rev. 6:1-16; 9:16-18).

**Revelation 6:1-16** - <sup>1</sup> And I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come." <sup>2</sup> And I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer. <sup>3</sup> And when He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come." <sup>4</sup> And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men should slay one another; and a great sword

was given to him. <sup>5</sup> And when He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." And I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. <sup>6</sup> And I heard as it were a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine." <sup>7</sup> And when He broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come." <sup>8</sup> And I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. And authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth. <sup>9</sup> And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; <sup>10</sup> and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" <sup>11</sup> And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also. <sup>12</sup> And I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; <sup>13</sup> and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. <sup>14</sup> And the sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. <sup>15</sup> And the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; <sup>16</sup> and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; ...

**Revelation 9:16-18** - <sup>16</sup> And the number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. <sup>17</sup> And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone. <sup>18</sup> A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths.

Also cf., Daniel 12:1ff; Zephaniah 1:14; Jeremiah 30:7; and Daniel 9:24-27.

## 11. The Battle of Armageddon

The prophetic picture indicates a series of wars of mass destruction are coming in the future (cf. Rev. 6-18). These will result in nearly half the population of the world being destroyed (cf., Rev. 8:7; 9:16-18). Eventually, these wars will culminate in a final battle at "the place call Armageddon (cf., Rev. 16:16). In the end, Christ Himself will return and conquer the beast and the false prophet, casting them into the lake of fire (cf., Rev. 19:11-20). Satan will be bound in the abyss for a thousand years (cf., Rev. 20:1-2).

**Revelation 16:16 (NASB)** - And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called HarMagedon.

**Revelation 16:16 (NIV)** - Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

**Isaiah 34:3** - So their slain will be thrown out, And their corpses will give off their stench, And the mountains will be drenched with their blood.

**Zechariah 14:12-13** - <sup>12</sup> Now this will be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth. <sup>13</sup> And it will come about in that day that a great panic from the Lord will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another.

**Revelation 19:11-20** - <sup>11</sup> And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. <sup>12</sup> And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. <sup>13</sup> And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. <sup>16</sup> And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." <sup>17</sup> And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God; <sup>18</sup> in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great." <sup>19</sup> And I saw the

beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army. <sup>20</sup> And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

**Revelation 19:15** - <sup>15</sup> And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

## 12. The Return of Christ

There is one common theological area of agreement in Christianity: **He is coming again!**

**Matthew 24:30** - ... and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.

**Zechariah 14:3-4** - <sup>3</sup> Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. <sup>4</sup> And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

**Isaiah 63:1-4** - <sup>1</sup> Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." <sup>2</sup> Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? <sup>3</sup> "I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger, And trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My raiment. <sup>4</sup> "For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come.

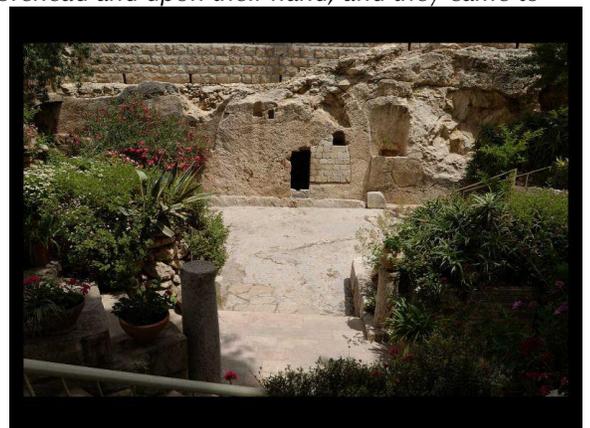
**Revelation 19:11-16** - <sup>11</sup> And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. <sup>12</sup> And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. <sup>13</sup> And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. <sup>16</sup> And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

## 13. The Millennial Kingdom

The NT describes this time when Christ rules on earth with His bride, the church, for 1,000 years.

**Revelation 20:1-6** - <sup>1</sup> And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup> And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, <sup>3</sup> and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time. <sup>4</sup> And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

**Revelation 5:10** - <sup>10</sup> "And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."



The Empty Tomb of Jesus in Jerusalem is our witness that we, as believers in Christ, will one day be resurrected from the grave ourselves to live eternally with Christ in a perfect place called Heaven—that's good news indeed.

## 14. The Great White Throne Judgment

The millennial kingdom will be transferred into the eternal kingdom of God (cf., 1 Cor. 15:24) and the “Great White Throne Judgment” settles the eternal condemnation of all the lost of all time whose names are “not found written in the book of Life” (cf., Rev. 20:11-15).

**1 Corinthians 15:24** - ... then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

**Revelation 20:11-15** - <sup>11</sup> And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. <sup>13</sup> And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. <sup>14</sup> And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. <sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

## 15. Eternal Life

The Bible clearly predicts the eternal state as one of perpetual bliss where paradise is regained. The “tree of life” is restored (cf., Rev. 22.2) and the redeemed of all time live together in the “new heavens” and the “new earth” with “new Jerusalem” as their central dwelling place (cf., Rev. 21:41).

**Revelation 22:2** - ... in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

**Revelation 21:27** - ... and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination ... shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

**Isaiah 65:19** - “I will also rejoice in Jerusalem, and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying.

**John 3:16** - “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

## E. FOUR IMPORTANT STATEMENTS ABOUT THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

### 1. The certainty of His coming.

**John 14:3 (NASB)** - “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

**Acts 1:10-11 (NASB)** - <sup>10</sup> “And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; <sup>11</sup> and they also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.’”

**1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 (NASB)** - <sup>15</sup> “For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

## 2. The manner of His coming.

### A. It will be a personal, visible coming.

**Acts 1:11 (NASB)** - “. . . and they also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.’”

### B. It will be a sudden return.

**2 Peter 3:10 (NASB)** - “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.”

### C. It will be a triumphant return.

**Titus 2:13 (NASB)** - “. . . looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus. . . .”

### D. It will be a sovereign return.

**2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 (NASB)** - <sup>7</sup> “. . . and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, <sup>8</sup> dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power . . .”

## 3. The time of His coming.

**Matthew 24:36 (NASB)** - “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.”

**Acts 1:6-7 (KJV)** - <sup>6</sup> “When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? <sup>7</sup> 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.”

“We are to be mean-time Christians, not end-time Christians. Our concern is to be about witnessing, evangelism and bringing glory to God until He comes—whenever that may be.”

- P. Powell, *The Life Beyond*, p. 35.

## 4. Our attitude toward His coming.

**2 Peter 3:11 (NASB)** - [Following a long discourse about the “Coming of Christ,” Peter said,] “Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness . . .”

### i. Ready

**Matthew 24:44 (NASB)** - “For this reason you be ready too; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.”

### ii. Busy

**Luke 19:13 (NASB)** - “And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them [\$2,000] and said to them, ‘Do business with this until I come back.’”

**Luke 19:13 (KJV)** - “And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy [literally, “be busy”] till I come.”

### iii. Holy

**2 Peter 3:11(NASB)** - "Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness."

**Titus 2:11-13 (NASB)** - <sup>11</sup> "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,<sup>12</sup> instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,<sup>13</sup> looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus."

### iv. At peace with God

**2 Peter 3:14 (NASB)** - "Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless . . . "

### v. Sharing the Good News

**2 Peter 3:9 (NASB)** - "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

### vi. Growing

**2 Peter 3:18 (NASB)** - ". . . but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen!"

*But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." - Luke 21:28*

*Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live." - John 5:25*

## NOTES / QUESTIONS

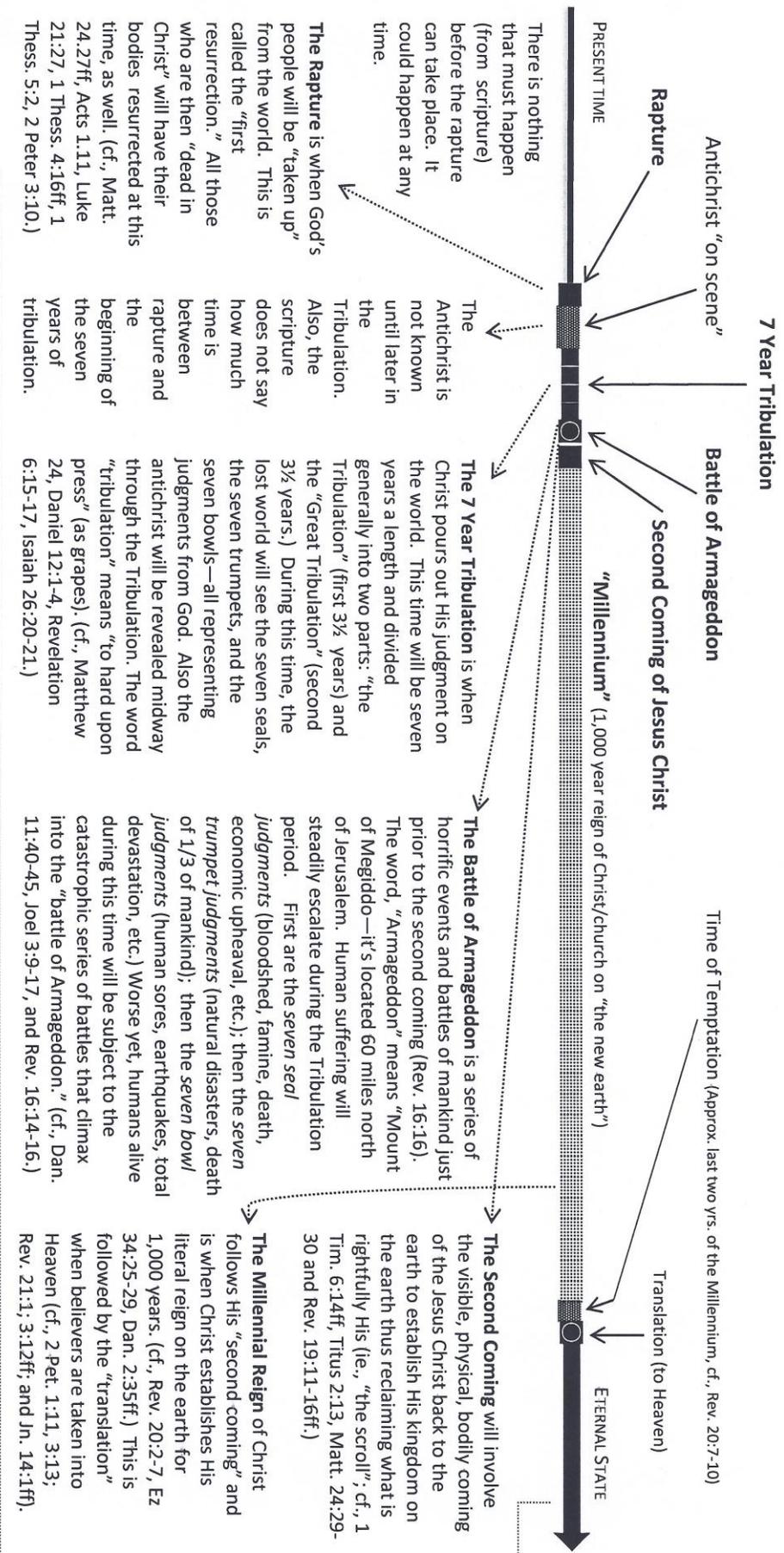
## F. The four “views” of the end times (chart)

**NOTE:** Pastor Joe is a “pre-tribulational, dispensational, premillennialist.”

	<b>Dispensational Premillennialism</b>	<b>Historic Premillennialism</b>	<b>Amillennialism</b>	<b>Postmillennialism</b>
<b>Will Jesus return physically?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>When will Jesus return?</b>	After a 7 year tribulation: before the millennium.	After a 7-year tribulation; before the millennium.	Anytime; a detailed time frame is not important	After the millennium.
<b>Do the rapture and second coming of Christ occur at the same time?</b>	No, they are events separated by either 7 years (pre-tribulation rapture) or 3 ½ year (mid-tribulation rapture).	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Will there be a Great Tribulation?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	The tribulation occurs any time Christians are persecuted or wars and disasters occur.	The tribulation is the conflict between good and evil since Jesus’ death and resurrection.
<b>Will Christians suffer during the tribulation?</b>	Christians are either raptures before the tribulation (pre-tribulation rapture) or 3 ½ years into the tribulation (mid-tribulation rapture).	Yes, Christians will go through the tribulation and endure suffering and persecution for the cause of Christ.	Yes, Christians will suffer and endure persecution until Jesus returns; persecution will increase in the end.	Yes, Christians are called to share the Gospel, and tribulation will occur when that Gospel is opposed.
<b>Will there be a literal 1000-year millennium?</b>	Yes, after the 7-year tribulation, Christ will return and reign for 1000 years.	Yes, after the tribulation, Christ will return and reign for 1000 years.	No, the millennium refers to the reign of Christ in the hearts of His believers.	No, the millennium refers to a period of peace when the Gospel reaches all people.
<b>Who is saved?</b>	Christians only	Christians only	Christians only	Christians only
<b>Is the modern state of Israel relevant to the prophecies in Revelation?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>When was this view most held?</b>	Became popular about 1860. Has increased in popularity	The earliest view of the end times, emerging at the end of the first century.	Popularized in AD400. Continues to be accepted today.	May have been popular as early as AD300. Less popular today.

# Chart of the End Times

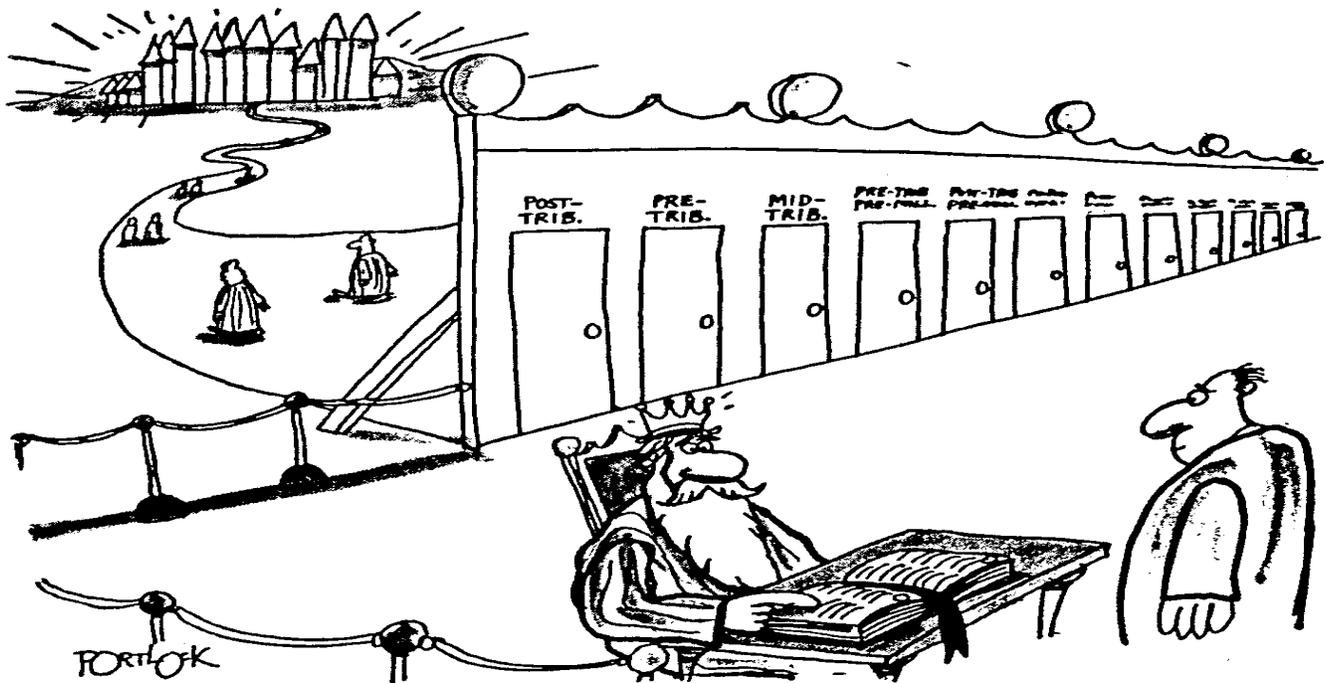
This "CHART ON THE END TIMES" was developed by Dr. Joe K. Taylor



The Eternal State will be a time of unspeakable joy, reward and fellowship for the believer (cf., Revelation 20:11-15). (NOTE: When a believer in Christ dies, their body goes into the grave and their soul goes immediately to be with God in Heaven (cf., 2 Cor. 5:8). At the rapture, the old body will be resurrected and "made perfect" and reunited with their soul in what the bible and theologians call *the glorified state*. Cf., 1 Thess. 13-18 and 1 Cor. 15:42-49.)

When as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this." - Rev. 4:1, NLT

## G. Two Final Thoughts (Cartoon and Quote):



### From "He Still Moves Stones", by Max Lucado

Insights from the Story of Nicodemus, cf., John 3:1-12

Nicodemus is drawn to the carpenter, but he can't be seen with him. Nicodemus is on the high court. He can't approach Jesus in the day. So Nicodemus goes to meet him at night. He goes in the darkness.

Appropriate. For legalism offers no light. Nicodemus begins with courtesies, "Teacher, we know you are a teacher sent from God, because no one can do the miracles you do unless God is with him" (v. 2).

Jesus disregards the compliment. "I tell you the truth, unless one is born again, he cannot be in God's kingdom" (v. 3). No chitchat here. No idle talk. Straight to the point. Straight to the heart. Straight to the problem. Jesus knows the heart of the legalist is hard. You can't crack it with feathery accolades. You need a chisel. So Jesus hammers away:

You can't help the blind by turning up the light, Nicodemus.

You can't help the deaf by turning up the music, Nicodemus.

You can't change the inside by decorating the outside, Nicodemus.

You can't grow fruit without seed, Nicodemus.

You must be born again.

*Whack! ... Whack! ... Whack! ...*

The meeting between Jesus and Nicodemus was more than an encounter between two religious figures. It was a collision between two philosophies. Two opposing views on salvation. Nicodemus thought the person did the work; Jesus says God does the work. Nicodemus thought it was a tradeoff. Jesus says it is a gift. Nicodemus thought man's job was to earn it. Jesus says man's job is to accept it.

These two views encompass all views. All the world religions can be placed in one of two camps: legalism or grace. Humankind does it or God does it. Salvation as a wage based on deeds done—or salvation as a gift based on Christ's death. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Lucado, Max: He Still Moves Stones. Nashville : Word Pub., 1999. Chapter 13.