

The Plumb Line of End Time Bible Prophecy

1. Introduction

- A. Today/tonight, I am here to speak on the topic of end time Bible prophecy.
- B. I could teach on numerous topics that you have heard many times before (the rapture, 2nd coming, the tribulation, mark of the beast, millennium, the final judgment, etc.).
- C. I can say things that would confirm things that you already know.
- D. Do you want to hear another message about Bible prophecy, or you want to hear some solid biblical information that could challenge your understanding of the end times?
- E. Many would never consider changing how they view the rapture and the second coming because they are so invested in their system of interpretation.
- F. Many Christians, rather than investigating the biblical merit of other views, dismiss them as untrue. Even in the face of strong biblical evidence that may conflict with their belief, they do not want to change.
- G. If you are up to the challenge, I believe you may find what I am going to share with you very fascinating. At least it was for me.
- H. I want to follow the biblical evidence, no matter where it leads.
- I. If I need to change my eschatological beliefs to conform to the scriptures, then I want to do just that.

2. Opening Statement

- A. I am going to share several passages that are not ambiguous, but very clear statements of scripture concerning the second coming of Christ. I call them the “*Plumb Line of Bible Eschatology*”
- B. Once you see the clarity these passages, I believe you will take what I am saying seriously.

3. The Popular Eschatological View in the Church Today

- A. Premillennial Dispensationalism (literal interpretation of Revelation & Daniel).
- B. Two peoples/two plans of God; one for Israel, and one for the Church.
- C. Pretribulation rapture (involves multiple resurrections).
- D. Two comings of Christ; Rapture/secret & 2nd coming/public.
- E. Seven-year tribulation where God’s wrath is poured out.
- F. Antichrist, abomination of desolation, mark of the beast, battle of Armageddon
- G. Daniel’s 70 Week Prophecy (gap interpretation).
- H. Futurist interpretation method of the Book of Revelation.
- I. Literal 1,000-year (Millennium) kingdom age.
- J. Final rebellion at end of millennium that brings in the Eternal State.

Note: This view was not developed until the 19th century by John Nelson Darby. There are some claims that some early church fathers held this view, but no influence of it until the 19th -20th centuries, being a modern view of the church. How has this been overlooked for nearly 2 thousand years? Its newness does not mean it is incorrect, but it does call for serious biblical evaluation (Berean Example in Acts 17).

In challenging this eschatological model, there needs to be sound biblical/scriptural evidence to lead to difference conclusions on the unfolding of prophetic events.

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4. Main Points forming My Eschatological View:

- A. Following proper hermeneutical principles (reading the Bible correctly). (Ch 2)
- B. One resurrection of the dead marking the end of death. (Plumb Line) (Ch 5&6)
- C. Reevaluating the Olivet Discourse from the parallel gospel accounts and Josephus's book "The Jewish Wars." (Ch 15 &16)
- D. Date of the writing of the Book of Revelation (Early Date vs. Late Date) (Ch 15)
- E. Proper interpretation of the pronoun "he" in Daniel 9:27 (Ch 7)

5. The Plumb Line Metaphor – 1 Corinthians 15:20-26; 51-54

- A. A plumb line is a light line with a weight (plumb bob) at one end that, when suspended next to a workpiece, defines a vertical line.
- B. Painters and carpenters use plumb lines to keep their work straight.
- C. 1 Corinthians 15:54 provides the straight line in which all Bible prophecies concerning the end of the age must line up with. Must harmonize scriptures to agree with this fact.
- D. 1 Cor. 15:54 states that the resurrection (verses 51-53) is the fulfillment of Isaiah 25:8.
- E. All prophetic events must be interpreted in such a way that they will stay true with the timing of when death shall be abolished forever. This is an established biblical fact.
- F. Jesus teaches there is ONE physical resurrection of the dead – **John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15**.
- G. There can be no pretribulation rapture since death will occur during the tribulation and even in the millennium. **THIS IS BASED ON SCRIPTURE!**
- H. Since death is abolished forever at the 2nd coming, there cannot be a thousand-year age where death still occurs. This conclusion is drawn **BASED ON SCRIPTURE!**
- I. Does this information alter your view of the end time events? (Interpretative grid used).

6. Scriptures that serve as plumb lines or parameters that should establish the foundation upon which our eschatological beliefs rest.

- A. Parameter – a set of facts or a fixed limit that establishes how something can or must happen or be done. Is another term to describe what I call plumb lines verses.
- B. Biblical references:
 - The end of death forever (1 Cor. 15:54).
 - One universal resurrection of all the dead (John 5:28-29).
 - The resurrection occurs at the "last day" (singular), namely the end of physical time (eschaton) and the beginning of eternal time (new heavens & new earth).
 - No one knows the day of Christ's 2nd coming (Matt. 24:42-44; Mk 13:32-33).
 - Christ comes in a visible like manner as He ascended to Heaven (Acts 1:9-11).
- C. Entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 15 sets the stage concerning resurrection & end of death.

7. Overview of the Olivet Discourse

- A. Jesus answers disciples' questions concerning the destruction of the temple – Matt 24:4
- B. The signs Jesus gives are for the destruction of the temple & Jerusalem in A.D. 70
- C. Jesus coming in the clouds (Matt 24:30) is prophetic language of coming judgment (Isaiah 13:9-13), not His physical return.
- D. All these things/signs will take place in the generation of the 1st century (not the 21st).
- E. The days of Noah (and Lot) analogy gives the paradigm for the 2nd coming of Christ.
- F. This interpretation of the Olivet Discourse should serve as the basis for interpreting Revelation, which is John's expanded version of the Olivet Discourse in apocalyptic language.

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8. Two Eschatological Models (*two possible sets of circumstances for Christ's return*)

A. Tribulation/God's Wrath Model (preceded by signs)

- Seven-year tribulation of God's wrath being poured out / mark of the beast
- The rapture & 2nd coming are separate events (except post trib. rapture view)
- Rebuilt 3rd Jewish Temple & reinstitution of blood sacrifices.
- Multiple resurrections of the dead
- Literal 1,000-year kingdom age of Christ ruling on earth
- Two peoples/plans of God (Israel & The Church)

B. Days of Noah Paradigm (no preceding signs)

- Surprise nature of Christ's return/eschaton (like Pear Harbor & 9/11 attacks)
- One second coming, rapture and 2nd coming are simultaneous events
- Reprobate Society/Culture as typified by the days of Noah & Lot
- God's people will be oppressed/vexed by the filthy/depraved conduct of the wicked.
- The wrath of the Lamb poured out at Christ's second coming.
- One resurrection, one end time battle, one final judgment.

1 Corinthians 15 & Olivet Discourse Combined Timeline

