

A Brief Outline of Future Events

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Introduction

Many people are unclear about what the Bible teaches about the future. But in the Bible, God is very clear. We can't know all the details, but following is what we do know, arranged chronologically.

0. Your Own Death – Hebrews 9:27, 1 Corinthians 15:22

- A. Believers: Body to the grave, spirit to heaven. Next event: judgment seat of Christ, see 1.E. below.
- B. Unbelievers: Body to the grave, spirit to Hades. Next event: Great White Throne judgment, see 5.A. and 5.B. below.
- C. Question: Are you ready?

1. Rapture – 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 1 Corinthians 15:51-54, Revelation 3:10

- A. Raising of the dead "in Christ" in physical but glorified bodies.
- B. Transformation of those who are alive, also "in Christ," to glorified bodies.
- C. Can happen at any moment today or in the near or far future.
- D. Question: Are you ready?
- E. Followed by the judgment seat of Christ – 2 Cor. 5:9-10, Romans 14:10.

2. Tribulation – Revelation 6–19

- A. Martyring of many believers.
- B. Time of judgment for Israel.
- C. The Church is not present on the earth.
- D. Bible teaches that this will last 7 years (Daniel 9:27), divisible into two parts.

3. Second Advent (Coming) of Christ – Revelation 19:11

- A. Raising of the OT saints and Tribulation saints.
- B. The first resurrection is now complete – Revelation 20:5-6.
- C. Inauguration of the kingly reign of Christ on earth - Matthew 25:31.
- D. Judgment of living people, some sheep and others goats – Matthew 25:32.

4. Millennial Kingdom (1000 Year Kingdom) – Revelation 20:1-10

- A. Saints reign with Christ. Believers are vindicated in the very realm of their persecution. Christ is vindicated in the place where He was killed. Christ reigns and prospers in the realm where Adam failed. God's promises to Israel are fulfilled on the earth where Israel originally was.
- B. Satan is bound until the very end of the 1000 years when he is released briefly and then thrown into the lake of fire. He is not there presently (1 Peter 5:8).
- C. A time of blessing and peace on the earth.

5. Resurrection of Unbelievers and Their Final Judgment – Revelation 20:11-15

- A. The unsaved dead are raised to life in physical bodies.

- B. The Great White Throne Judgment, according to works. Works are always insufficient. None of these individuals are found in the book of life because all of the book-of-lifers were resurrected in the first resurrection (Revelation 20:5-6). Note well that there is not a single general resurrection. There are at least two resurrections, separated by 1000 years (Rev. 20:5).
- C. The second death – Revelation 20:14, 21:8.

6. The Eternal State: New Heavens and New Earth – Revelation 21-22

- A. Our earth is burned up and replaced with a new one. Revelation 21:1.
- B. A new version of Jerusalem, built in heaven for a dwelling of the saints, is installed on the earth. Revelation 21:2-3.
- C. Saints of all ages live together on the new earth in a perfect kingdom ruled by God.
- D. Question: Are you living appropriately in light of what is coming? 2 Peter 3:10-12.

7. Sidebar: God Will Dwell With His People and be Their God

The theme of God dwelling with his people and being their God is found throughout Scripture. A major intention or goal of God is to establish a relationship of loving fellowship with His people. The implementation of this goal in the millennial kingdom, and then the eternal kingdom, will bring honor to the triune God and blessing to His people.

1. Perfect fellowship was the way it was in the beginning. Genesis 3:8.
2. But this perfect fellowship was broken. Genesis 3:22-24.
3. It will be re-established in the future. Note the following texts of Scripture, from the Law, the prophets, the gospels, and the Pauline letters, and Revelation. They show that God's goal is to establish a permanent relationship with his people.

Exodus 6:7 I will take you as My people, and I will be your God.

Lev 26:11-12 Moreover, I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you. I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.

Ezekiel 11:20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances, and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God.

Ezekiel 36:28 "And you will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.

Ezekiel 37:23 "And they will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God.

Ezekiel 37:27 "My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him.

2 Corinthians 6:16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Hebrews 8:10 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Revelation 21:3 "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

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