

## What Does the Bible Say About End-Times?

The book of Revelation was written by John during a time when the early church was going through extremely severe persecution by Nero (he would flay Christians alive). God originally gave this vision of the future to John, first, to give hope to the persecuted early church.

Many of the teachings are debated by theologians (and the terminology can get very confusing).

**Systematic Theology:** Phil and I take a systematic approach to the study of scripture. This means we take the Bible as a whole to interpret passages, Old Testament and New Testament. The Bible is like a huge jig-saw puzzle and the pieces need to fit correctly to properly interpret the scripture. Some theologians will build their case on one passage or reading, this is where various theories conflict. Note, Phil's biblical studies consist of Tennessee Temple (Independent Baptist), John Brown University (Inter-Denominational), and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, providing a well-rounded background in biblical studies. He was also affiliated with Assembly of God churches in his youth. His role as military chaplain also helps him understand and respect the various views of theology. Debbie, grew up Catholic, attended a Southern Baptist High School, and graduated from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Rapture:** Greek for *caught up*, when Christ comes for the believers, 1<sup>st</sup> coming of Christ (after His ascension).

- **Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17.

Theologians have different theories of when the rapture takes place. Some believe before the tribulation, some believe half-way through the tribulation, and others believe at the end. Still others believe our present time is the tribulation period.

Some theologians call this the "Second-Coming" of Christ, others disagree. In the rapture, Jesus does not set foot on earth, he raptures the church. Phil and I do not consider this event the second-coming of Christ but first (after His ascension).

Phil and I support **Pre-Tribulation** theories.

- **Scripture:** Revelation 3:10

(God spoke these words (Revelation 3:10) to the Church of Philadelphia (brotherly love). While some believe these words were for a literal early church, others believe this passage represents the true believing church and/or the different time-periods of church, while others believe it's both, the early church and the true believing church.) Because the book of Revelation is full of symbolism, it goes to reason that the Church of Philadelphia would represent the true believers church (and perhaps a literal church as-well).

**Note:** As far as signs of the end-time, we see the fulfillment of all the signs prophesied. However, we are waiting on the timing of world situations to where satan's anti-Christ is accepted as the one world leader after all of the true believers are raptured (according to our understanding of the rapture, see below).

**Tribulation:** 7- years of suffering with 3.5 less bad and 3.5 extremely bad. The *Great Tribulation* is taught in several books of the Bible, including Daniel, Zephaniah, and Revelation. Several misconceptions exist regarding the anti-Christ and the Tribulation period. This webpage discusses the Tribulation and addresses the misconceptions:  
<https://christinprophecy.org/articles/the-great-tribulation> [Click Here](#)

**Armageddon:** This is the final battle before the “Great Day of the Lord.”

**Scripture:** Revelation 16: 13-16 and Revelation 19: 17-19.

Revelation 16 discusses 7 “Bowls of God’s Wrath.” The *Battle of Armageddon* is the sixth bowl. (From our understanding of scripture, we believe believers will not be on earth during this time, this all happens after the rapture of the true church. Why would God pour out His wrath on His children? He wouldn’t, it goes against everything the scripture says about God’s relationship with His children. Yes, He disciplines us and allows us to go through test, He does not have wrath against us.

**Second-Coming of Christ:** This is the time Christ returns again after the Battle of Armageddon and sets His foot on Mount Olive.

- **Scripture:** Zechariah 7:1-14 and also, *Revelation 19:11-21*

**Millennium:** (Millennium, Latin for 1,000 years) This happens after Armageddon and the Second-Coming, when satan is bound for 1,000 years. The Christians get their rewards and reign either in heaven or on earth. Today, there are four major views: *Amillennial* (*St Augustine, Catholics, others*), *Historical Premillennial Protestant* (Fuller & Trinity Evangelical Divinity, others), *Dispensational Premillennial* (Dallas Theological Seminary, David Jeremiah, Charles Stanley, others), and *Postmillennial* (less popular today after WWII ruined their millennium).

Phil and I support a mix of Historical Premillennial view and Dispensational Premillennial.

**Historical Premillennial defined:** Christ will reign for a thousand years (whether years are symbolic or figurative, uncertain) following His second- coming; saints will be resurrected at the beginning of the millennium, nonbelievers at the end, followed by judgement.

**Scripture:** Revelation 20: 1-10

**Chart:** Here’s link to a chart overviewing the 4 views [https://www.fivesolas.com/esc\\_chrt.htm](https://www.fivesolas.com/esc_chrt.htm)

**Satan’s Release:** After the 1,000 years satan is released for a short period.

- **Scripture Revelation 20: 8- 9**

**Final Battle:** Scripture (Revelation 20:8-9) indicates some type of battle between Satan and Jesus (the saints are there as backup reserves). Whether Gog and Magog are literal or figurative, is uncertain.

**Lake of Fire:** Satan is eternally defeated! Satan and his demons are cast into the Lake of Fire!

- **Scripture:** Revelation 20:10-11

**Second Resurrection & Final Judgement:** The second resurrection refers to the unbelievers who passed away and were not resurrected during the rapture. The final judgement is described by Jesus in Scripture.

- **Scripture:** Matthew 25:31-46.
- **Scripture:** Revelation 20: 11-15

**New Heaven and New Earth:** God makes all things new!

- **Scripture:** Revelation 21:1

**New Jerusalem:**

- **Scripture:** Revelation 21:2-5

**4 Areas of Agreement:** All four major theories of end-times all agree in these areas. 1.) The great red dragon in Revelation 12:3 represents Satan. 2.) The second death in Revelation 20:6 represents spiritual death and eternal separation from God. 3.) The new heavens and earth found in Revelation 12:1 represents a new order; redeemed earth. 4.) New Jerusalem represents God dwelling with His saints in the new age after all other end-time events. (From *Holman Book of Biblical Charts, maps, and reconstructions, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993, pgs. 92, 94.*)

**Christian Eschatology:** I would compare Eschatology to a treasure map searching for the hidden treasure. You could spend a life-time studying the end-times and still have questions or be proven wrong in the end. The Bible is a book of faith. God gives us clues for the end-times. For Phil and I, we see enough clues to hope for the rapture before the Tribulation period. If that is the case, many things described (Mark of the Beast, 144,000 saints, horrific suffering, etc) will happen after the true church departs in the rapture. Revelation was given to John, first, to the first century Christians hope as they went through horrific suffering under Nero. Christians suffer severely today in many parts of the world. One fact all Christians agree upon, Jesus wins, we win too when we put our trust in Him. As believers, **we are not without hope!** God's Word, His Son, His Holy Spirit gives believers a solid foundation "like an anchor to our soul" (Hebrews

6:19).” If you have not put your trust in Him, you can do that right now! Here’s a lovely song that you can sing to Him as a prayer [click here](#). (TheSalvationPoem.com, Matt & Sherry MacPherson)

*Jesus you died upon the cross,  
And rose again to save the lost.  
Forgive me now of all my sin,  
Come be my savior, lord and friend.  
Change my life and make it new,  
And help me lord to live for you.*