

Sermon Notes

First Presbyterian Church, Spartanburg, SC
David Renwick, February 14, 2010

APOCALYPSE! IS THE END NEAR?

Psalms 31:15 "My times are in your hand"

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to proclaim,
"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

Matthew 6: 10 "Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven"

The Questions the Bible Itself Asks . . . especially injustice & evil

A. Is there *any* solution?

Job . . . in the unknowable will of God

Is the solution *on earth*?

Deuteronomy . . . leads to restoration of Land/Jerusalem/Temple

Is the solution *in heaven? In the future?*

Daniel, Ezekiel . . . *Jesus, Revelation*

. . . leads to belief in promised land/ new Jerusalem/the real temple . . .

B. Is the solution by *taking action*?

Our responsibility?

Is the solution by *waiting for God*?

Not our responsibility?

C. Are any unbelievers *good guys*? Persia (Cyrus) . . . Romans?

(Romans 13)

Are all unbelievers *bad guys*? Greeks . . . Romans? (Revelation)

Two Responses in the Bible

The Basic Prophets

Try Harder!!! And all will be well!!! . . . **BUT JOB!!!!!!**

Rise of Apocalyptic

(*Apocalupsis* is the Greek word for 'reveal')

No solution in "this age" but only in another age

e.g., the "latter days" (E.g., Isaiah 2)

Are the last days within "time"?

Are the last days short or long (a whole "era")?

If the last days are beyond time, when will they be?

SUMMARY OF APOCALYPTIC THINKING

. . . *Matthew 24, I & II Thessalonians, Revelation*

1. History is moving toward a climax
2. Evil is real
3. What seems permanent/unconquerable is not
4. We can catch important glimpses of God's work ; but not the whole
5. We are accountable! Be faithful! Watch! . . .
6. God is in charge and WILL destroy evil and vindicate faithfulness
 - this will begin with the coming of Messiah (Hebrew) = Christ (Greek).
 - Messiah's presence will inaugurate the Messianic Age = the Latter Days
 - The Prophets -- Isaiah 2:1-4; 11:1-3
 - 'Apocalyptic' Literature – Ezekiel 17 (post Exile); Daniel 7

BUT

7. Christ/Messiah *has* come, and not all is well!

He was going to be a *Warrior*

. . . he turns out to be a *Lamb!* (see John the Baptist, Lk.7:19)

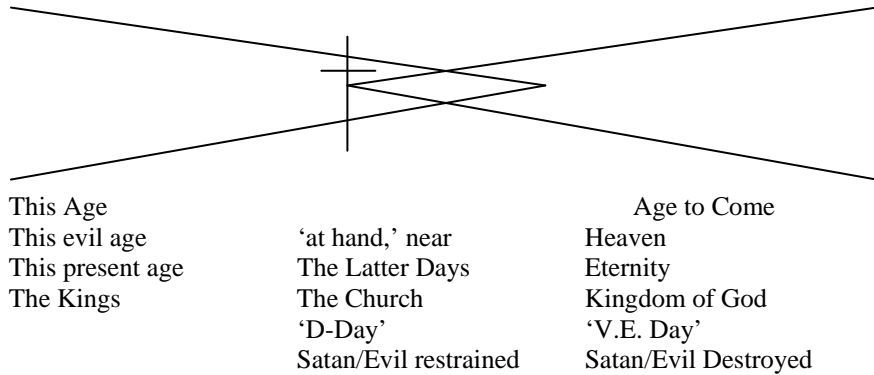
8. Therefore, *there must be* another Coming

Apostles' Creed – Christ comes for redemption *and* for judgment

Scripture: Teaching of Jesus' Teaching, Acts, Paul

Personal	[Acts 1:11], John 14:3, 21:20-23
Unexpected	Matt 24:32-52, 25:1-13
No one knows	Mk 13:32, [1 Thess 5:1,2]
Be Prepared	Matt 24:44
Sudden	Matt 24: 27, Luke 17:24
Signs	Luke 21:9 wars, rumors Matt 24:14, Spread of Gospel; Matt 13:24-30 wheat & tares
bodily, visible	Matt 24:30, [Rev. 1:7, Acts 1:11]
glorious	Mark 8:38, Luke 9:26 [Titus 2:11-13]

THE DIVINE TIME – LINE: THE OVERLAP OF THE AGES



‘Prophetic Fore-shortening’



KEY MILLENIAL TEXTS AND VIEWS

Revelation 20:1-6 (mentions the millenium)

¹Then I saw an *angel* coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the *bottomless pit and a great chain*. ²He seized the *dragon, that ancient serpent*, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him *for a thousand years*, ³and threw him into the pit, and locked and sealed it over him, so that he would deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be let out *for a little while*.

⁴ Then I saw thrones, and those seated on them were given authority to judge. I also saw *the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God*. They had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ *for a thousand years*. ⁵(The rest of the dead did not come to life until *the thousand years* were ended.) This is the first resurrection.

Matthew 24:40-41 [read in the context of 24:36-44] (mentions “left behind” = the rapture)

³⁶ **But about that day and hour no one knows**, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ **Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.** ⁴¹ **Two women will be grinding meat together; one will be taken and one will be left.** ⁴² Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

Daniel 12:1-3 (mentions tribulation)

¹At **that time** Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be *a time of anguish*, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. ²*Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* ³Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

2 Peter 3: 8-10

⁸But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that *with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.* ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is *patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.* ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

1. Post-Millennial NOW - 1000 years is figurative

Bringing in a golden age

A long period of righteousness and peace; world eventually Christianized

= OT Latter days; see Is. 9:11; Ps 22:27

= Parables - “leaven” Matt 13:33; Christ’s eventual return

2. A-Millennial NOW - 1000 years is figurative

The present reign of Christ through the Church, or the reign of the “saints” in the church triumphant; Ends with Christ’s sudden return

3. Pre-Millennial FUTURE - literal 1000 years: 2 Phase Return

a. The Rapture (Matt.24:21, Dan.12:1)

Christ comes for the church, his bride, Either pre-tribulation

Or post-tribulation

b. The Revelation

Subdues the anti-christ, Brings in a 1000 year reign of peace

1000 years ends with brief, fierce satanic rebellion, and ultimate resurrection.