

## Eschatology Overview - The Blessed Hope

*"<sup>13</sup>While continuing to expect the blessed fulfillment of our certain hope, which is the appearing of the Shekinah of our great God and the appearing of our Deliverer, Yeshua the Messiah." (Titus 2:13, JNT). "<sup>13</sup>We wait for the blessed hope and appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior, Messiah Yeshua" (Titus 2:13, TLV).*

### I. Introduction

- **Eschatology** is the study of the last days (things) or events.
- This is intimately related with the Apocalyptic writings in Scripture which deal with the Revelation and Second Coming of **Messiah Yeshua**.
- **Eschatology** is the object of much speculation and theories.
- It is not easy to understand because Scriptural Prophecy is not fully comprehended until **after** its fulfillment.

### II. Theories Concerning the **Second Coming of Messiah Yeshua**

- A. Theories related to the **Millennial Kingdom** of **Messiah**.
1. Pre-Millennial: Teaches that **Yeshua** will return to earth before the Millennial Kingdom.
  2. Post-Millennial: Teaches that **Yeshua** will return to earth after the Millennial Kingdom.
  3. A-Millennial: Teaches that there will be no Millennial Kingdom, and that **Yeshua** will not return to earth but rather the earth will progress gradually until it reaches a true peaceful era.
- B. Theories related to the **Tribulation**.
1. What is the **Tribulation**?
    - a) A period of seven years that will take place before the millennial reign of **Messiah**.
    - b) It is divided into two periods of three- and one-half years.
      - (i) The first three- and one-half years are called the **Tribulation**.
      - (ii) The second three- and one-half years are called the **Great Tribulation** or **Indignation**.
    - c) It involves both the pouring of wrath of God over the world as well as the repressive dictatorship of the man of sin.
  2. Pre-Tribulation: Teaches that **Messiah** will return before the seven-year tribulation period and will rapture the church taking her unto the heavens to remain there until the period of seven years has concluded.
  3. Mid-Tribulation: Teaches that **Yeshua** will return in the middle of the seven-year tribulation period and will rapture the church taking her unto the heavens to remain there until the period of great tribulation (the last 3½ years) has concluded.
  4. Post-Tribulation: Teaches that **Messiah** will return at the conclusion of the seven-year tribulation period.

### III. When Will Yeshua Return?

- A. **Hebrews 1:12-13**: "<sup>12</sup>And like a robe You will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed; but You are the same, and Your years shall never end. <sup>13</sup>But to which of the angels has He ever said, 'Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet?'"
1. Yeshua will not return to earth until it is time for the destruction of the enemies of God.
  2. He will remain at the right hand of the Father until that moment.

B. **2 Thessalonians 2**

**2** <sup>1</sup>Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, concerning the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah and our gathering together to Him, <sup>2</sup>not to get shaken out of your mind or disturbed – either by a spirit or a word or a letter as if through us – as though the Day of the Lord has come. <sup>3</sup>Let no one deceive you in any way, for the Day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the one destined to be destroyed <sup>4</sup>He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits in the Temple of God, proclaiming himself that he is God. <sup>5</sup>Don't you remember that when I was still with you I was telling you these things? <sup>6</sup>And you know what now holds back, for him to be revealed in his own time. <sup>7</sup>For the mystery of lawlessness is already operating; only there is one who holds back just

*now, until he is taken out of the way. <sup>8</sup>Then the lawless one will be revealed. The Lord Yeshua will slay him with the breath of His mouth and wipe him out with the appearance of His coming (2 Thess. 2:1-8)*

1. Evidently this letter responds to a misunderstanding of the first letter to the Thessalonians, especially verses 4:11-13.
  2. This letter was written to clarify certain points regarding the timing and events that would precede the second coming of the *Messiah*.
- C. Paul's Scriptural sources for the knowledge to establish the events that precede the return of *Messiah*?
1. *Daniel 7*  
Daniel had a vision of the coming kingdoms, which would culminate with a fourth kingdom that would have ten horns or divisions of power. Out of these would come a small horn (power) that will defeat three of the ten horns leaving seven and becoming itself the eighth. This power, whom Paul identified as the *man of sin*, will exalt himself and in the process makes war against the saints of the Most High. The duration of this war by the small horn is **3½ years** ("*until a time and times and the dividing of time.*") The end of his reign of terror over the saints of the Most High will take place when the Ancient of Days comes and establishes the Kingdom of God.
  2. *Daniel 8*  
The history of Daniel 7 is repeated, and another historical example is used. Antiochus Epiphanes was that small horn that came out of the ranks of the Greek Empire to torment Israel. When he first came to Israel, he was thought to be a liberator from the hands of Ptolemy (of Egypt); and was initially accepted by the people. After **3½ years** he began a reign of terror, culminating in the defiling of the Holy Place by the sacrificing of a pig. At the end he was judged and died (without hands, *vv. 25*). The duration of the reign of Antiochus was 2,400 days or seven years.  
The man of sin will also reign for seven years, with the last **3½ years** being a reign of terror, when he will proclaim himself as *god* and will try to destroy the righteous seed. At the end of the tribulation, he will be destroyed by the breath (*pneumas* or spirit) of *Yeshua's* mouth (without hands).
- D. In Daniel 7 and 8 we can identify the time of the return of *Messiah* in relation to the tribulation: "*I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom... and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.*"
- E. This will fulfill Paul's predictions in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 8.
- F. Throughout Scripture we find not a trace of a secret coming or return of the *Messiah*. His second coming is destined to be a splendid return. He will return with **great power and glory**.

#### ***IV. Yeshua Teaches the Truth About His Second Coming***

- A. If anybody knows anything about the Lord's second coming, that person is *Yeshua* himself.
- B. *Yeshua* delineates a chronology about His coming in Mathew 24
  1. *Yeshua* answers three questions
    - (i) When will these things happen? (The destruction of Jerusalem)
    - (ii) And what will be the sign that you are coming?
    - (iii) And what will be the sign that the *Olam Hazeh* is ending (end of the age)?
  2. *Yeshua*, while answering, presents a detailed summary of the events that will precede His coming.
- C. The key to this chronology is in Mathew 24:21-22

*"<sup>21</sup>For then there will be great trouble (great tribulation, KJV), such as has not happened since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. <sup>22</sup>And unless those days were cut short, no one would be delivered. But for the sake of the chosen, those days will be cut short."*

  1. Key points in these verses
    - a) The tribulation is the **great tribulation**.

- (i) Never since the beginning of the world was there anything like it.
- (ii) There will never be anything like it again.
  - (a) It has not happened; else it would have been fulfilled when Titus destroyed Jerusalem.
  - (b) It will come to pass at the end of time in accordance with the description in Revelation.
- b) The elect will be on the earth during the tribulation.
  - (i) If the length of this time had not been limited, no one would survive.
  - (ii) for the sake of those who have been chosen, its length will be limited.
2. The description of the great tribulation is central in the chronology.
  - a) He refers to this description when he describes the events that will happen afterwards, immediately after those days.
  - b) He tells us where the elect will be at the time this takes place.
- D. Events that will take place after the great tribulation.

*"<sup>29</sup>But immediately after the trouble of those days, 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light and the stars will fall from heaven & the powers of the heavens will be shaken.' <sup>30</sup>Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven & then all the tribes of the land will mourn, and they will see 'the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven' with power & great glory. <sup>31</sup>He will send out His angels with a great shofar & they will gather together His chosen from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other*

  1. Key points in these verses
    - a) Immediately after the tribulation there will be astronomical signs.
    - b) After these signs in the heavens, they will see the sign of *Son of Man* appearing in the sky.
    - c) Then afterwards the nations of the world will mourn.
    - d) As they mourn, they will see the *Son of Man* coming with tremendous glory and power.
      - (i) Fulfilling Daniel 7:13
      - (ii) Confirming Revelation 1:7 (*"Look, He is coming with the clouds & every eye shall see Him, even those who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth shall mourn because of Him. Yes, amen!"*)
    - e) Then *Yeshua* will send His angels to gather up (rapture, seize violently) the elect.
      - (i) The action of gathering the elect is truly the rapture or seizure or ingathering.
      - (ii) The *rapture* or *ingathering* will take place at the last *shofar* blast (*"in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last shofar. For the shofar will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed" 1 Corinthians 15:52*) or the seventh sounding of the *shofar* (*"<sup>15</sup>Then the seventh angel trumpeted, and there were loud voices in heaven saying, "The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Anointed One. And He shall reign forever and ever!" Revelation 11:15*)
  2. The second coming of *Messiah* and the rapture will occur after the great tribulation has finished and not a moment earlier, thereby invalidating all pre-tribulation doctrines.
  3. There is not even the most minimum hint of a secret rapture or a secret coming.
  4. If the *Messiah* does not understand His own coming, there is no one else that can understand it.

#### V. The Correct Interpretation of 1 Thess. 4:13-18

- A. Confirms the chronology that *Yeshua* established in [Mathew 24](#)
- B. Begins with words of comfort for those believers that were worried about those who had died:

*"<sup>13</sup>Now we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest who have no hope."*

  1. The hope of the good news is that those that died *Messiah* will be resurrected in *Messiah*.
  2. Those that have resurrected will descend from heaven with *Yeshua*.
  3. The resurrection occurs in the heavens:
    - (i) *"<sup>1</sup>For we know that if the tent, our earthly home, is torn down, we have a building from God—a home not made with human hands, eternal in the heavens. <sup>2</sup>For in this we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling" (2 Cor 5:1-2)*

- (a) The just will be in paradise (*"Yeshua said to him, "Yes! I promise that you will be with me today in Gan-Eden" (Luke 23:43)*)
  - (b) Gan Eden is the third heaven (*"I know a man in union with the Messiah who fourteen years ago was snatched up to the third heaven; whether he was in the body or outside the body I don't know, God knows.<sup>4</sup> was snatched into Gan-Eden and heard things that cannot be put into words, things unlawful for a human being to utter" (2 Cor. 12:2,4)*)
  - (c) The souls of the just will be in the third heaven awaiting the resurrection (*"When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been put to death for proclaiming the Word of God, that is, for bearing witness.<sup>10</sup> They cried out in a loud voice, "Sovereign Ruler, HaKadosh, the True One, how long will it be before you judge the people living on earth and avenge our blood?" (Rev. 6:9-10)*)
  - (ii) Confirmed in: *"Moreover, Chanoch, in the seventh generation starting with Adam, also prophesied about these men, saying, 'Look! Adonai came with his myriads of holy ones<sup>15</sup> to execute judgment against everyone, that is, to convict all the godless for their godless deeds which they have done in such a godless way & for all the harsh words these godless sinners have spoken against him'" (Jude 14-15)*
- C. Order of events during the second coming of *Messiah*
- 1. *"do who have nothing to hope for. For since we believe that Yeshua died and rose again, we also believe that in the same way God, through Yeshua, will take with him those who have died.<sup>15</sup> When we say this, we base it on the Lord's own word: we who remain alive when the Lord comes will certainly not take precedence over those who have died.<sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a rousing cry, with a call from one of the ruling angels, and with God's Shofar; those who died united with the Messiah will be the first to rise" (1 Thess. 4:14-16)*
    - a) The living will not precede the dead.
    - b) The dead will rise first.
    - c) The Lord will descend at the moment of the resurrection.
    - d) This takes place at the last sounding of the *shofar* of *Rev. 11:15*
  - 2. *"then we who are left still alive will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus, we will always be with the Lord.<sup>18</sup> So encourage each other with these words." Vv. 17*
    - a) According to the order of events that will take place during the second coming of *Messiah* the rapture takes place after the resurrection.
    - b) Both the rapture and the resurrection will take place in a moment: *"It will take but a moment, the blink of an eye, at the final Shofar." (1 Cor. 15:52)*
      - (i) All will be transformed, both living and the dead.
      - (ii) At the sound of the last *shofar* (*Rev. 11:15*)
    - c) The living will be seized (caught up or raptured) to meet with the Lord coming with the resurrected ones.
    - d) The encounter takes place in the air (atmosphere)
    - e) Afterwards, the living and the dead in *Messiah* will be with the Lord forever.
- D. What is the rapture?
- 1. From the Latin *rapio*, to be seized violently.
  - 2. It is not an escape mechanism.
    - (i) Some believe that it is an escape onto heaven.
    - (ii) The escape of the *Bride of Messiah*
    - (iii) Some believe it was designed so that the just on the earth can escape the Great Tribulation.
  - 3. It is an ingathering mechanism (*Matt. 13*).
    - (i) The angels will gather in the elect.
    - (ii) This ingathering is for the purpose of meeting the Lord.
    - (iii) The Lord is coming to judge the earth and establish His Millennial Kingdom, and obviously not to go back to heaven immediately.