

## ALSOM – ALABAMA SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

### ESCHATOLOGY – THE 245 STUDY GUIDE for FINAL EXAM

*(Note: All of the statements in this study summary are true statements related to Eschatology. Approximately half of them reflect the “true” option (or correct choice) you will need for questions on your final exam.)*

The ultimate incentive for living a holy life is that it pleases the Lord and brings the rewards promised in the Bible.

Fulfilled Bible prophecy brings glory to God by showing his sovereignty over the future.

Amillennialists and postmillennialists agree on the belief that Bible prophecy must be interpreted literarily, not literalistically.

Apocalyptic literature is written in highly symbolic images which are not meant to be taken literalistically.

The four best known perspectives on eschatology are amillennialism, postmillennialism, premillennialism, and dispensationalism.

Amillennialism understands the thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20 to be symbolic of the very long period of time between Christ’s Ascension and the Second Coming.

Postmillennialism understands the millennium to be a golden age after the Church wins the world, followed by Christ’s Second Coming (Christ’s return is “Post” or “after” a millennium).

Premillennialism understands the Second Coming of Christ as inaugurating his literal long reign upon a still fallen, untransformed earth, followed by Armageddon and the Final Judgment (Christ’s return is “Pre” or “before” a millennium.)

Dispensationalism sees Christ’s return as split into two stages: A secret rapture of Christians as Christ comes in the air, followed seven years later by a public revelation of Christ as he returns to the earth.

The Christian church had never taught a two-stage return of Christ until John Darby invented Dispensationalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Being created in God’s image means that humans have the God-given ability to think and make choices.

God’s gift of the Promised Land to Israel was conditional on their keeping the Law Covenant, which Israel failed to do, and therefore received the punishment of exile to Babylon.

The only New Testament reference to God’s promise of land to Abraham treats the Promised Land as a temporary type of the whole earth now, and of the New Heavens and New Earth someday.

The Old Covenant promises of the Land to Israel are not renewed under the New Covenant in Christ.

God is all-powerful but chose not to bind Satan immediately upon his rebellion so that people can behold God's glory.

Jesus taught that in his first coming he had bound the strong man, Satan,

When the Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus said "it is not mine to set the time of my coming."

Examples of hyperbolic universal figurative language are seen

1. in the phrase "in the whole world" used by Jesus in the Olivet Discourse,
2. "every nation under heaven" regarding the Jewish crowd on the day of Pentecost, and
3. the phrase "unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again" about the great distress and suffering when Jerusalem would fell.

There were many examples of Jewish and Christian apocalypses written from 200 BC - 200 AD, and this genre always used wild images, bizarre symbols, and highly picturesque language to describe history, events, people, and spiritual reality, in order to teach theological truths.

"Kingdom Now" or "Dominion Theology" teaches that the church will take over world government, education, the arts, and finances.

Prophetic books are primarily *forthtelling* God's accusation of Israel's failure, coming judgment if they do not repent, and blessing if they repent and obey.

Prophetic books are not primarily foretelling the future.

The prophets sometimes did foretell the future, but it was almost always the immediate future of Israel, Judah, and the surrounding nations, not our future.

In the prophetic books, less than 5% specifically describes the New Testament age, less than 2% is messianic, and less than 1% refers to events still to come (the end of the age).

Jesus and the Apostles interpret many prophecies in non-specific, non-historical ways that are figurative and spiritual, such as Hosea 11 (out of Egypt I have called my son), Zechariah 13 (strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered), Amos 9 (restoring David's fallen tent).

Revelation 1:1 says that God revealed to John what was about to happen by signifying it in "signs and symbols", explicitly telling all readers and hearers that this book is not to be read literalistically, but according the rules of apocalyptic, by understanding its signs and symbols.

Amillennialism and premillennialism are the two eschatological perspectives that can be traced all the way back through the ancient church to the New Testament.

Dispensationalism was invented in the 1830's by an English minister named John Darby.

Death is a gain or advantage for the believer because to be with Christ is far better than the best life in a sin-cursed world.

Throughout church history to this very day the vast majority of the Christian Church has been amillennial or premillennial, never dispensationalist.

According to the Old Testament Sheol is the place where all souls go until they are judged worthy of eternal life or eternal punishment.

According to the New Testament, the righteous dead are described as being at home with the Lord.

The resurrection chapter of the New Testament is First Corinthians 15.

The genealogical link between the Old testament covenants and the New Covenant was David and Christ.

In the gospel of Matthew, the phrase “this generation” always refers to the generation to whom Jesus was speaking.

Through his life, death, and resurrection Jesus became the Mediator between God and humankind.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is only a foretaste of promised future Kingdom blessings.

The coming of Christ in 1 Thessalonians is portrayed as very loud and public.

Some Pentecostals mistakenly believe the rapture takes place before the tribulation because Scripture states that the believers are not appointed to suffer wrath.

When Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 that we are not appointed to suffer wrath, he is talking about God’s wrath against unrepentant, unsaved sinners, which Paul contrasts with the grace that repentant believers receive.

Paul’s statement in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 regarding believers not being appointed to suffer wrath has nothing to do with the end-times events.

The Holy Spirit has been referred to as “God-in-action” because the Old Testament accents what he does rather than what he is.

The most common metaphor used for Christ’s coming is the thief in the night, which teaches the sudden, unexpected, unforeseen nature of Christ’s coming.

The most common warning given by Christ and his Apostles regarding Christ’s return was that it would be sudden, unexpected, without signs, and without warning.

The last book of the New Testament is called “Revelation” because it reveals or unveils Christ as the victorious Lamb in God’s redemptive plan.

The genre of Apocalyptic uses images, symbols, descriptions that are wild and bizarre, to describe history, events, people, spiritual reality, and theology in picturesque ways.

We should always read Apocalyptic writings knowing that we are dealing with symbolic language that the original author and readers understood within their worldview, and we must understand it as they did.

Apocalyptic writings often use Recapitulation: Describing the same series of events more than once using different language to provide additional insight.

The apocalyptic portions of Revelation use recapitulation and should not be read as strictly chronological.

Numerous Jewish and Christian apocalypses were written between 200 BC and 200 AD, describing the struggle of God's people against spiritual evil and ungodly rulers.

In anticipating Christ's return, believers must guard their thoughts because thoughts build character, which influences one's eternal destiny.

We must read the ancient text with ancient eyes and hear it with ancient ears.

We are to comfort and edify fellow believers with the reminder that no evil has overtaken us except what is common to humankind.

When writing religious texts, ancient authors used numbers primarily as symbols pointing toward other meanings, such as theological truths.

To insist that biblical numbers must be literalistically precise is to reject the original meaning, and force modern secular meanings onto the biblical text.

Biblical authors usually thought of numbers as symbolic rather than precisely mathematical (literal).

Some advocates of the futurist view of Bible prophecy hurt its reputation by naming a current world figure as the antichrist.

The Apostle John said in 1 John that the spirit of antichrist was already at work in the world and many antichrists already existed.

Some believe that the power which now holds back the power of lawlessness is the true church or believers in whom the Holy Spirit dwells.

Many Christian scholars have always believed that the power which now holds back the power of lawlessness is Michael and the holy angels.

The New Testament writers viewed God's plan and people as flowing in continuity from Old Testament Israel into Jesus Christ, in whom God's People were resurrected, recreated, restored.

According to Jesus and the apostle Paul, all of the Old Covenant promises are fulfilled in Jesus Christ and His Kingdom, either now or in the age to come.

The martyrs under the altar (fifth seal) are those who give their lives as witnesses for Christ.

The last three trumpet judgments are sometimes called the three "woes."

Personal eschatology refers to the destiny of the individual after physical death.

The Christian church has always believed that the people of God will dwell with Him eternally.

The majority tradition in the Christian church has always believed that eternal conscious torment in hell is the destiny of all who are not a part of the People of God.

A minority tradition in the Christian church has always believed that those who are not a part of God's People will ultimately be annihilated in hell, ceasing to exist.

Conditional immortality says the idea that all humans have an immortal soul comes from Greek philosophy not biblical theology, and that only God and those who are in Christ have eternal life.

The amillennial position on Israel's role in end-time events is that the prophecies of a restored Israel are fulfilled in Christ and the Church.

Dispensationalism was invented in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by John Darby and was popularized in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by C. I. Scofield.

The gospels use many Old Testament motifs and events of Israel to portray Jesus as the authentic Jew, the true Israel: The True Vine, the seed of Abraham, the Son of David, the Son of Man, and so forth.

According to Scripture, the last days began with the First Coming of Messiah Jesus and continue until his Second Coming.

Almost all of the wild speculation and predictions about Christ's return are done by Dispensationalists.

The Apostles wrote the New Testament as fulfilling the Old Testament in the person and work of Jesus Christ, and in the People he was redeeming from every nation.

Jesus is prophesied to be a suffering servant by the prophet Isaiah.

Those who believe in a literal millennium believe that the government will be a theocracy under Christ.

Biblical authors used the number "1,000" symbolically to mean a very long time, or all the time that was necessary, rather than precisely 1,000.

The Book of Hebrews teaches that the Old Testament temple and all of its sacrifices have been done away with forever because they have been fulfilled forever in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Those who believe in a literal millennium say that at the end of the millennium Satan is released from the abyss to deceive and test one last time.

The apocalyptic visions of Revelation 6-18 are best understood as recapitulations of the same events, not as a chronological succession of different events.

In Matthew 24-25, Jesus answer his disciples' two questions, first about the destruction of the Jewish Temple (24:4-34), and then about his Second Coming (24:35-25:46).

In Matthew 24's analogy with Noah, those "taken" are taken for judgment, and those "left behind" are left behind for salvation.

We are commanded to make disciples, but never to look for or speculate about signs of the end of the age and of Christ's return.

The warning most often repeated about Christ's return is that it will be sudden, unexpected, with no sign, no warning, and no time to prepare, therefore we must always be ready.

The Assemblies of God founding father who wrote most of our first Statement of Fundamental Truths believed in two raptures, one coming of Christ to the Earth, and that part of the church would be left behind to go through the Tribulation.

Apocalyptic figurative (collapsing universe) language was used in prophecies by Isaiah about Babylon, by Ezekiel about Egypt, and by Jesus Christ about Jerusalem's fall in 70 AD. The prophecies were all fulfilled, empires fell, epochs changed, but no stars ever fell because that is always figurative language.