

LAST THINGS (Eschatology)

- I. Representative Biblical references to "last" things.
 - A. Old Testament - Heb. word *achrith* - "that which comes after"
 - Isa. 2:2 - "In the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established..."
 - Jere. 49:39 - "in the last days I shall restore the fortunes of Elam"
 - Ezek. 38:16 - "in the last days I shall bring you against My land"
 - Hosea 3:5 - "they will come trembling to the Lord and to His goodness in the last days."
 - Micah 4:1 - "in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established"
 - B. New Testament - Greek word *eschatos* - "last in a sequence"
 - John 6:39,40,44,54 - "raise it/him up on the last day"
 - John 11:24 - "he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day"
 - John 12:48 - "will judge him at the last day"
 - Acts 2:17 - "In the last days I will pour forth of My Spirit"
 - I Cor. 15:26 - "the last enemy abolished will be death"
 - I Cor. 15:52 - "at the last trumpet, the dead will be raised imperishable"
 - II Tim. 3:1 - "in the last days difficult times will come"
 - Heb. 1:2 - "in these last days God has spoken to us in His Son"
 - I Pet. 1:5 - "a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time"
 - I Pet. 1:20 - "He has appeared in these last times for the sake of you"
 - II Pet. 3:3 - "in the last days mockers will come following their own lusts"
 - I Jn. 2:18 - "it is the last hour"
- II. A Biblical understanding of *eschatos*.
 - A. *Eschatos* implies the "last" in a sequence - cf. I Cor. 15:8
 - 1. Not necessarily end or terminus
 - 2. Not necessarily final events of a future time
 - B. Two avenues of eschatological consideration
 - 1. "Last things" for individuals - death, judgment, resurrection, after-life, etc.
 - 2. "Last things" concerning God's purposes in history.
 - C. Time can be divided into "past times" and "last times" - Heb. 1:1,2
 - 1. Complete period of "last times" - Acts 2:16; Heb. 1:2; II Pet. 1:20
 - 2. Specific period of "last days" of "last times" - Jn. 6:39,40,44, 11:24; 12:48; I Cor. 15:26,52; I Tim. 4:1; I Pet. 1:5; II Pet. 3:3; I Jn. 2:18
 - D. Differing perspectives of "last times"
 - 1. Jewish theology of old covenant looked to future for "last things"
 - 2. Christian theology of new covenant looks both to present fulfillment and future consummation of "last things"
 - E. Christianity views God's "last things" as fulfilled in Jesus Christ
 - 1. "Last days" inaugurated by the birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, Pentecostal outpouring of Jesus Christ.
 - 2. "Last things" fulfilled in the "finished work" of Jesus Christ - John 17:4; 19:30
 - 3. God's "last word" for the restoration of mankind is in His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - F. Christian eschatology must maintain a balance between the
 - 1. Already - the present, experienced, realized, inaugurated
 - 2. Not yet - the future, expected, anticipated, awaited

- III Biblical categories that evidence the "already" and "not yet" of "last things."
- A. Coming of Christ - *parousia*
 - 1. Already - II Pet. 1:6
 - 2. Not yet - I Cor. 15:23; I Thess. 2:19; 5:23; James 5:7,8
 - B. Appearing of Christ - *epiphaneia*
 - 1. Already - II Tim. 1:10; Titus 2:11; 3:4
 - 2. Not yet - II Thess. 2:8; I Tim. 6:14; Titus 2:13
 - C. Manifestation of Christ - *phaino*
 - 1. Already - I Tim. 3:16; I Pet. 1:20
 - 2. Not yet - I Pet. 5:4; I Jn. 2:28; 3:2
 - D. Revealing of Christ - *apokalupsis*
 - 1. Already - Gal. 1:16
 - 2. Not yet - I Cor. 1:7; II Thess. 1:7; I Pet. 1:5,7; 4:13; 5:1
 - E. Kingdom
 - 1. Already - Rom. 14:17; Col. 1:13
 - 2. Not yet - I Cor. 15:24,50; II Tim. 4:18
 - F. Eternal life
 - 1. Already - Jn. 3:36; II Cor. 2:16; I Jn. 5:11-13
 - 2. Not yet - Jn. 6:40; Gal. 6:8; Jude 21
 - G. Salvation
 - 1. Already - Lk. 19:9; Rom. 1:16; Eph. 2:5,8; Titus 2:11
 - 2. Not yet - Rom. 13:11; I Pet. 1:5
 - H. Redemption
 - 1. Already - Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Titus 2:14
 - 2. Not yet - Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:4; 4:30
 - I. Immortality
 - 1. Already - II Tim. 1:10
 - 2. Not yet - I Cor. 15:53,54
 - J. Resurrection
 - 1. Already - Rom. 6:4,5; Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12; 3:1
 - 2. Not yet - Jn. 11:24; I Cor. 15:42-44; II Cor. 5:4; I Thess. 4:16
 - K. Hope
 - 1. Already - Eph. 1:8; Col. 1:27; I Tim. 1:1
 - 2. Not yet - Rom. 8:24,25; Col. 1:5; Titus 2:13
 - L. Judgment
 - 1. Already - Jn. 3:19; 12:31
 - 2. Not yet - Rom. 14:10; II Cor. 5:10; Heb. 9:27
 - M. Heaven
 - 1. Already - Eph. 1:3; 2:6; Phil. 3:20
 - 2. Not yet - Col. 1:5; I Pet. 1:4
- IV. The Christological reality of "last things"
- A. Biblical eschatology must be Christocentric
 - 1. Jesus Christ is the *eschatos* of God. God's last word for man.
 - a. Last Adam - I Cor. 15:45
 - b. First and the Last - Rev. 1:17; 2:8,19; 22:13
 - 2. Jesus is the culminating consummation of God's intent for man.
 - 3. Jesus is the ontological dynamic of God's "last thing"
 - B. One's eschatological understanding will provide a perspective and a grid for the interpretation of all Scripture.
 - 1. Is God's "last thing" an event, a time period, a social entity, or a program of physical promises to be fulfilled?
 - 2. Or is God's "last thing" fulfilled in His Son, Jesus Christ?