

Eschatology

Part 1

Definition: 1) the part of theology concerned with death, judgment and the final destiny of the soul & humankind.
2) the end of the world or end times

- We must recognize the scope, depth, and precision of God's Word. We must embrace "the whole counsel of God" – Acts 20:27
- Over 1845 verses refer to Christ's rule in the Old Testament alone; seventeen books give prominence to the event. In the New Testament, there are at least 318 references to the return of Jesus Christ. Twenty-three out of the twenty-seven books give prominence to the event. For every prophesy of Christ's first coming, there are at least eight of His Second Coming.

Two Basic Views of Eschatology: Millennium & Amillennium

- Millennium View- the literal return of the Messiah of Israel to rule the earth, and, particular, in a thousand-year period known as the millennium. Pre-millennialism, regards it as literal.
- Amillennium View- views these allusions as merely symbolic. "no Millennium"

These two drastically differing views come from hermeneutics – theories of Biblical interpretation.

Tragedies of Amillennium Views:

- 1) All of the Messianic promises throughout the Old Testament are at risk, promises that point to the dynasty of David ruling the earth through Jesus Christ, the Messiah.
- 2) Allowed the early church to become extremely anti-Semitic. Jews have suffered through nineteen hundred years of prosecution, much under the banner of Christ. Because of these views
- 3) It caused the Church to lose its roots. We serve a Jewish King. We serve a church founded by Jewish leaders. And we respect and look to Jewish Scripture. God is not through with Israel, yet the destiny of Israel is denigrated by amillennialism.
- 4) The promise given to Mary by the angel Gabriel is rendered indeterminate. Mary was told specifically that her child would rule on the throne of David. The throne of David did not exist during those days. It has yet to be established.

Two Other Viewpoints: Preterism & Reconstructionism

Preterism: They say that everything in Revelation has already taken place and is all in the past.

Reconstructionism: They claim that the Church has replaced Israel and has inherited the promises that were given to her.

-Neither one of these views are Scriptural doctrines.

The Problem:

A Missing Theology Division

There is a distinct difference Between Israel and the Church. We will look at those. We must understand that **Israelology: the study of Israel as an element of Gods plan**. Much of the Bible deals with this, many over look this fact. But if we keep this in proper perspective, the study of scripture take on a different perspective and significance.

Israel & the Church have different destinies. "Replacement Theology" views the church as replacing Israel in regards to the promises in the Old Testament that were specifically for Israel. This view denies Israel its place in God's program, arguing that because Israel rejected Her Messiah, she forfeited the promises of the Old Testament, and those promises have now devolved upon the Church. But some of the most critical promises to Israel were unconditional. **The Mosaic Promises** had some conditions attached. **The Abrahamic Covenant** was unconditional.

We cannot call God a Liar or question His Character. Therefore this is more than just a different view point. If you accept the idea that Israel is not going to receive those promises, commitments which reconfirmed repeatedly under oath, then you make God a liar or impugn His character.

Seventy Weeks prophecy (the pivotal prophecy in **Daniel 9**) dealt specifically with Israel, not the Church. Paul taught that during the dispensation of the Church, the distinction between Jew & Gentile was set aside; but Revelation 4 onward, those distinctions reappear, the Jewishness of Revelation-particularly chapter 4 through 19-is key to understanding this section of scripture.

Many of us have not done a study on the Church, **Ecclesiology**. It is important to understand the distinctiveness of the mystical body of Christ, in contrast to other categories of the faithful.