

End-Time Events

Chi Alpha understands the biblical description of end-time events to be literal, not symbolic (as do some churches). This brief survey of our commonly held views about end-time events will concentrate on the basic essentials, leaving the more speculative aspects of prophecy to those who choose to suggest personal opinions on details not clearly delineated in Scripture.

1. The Rapture.

-The Rapture of the living saints is the first phase of what is commonly called the Second Coming. This event is the blessed hope Paul mentions in Titus 2:13. At this time, Christ comes and snatches away His church without actually setting foot on the earth.

*Titus 2:13 while we wait for **the blessed hope**-- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus*

Christ,

1Thes 4:16-18 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the

archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

18 Therefore encourage each other with these words.

1 Cor 15:51-52 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed-- 52 in a flash,

in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised

imperishable, and we will be changed.

Questions-

1. Why does Paul call this the "blessed hope?"

2. Should it be a fearful event for a Christian?

-To the Christian who truly loves Jesus, the sudden appearance of Christ in the air will hold no fear, dread, or disappointment.

3. Believer's bodies will be changed at the rapture. What do you think might be different?

-The Bible does not give a complete description of the new bodies. The full revelation will be a glorious surprise.

-We are given a peek in the Gospel accounts of Jesus after His resurrection. (Luke 24:36-43 John 20:26-27)

2. The Tribulation.

With the saints removed from the earth, a time of suffering will come upon the whole world. The Tribulation is a period of 7 years (Daniel 9:27). The first half of these 7 years will probably be a time of prosperity and acceptance of the Antichrist as the great deliverer from economic chaos. But the last half of the period will witness the plagues described in Revelation chapter 16. The last half of the Tribulation period is called the Great Tribulation.

Read *Mark 13:32-37 "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.*

34 It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

35 "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back-- whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. 36 If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. 37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

Read also *Rev 16*

Pre-Tribulation scholars hold that the Rapture will occur before the beginning of Daniel's 70th week(7 years).

Mid-Tribulation scholars believe the Rapture will occur in the middle of the 70th week, or before the Great Tribulation.

Post-Tribulation scholars teach that the Rapture will occur at the end of the 70th week, or when Christ comes to set up His eternal kingdom.

-The common belief in Chi Alpha is that **pre-tribulation is more accurate.**

Questions-

1. Why would the Pre-Tribulation Rapture position be more biblically accurate?
 - This view best satisfies the biblical teaching that the Rapture is always imminent-it could happen at any time and will have no announcement
2. What does Jesus mean by "sleeping" in Mark 13:36?
 - unprepared ; in sin ; disobedience ; or even just slothfulness ; etc...
3. What is the purpose of the Tribulation?
 - The Tribulation directly concerns Israel and is God's judgment for long apostasy (abandonment of religious faith) and neglect of the Messiah
 - The Tribulation also affects the whole world because of its ungodliness and ill treatment of the Jews.

3. The Second Coming.

-This event is different from the Rapture. The second coming of Christ is the visible, bodily appearance of Christ as He returns to the Mount of Olives from which He ascended back to heaven after His resurrection.

-After the marriage supper of the raptured saints and the Lamb (Jesus) in heaven (during the Tribulation), Christ, the Groom, goes forth to claim all of His kingdom. He rides on a white horse, followed by the saints, also on white horses.

Read *Rev 19:11-14* *I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. 12 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. 13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. 14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.*

-It will be a sight of great wonder and majesty as Christ descends with His followers to reclaim that which Satan has temporarily wrested from His hand.

-The ensuing conflict between the world of righteousness and the world of darkness is called the Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16). At the conclusion of the battle, defeated Satan is bound and cast into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (Revelation 20).

4. The Millennium.

-With Satan's influence removed from the earth and Christ's reign of righteousness unopposed, the Millennium will be a time of unsurpassed glory and perfect relationships.(Isaiah 2, 11, 12, 32, 35, 60, 65; Zechariah 14).

-The Millennium will last 1,000 years. Satan will be released for "a little season" to test the love, faith, and loyalty of those individuals born during the Millennium and therefore still untested as to their choice between right and wrong.

-The rebellion of Satan and those who choose to follow him will be short-lived. Fire will come down from heaven and devour the opposition. Satan will then be permanently cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20).

5. The Great White Throne Judgment.

-After the judgment fire physically destroys those deceived by Satan at the end of the Millennium, all the wicked who have ever lived on the face of the earth will be dead.

-Then will follow the resurrection of the wicked dead to stand before the austere Judge "from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away" (Rev. 20:11). Books are opened and the wicked are judged according to their works.

-Then, like Satan, they will be consigned to the lake of fire to be tormented day and night forever. This is the saddest scene in the entire Bible and motivates Chi Alpha to reach the lost of the world and help them escape the end of those who do not submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

6. The Holy City. Read *Rev 21 & 22*

-Revelation 21 begins with John's view of new heavens, a new earth, and the holy city (the new Jerusalem that comes down from God out of the new heavens to rest on the new earth). The Lord God's full victory.

Conclusion Read *2 Pet 3:8-9* *But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

Questions-

1. We believe that Jesus could come at any moment. What 2 explanations does Peter give to explain the apparent "slowness" of His return?

-First, God measures time differently than man does. "With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day"

-Second, we are told that God's delay gives opportunity for more to come to repentance through His patience (2 Peter 3:9).

2. How should this understanding affect our lives?

-see 2 Peter 3:11 - holy and Godly lives