Abomination of Desolation. A phrase deriving from Daniel (9:27; 11:31; 12:31) which is cited by Christ in His Olivet Discourse (Mt. 24:15). In Dispensationalism this refers to the desecration of a future rebuilt Jewish Temple. That event occurs during a seven-year Great Tribulation which Dispensationalists believe precedes the Second Coming of Christ. The term actually refers to the physical and ritual desecration of the Temple in September, A.D. 70, when the Roman soldiers "brought their ensigns to the temple and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them" (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, 6:6:1). The phrase is found in the portion of the Olivet Discourse introduced by Jesus' reference to the destruction of the first century Temple (Mt. 24:1-3) and ended by the declaration that "all these things" will occur in "this generation" (Mt. 24:34).

Amillennialism. An eschatological system which holds that the millennium was established in the first century by Christ and is John's apocalyptic image of Christ's kingdom rule. This kingdom has its source in Heaven and its effect in the hearts and lives of believers. The

amillennialist teaches that no extensive period of divine peace and worldwide external blessings will prevail in earth history before the Second Coming of Christ. Rather, the kingdom's presence operates within the lives of believers and through the ministry of the church while the church is under assault and despite the historical decline that worsens until the end.

Antichrist. This term refers to one thing in Scripture and quite another in popular eschatology. In popular eschatology (especially Dispensationalism) the Antichrist will be an evil religious-political leader who arises during a future Great Tribulation. He becomes a worldwide tyrannical ruler imposing his evil will upon a deceived world while ruling from a rebuilt Jewish Temple. In Scripture the term only occurs in the epistles of John. In those passages we learn that John uses the word to describe not an individual person, but a movement (1 John 2:18) opposed to Christ (1 John 2:22; 4:3). We also discover that this movement exists in John's own lifetime (1 Jn. 4:3; 2 Jn 1:7), rather than in the distant future.

Apocalypse. The technical name of the Book of Revelation, which is based on the first Greek word appearing in that book. The Greek *apokalypsis* is a compound of *apo* ("from") and *kalypsis* ("hidden"), meaning "uncover, reveal, open up."

Day of the Lord. This phrase speaks of a period of special divine judgment in history. Though it always appears in the singular, it refers to any period of propheticallyannounced divine wrath against God's enemies, including Old Testament judgments against Babylon (Isa. 13:1, 6) and Idumea (Isa. 34:5, 8), and against Jerusalem in the Old Testament (Joel 2:1) and in the first century (Acts 2:16, 20). Each "day of the Lord" is a prophetic prototype of the final, consummate Day of the Lord associated with the Second Coming of Christ to end history (2 Pet. 3:10).

Dispensationalism. A whole theological system that emphasizes particularly its eschatological distinctives. Dispensationalism arose in the early 1800s, either through the work of John Nelson Darby or perhaps earlier in the prophetic utterances of one Margaret

MacDonald. It has been upgraded and refined over the years and is the most popular version of prophetic commitment in American evangelicalism. It is the most ornate and complex evangelical eschatological system.

Eschatology. This term derives from compounding two Greek terms: *eschatos* ("last") and *logia* ("word, discourse"). Etymologically, eschatology is "the study of the last things." The term is drawn from certain Scriptural passages that speak of "the last days" (2 Tim. 3:1; Heb. 1:2), "the last time" (1 Pet. 1:20; Jude 18), "the last hour" (1 Jn. 2:18), and other comparable statements.

First resurrection. In John's symbolic vision of the Millennium in Revelation, the first resurrection signifies the salvation of sinners, who upon conversion come under the salvific rule of Christ and enter the kingdom of God. Salvation involves an arising from a state of spiritual death to spiritual life (Eph. 2:1-6) and is pictured in Scripture not only as a resurrection (John 5:24; Eph. 2:4-6; 1 John 3:14), but also by an equally remarkable image: a "new

creation" (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; cp. Eph. 2:10).

Great Tribulation. The phrase "Great Tribulation" appears in Matthew 24:15 and Revelation 2:22; 7:14. In both of these contexts this tribulation period is tied to the first century, because it is in "this generation" (Mt. 24:34) or "must shortly come to pass" (Rev. 1:1; 22:6) because "the time is near" (Rev. 1:3; 22:10). The great tribulation speaks of the devastation overwhelming first century Israel and resulting in the destruction of her Temple during the Jewish War with Rome. It is a divine judgment upon the first century Jews for rejecting the Messiah (Mt. 23:37-24:3). In dispensationalism the Great Tribulation is extracted from its contextual time constraints and placed in the distant future after the Rapture of the church and just before the Second Coming of Christ. It becomes a seven-year period of trial for the Jews that will witness the rebuilding of the Temple, the arising of Antichrist, the destruction of twothirds of the world's Jewish population, but finally witness the conversion of the Jewish remnant who will welcome the Second Coming of Christ to deliver them.

Kingdom of God / of Heaven.

When Jesus began His ministry, He preached that "the kingdom of God" was at hand (Mark 1:14-15). Though Matthew is the only gospel to record the phrase "kingdom of Heaven," the term is interchangeable with the "kingdom of God" (cp. Mt. 13:31; Mk. 4:30). The kingdom He preached was not a political entity but involved the coming of the final phase of redemption and is closely tied to the gospel message (Mk. 1:14-15). In fact, His message of salvation is often called "the gospel of the kingdom" (e.g., Mt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14). His kingdom was not an external political kingdom coming with visible glory (Lk. 17:20-21); nor would it involve armies to defend and promote it (Jn. 18:36). It was a kingdom of truth (Jn. 18:37) and righteousness (Rom. 14:17) that would grow gradually over time (Mt. 13:30-33).

Last Days. In the Biblical scheme, the Lord Jesus Christ is the focal point of history. His coming divides history into two parts. The Old Testament era served as the "former days" (Mal. 3:4) that gave way to the "last days," the times initiated by Christ's coming: "God, who at

various times and in different ways spoke in *time past* to the fathers by the prophets has in these *last* days spoken to us by His Son" (Heb. 1:1-2). The last days are initiated by the appearance of the Son (Heb. 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:20) to effect redemption (Heb. 9:26) and by His pouring out of the Spirit (Acts 2:16, 17, 24; cf. Isa. 32:15; Zech. 12:10). The "ends of the ages" comes during the apostolic era (1 Cor. 10:11). These will run until "the last day," when the Resurrection and Final Judgment occur to end history (John 6:39; 11:24; 12:48). Because the last days have been with us since the first century coming of Christ, no days are to follow them except for "the last day." Consequently, no Millennium will introduce another grand redemptive era in man's history.

Millennium. This term is derived from Revelation 20:1-6. The term is based on the combination of two Latin words *mille* (1000) and *annus* (year). Not only does the millennium (or 1000 years of Christ's reign) appear in the most figurative book of Scripture, but it is found *only* in this highly symbolic book. Nowhere else is Christ's reign associated with 1000 years. The

figure serves as an image of the great expanse of Christ's redemptive reign which began in the first century (Mk. 1:14-15; Mt. 12:29-30) and continues until Christ returns at "the end" of history (1 Cor. 15:24-26).

Parousia. The Greek

term parousia was a common term that meant "presence." It eventually came to apply particularly to the coming and/or presence of some noted dignitary. As with most Biblical and theological terms it was taken into Christian parlance from common use and developed a technical meaning. However, even in Scripture we must sort out its various usages. The coming of Stephanus (1 Cor. 16:17), of Titus (2 Cor. 7:6), of Paul (Phil. 2:12), and of the "Man of Sin" (2 Thes. 2:9) are each called a parousia. The term can be used metaphorically of Christ's historical judgment on Israel (Mt. 24:3, 27), for according to the Arndt-Gingrich-Danker Lexicon the term was used "as a sacred expression for the coming of a hidden divinity, who makes his presence felt by a revelation of his power" (cp. Isa. 19:1). It can also be employed literally of His incarnational first coming (2 Pet. 1:16) and His consummate Second Coming at the

end of history to judge the world (1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thes. 4:15). The context of each use must determine the type of *parousia* in mind.

Postmillennialism. The prophetic school which teaches that the kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament came in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ at His first coming (Mk. 1:14-15). It expects the proclaiming of the Spirit-blessed gospel of Jesus Christ to win the vast majority of men to salvation in the present age (Mt. 12:18-20; Jn. 3:17; 12:31-32). Increasing gospel success will gradually produce a time in history prior to Christ's return in which faith, righteousness, peace, and prosperity will prevail in the affairs of men and of nations (Mt. 13:31-33; Mk. 4:26-32). After an extensive era of such conditions the Lord will return visibly, bodily, and in great glory, ending history with the general resurrection and the great judgment of all men (1 Cor. 15:20-27). It is *post* (after) *millennial* in that Christ returns after the glorious "millennial" conditions finally prevail in earth history. Postmillennialism may be summarized: (1) The Church Age is the kingdom era prophesied by the Old Testament prophets. The people

of God are expanded from Israel of the Old Testament to the universal church of the New Testament, becoming the Israel of God. (2) Satan is bound during Christ's earthly ministry at His first coming. His binding prevents him from totally hindering the proclamation of the gospel. (3) Christ now rules spiritually in the hearts of believers, who will gradually exercise a growing influence in human affairs. (4) History will gradually improve as the growth of Christian influence unfolds into the future. (5) Christ will return to end history, resurrect and judge all men, and establish the eternal order, the New Creation.

Pre-tribulationism. The dispensational view which teaches that Christ will return secretly and take His church out of the world just *before* (hence, "pre") the outbreak of the Great Tribulation. Dispensationalists believe that the Rapture must be pre-tribulational because the events of the Great Tribulation are not a part of the program for the church but for Israel.

Premillennialism. Premillennialism teaches that the kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament will be a literal, political kingdom effected by Christ

at His Second Coming. The view is *pre*-millennial in that Christ returns *before* and in order to establish the Millennium. Premillennialism is today largely associated with Dispensationalism rather than the older, more simple form of Historic Premillennialism.

Preterism. The term "preterism" is based on the Latin praeteritus, which means "passed by." Preterism is that hermeneutic approach to Scripture which teaches that certain prophecies have already been fulfilled in history. Those passages are often (not always) identified by statements of temporal nearness, such as "at hand" (Mk. 1:14-15; Rev. 1:3), "shortly" (Rev. 1:1), "this generation" (Mt. 24:34), and other such time delimiters. This view holds that many New Testament prophecies focus on the catastrophic destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (see especially the Olivet Discourse, Mt. 24:1-3). That event is important in that God changes the course of redemptive history from an ethnic, land-based, temple-oriented system to a pan-ethnic, global, spiritual system of worship (cp. Mt. 10:6; 15:24 with Mt. 28:19; see also Heb. 8:13).

Rapture. A theological term based on the Latin word rapio which means "caught up." It is not found in Scripture, but the theological idea is strongly rooted in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, which speaks of the Lord's Second Advent wherein deceased and living saints are "caught up" to be with the Lord forevermore. Dispensationalism proposes a "secret Rapture" which removes the church from the earth which must endure a seven-year Great Tribulation. This key passage, however, emphasizes its *public* character: "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God" (1 Thes. 4:16).

Resurrection. The Greek word translated "resurrection" is anistimi, which means "to stand" (istemi) "again" (ana). It literally speaks of the reanimation of a corpse. Though the Bible records several bodily resurrections of the dead before Christ's resurrection, (e.g., 1 Kin. 17:20-24; 2 Kin. 4:32-37; Mk. 5:41-43; Jn. 11:43-44), His is the first resurrection of the eschatological order (1 Cor. 15:20-56). All miraculous resurrections occurring prior to His Second Advent at the end of history bring deceased

persons back to life. But since those resurrected do not receive their final, perfect, eternal bodies, they must suffer death once again. Christ's resurrection serves as the unique, historical "first fruits" (1 Cor. 15:23) of the final, consummate, eschatological order which transforms the body of the redeemed from a state of weakness to power, from dishonor to glory, from perishability to imperishability (1 Cor. 15:42-43). At the resurrection our renewed bodies will be animated and restructured by the Holy Spirit rather than by simple biological power: we will no longer have *psuchichos* ("soulish, natural") bodies, but pneumatikos ("spirit" driven) bodies (1 Cor. 15:44; Rom. 8:18-25). The Resurrection will be at the end of history (John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24) and will involve all men simultaneously (Jn. 5:28-29; Acts 24:15), contrary to the popular teaching of Dispensationalism.

Age, Ages In the NT, this term often refers to one or both of the eons understood by late Jewish thought, namely "this age" and the "age to come." The two-age eschatology of the rabbis failed to recognize the intervening Age of the Spirit predicted by Joel 2.28-32 which

would precede what they thought of as "the age to come" and what the prophets referred to as the **Day of the Lord (Yom YHWH)**. Paul mentions multiple ages yet to come (Eph. 2.7), which will include the **Millennial Reign** during the **Yom YHWH**.

Antichrist, The

The false Messiah, energized by Satan, who will arise in opposition to God, Christianity and Israel just prior to Christ's Coming (2 Thess. 2.3-10).

Antinomianism

Literally, *anti-law-ism*. In history this was the heretical and cultish doctrine that the moral law was not binding Christians as a rule of life. In recent **eschatology** the term has been adopted by

some **Dispensationalists** to describe their belief that Christians are not under law since law pertains to an earlier **dispensation**.

Apocalypse

Literally an unveiling, that is, a revealing of a person or thing in its true character. Synonymous to revelation, and an alternate title for the book of Revelation. Because of its association with the "end of the world," apocalypse is sometimes

used to denote a radical destruction or purge.

Apocalyptic

Pertaining to the end of the world, or to some awesome destruction.

Apostasy

A spiritual falling away, i.e., a rebellion, as described in 2 Thessalonians 2.3.

Apostate

Adjective: having fallen away spiritually.

Armageddon

Literally the mountain of Megiddo. The name given to the valley below the ancient city (now a ruin) of Megiddo in northern Israel. Also the name given to the final eschatological battle for Jerusalem, since the military staging for the battle will occur at the valley of Megiddo. Metaphorically, Armageddon is commonly used with reference to a catastrophic or devastating event, military or otherwise. When a city water storage tank ruptured in Westminster, California at the end of September, 1998, temporarily flooding a residential neighborhood, a police officer said: "A whole series of

condo garages are gone. It's a mess out there. It's like Armageddon."
The loss of a dozen garages is less than trivial compared to the biblical Armageddon, but the recent movie entitled Armageddon errs on the other extreme of usage. In that film, the fictional President of the United States defines Armageddon as "the end of everything." Armageddon is not the end of everything, but it is more than ruined garages: it is the end of the militant enemies of Messiah who are consumed by His coming.

Day of the Lord, The

The period that begins suddenly with the destruction of the ungodly (including Antichrist and his followers; see 1 Thess. 5.2,3).

Dispensation

Literally an administration, a period or process of management. To Dispensationalists, the term has come to mean an era in which God administers a redemptive plan in a fashion different from the way He administered redemption in other eras.

Dispensationalism

A form of biblical interpretation derived from the teachings of John

Nelson Darby (1800-82) of Dublin, Ireland, a leader of the Plymouth Brethren, and popularized by C. I. Scofield (1843-1921) in his Scofield Reference Bible (1902-1909 and revised in 1917). It emphasizes the idea that God dispenses redemption differently in different eras, and maintains a rigid discontinuity between the different dispensations.

End Time, The

The epoch in which some of God's people will be refined by tribulation (Dan. 11.33-35), as a rebel king affronts Messiah (Dan. 8.17-25), and invades Israel (Dan. 11.40-45). It is the apocalyptic time leading up to the resurrection and judgment (Dan. 12.1-2). Not to be confused with, but included in, the **Last Days**.

Eschatology

The study of last things, that is, the final events of redemption described in Bible prophecy. Derived from the Greek word meaning *last*.

Eschaton

The climax of history at which Christ returns to reestablish His reign over the earth.

Futurist

The view that the prophecies of Revelation (and related passages) focus upon the end of the age (world), and that therefore the greater part of the book has yet to be fulfilled.

Gematria

Numerology; the mystical interpretation of the numerical value of letters and words. Leo Rosten, in his *Joys of Yiddish*, explains that "mystics converted the numerical values [of words] into supposed keys to the meanings of passages in the holy texts and 'equated' different words and phrases according to the total values of their letters...Here is a pretty example of Gematria: The Hebrew word for 'pregnancy,' herayon, turns out to have the numerical value of 270, which is also 30 times 9 — 'the number of days a woman carries a child."

Hades

Originally the name of the Homeric god of the underworld, a Greek word used to denote the state or place of the dead. All the dead alike go into this place. To be buried, to go down to the grave, to descend into Hades, are equivalent expressions. In the LXX this word is the usual rendering

of the Hebrew **Sheol**, the common receptacle of the departed (Genesis 42.38; Psalm 139.8; Hos. 13.14; Isaiah 14.9). This term occurs rarely in the Greek New Testament, but now takes on decidedly punitive and Satanic connotations. Our Lord speaks of Capernaum as being "brought down to Hades", i.e., to the lowest debasement (Matthew 11.23). Jesus also portrays Hades as a kingdom (or city) in opposition to the Church (Mat. 16.18), and in Luke 16.23 Jesus makes Hades the place of the rich man's the doom and misery in contrast to the blessed state of Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham. In the Revelation, Hades personified hungrily follows behind Death as the latter rides forth to devastate the earth (6.8), and in the end is cast with Death into the Lake of Fire (20.14).

Hell

Derived from the Saxon *helan*, to cover; hence the covered or the invisible place. In King James Bible there are three words so rendered. (1.) Sheol, the place of disembodied spirits, which word is also often rendered "grave" (Genesis 37.35; 42.38; 44.29, 31; 1 Samuel 2.6, etc.). The inhabitants of Sheol are "the congregation of the dead" (Proverbs

21.16). It is (a) the abode of the wicked (Numbers 16.33; Job 24.19; Psalm 9.17; 31.17, etc.); (b) of the good (Psalm 16.10; 30.3; 49.15; 86.13, etc.). Sheol is described as deep (Job 11.8), dark (10.21, 22), with bars (17.16). The dead "go down" to it (Numbers 16.30, 33; Ezekiel 31.15, 16, 17). (2.) The Greek word *Hades* of the New Testament, which term has similar connotations to the Sheol of the Old Testament. It is a prison (1 Peter 3.19), with gates and bars and locks (Matthew 16.18; Revelation 1.18), and it is downward (Matthew 11.23; Luke 10.15). (3.) Gehenna, which in most of its occurrences in the Greek New Testament designates the place of the lost (Matthew 23.33). The fearful nature of their condition there is described in various figurative expressions (Matthew 8.12; 13.42; 22:13; 25:30; Luke 16:24, etc.).

Hermeneutics

The science of interpretation, particularly of texts.

Historic Premillennialism

A system of **eschatological** belief emphasizing the literal, premillennial coming of Christ, but not holding to a rigid **Dispensationalism** nor to belief in a pre-tribulational rapture.

Historicist

The view that the prophecies of the Revelation (and related passages) provide a preview of history from the time of the writer to the end of the world, and therefore have been already fulfilled in part. As W. Graham Scroggie summarizes: "In this view the Seals apply to the history of the Roman Empire during the second and third centuries; the sealing of the 144,000 tells of the revival of the saints subsequent to the revolution under Constantine, and under the leadership of Augustine; the trumpets tell of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire: the Little Books announce the Protestant Reformation under Luther; the beasts of ch. xiii. represent the Papacy; the outpourings of the vials predict the French Revolution and subsequent events; and in chs. xvii. and xviii. we learn of the yet future destruction of the Papacy, and the city of Rome."

Idealists Interpretation

Last Days, The

The epoch that began with the earthly ministry of Christ (Heb. 1.2), was marked by the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost (Acts 2.17), and

that will continue until the Lord rules the nations from Jerusalem (Micah 4.1-4). Daniel refers to the final segment of this period as the "End Time."

Mahdi

Also al-Mahdi or al-Mehdi. The legendary 12th imam of Islam held in occultation for centuries, and now expected to reappear at any moment to convert the globe to Islam.

Millennial Kingdom, Millennial Reign

The thousand-year earthly kingdom set up by Christ at His second coming.

Millennium

The thousand-year period during which Christ will reign on earth after His second coming, and during which Satan will be bound.

Mystery

A mystery in the NT is not something obscure or incomprehensible, but rather a truth that can only be known by revelation or by special insight given to the initiated. See Rev. 10.7.

Opisthograph

A scroll with writing on the exterior

surface (the verso) as well as on the interior surface (the recto, which on papyrus provided the smoother surface with horizontal fibers), as that of Rev. 5.1. Normally, writing only appeared on the verso when the recto had insufficient space.

Poetic Interpretation

The view that the prophecies of Revelation are to be taken metaphorically of the sure triumph of God over evil in the world, and not as predictions of literal cataclysms in the cosmos. More or less synonymous with the **Idealists'** interpretation.

Post-apocalyptic

A literary term referring to a scene or story set in a recently destroyed world.

Postmillennialism

Belief in the restoration of society, primarily through the influence of the church, before the return of Christ. It is the return of Christ that is post, i.e., after, the millennium. This view tends to equate the "millennium" with "the church age." **Reconstructionism** is a form of postmillennialism.

Post-tribulationist

One who believes that Christ will rapture Christians after the Great Tribulation.

Premillennialism

Belief in a literal coming of Christ before the thousand-year reign of world peace.

Preterist

The view that the prophecies of the book of Revelation (along with the prophecies of Matthew 24, etc.) commented on events of John's day and did not make predictions about the future end of the world. Compare the **historicist** view.

Pre-tribulationist

One who believes that Christ will rapture Christians before the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

Rapture

Literally a catching up, based on the Latin word used in the Vulgate version of 1 Thessalonians 4.17. It refers to the catching up to the clouds of Christians who are alive at the coming of Christ, an event immediately preceded by the resurrection of Christians who have already died.

Reconstructionism

A postmillennial view that calls believers to aggressively bring change to society, with the ultimate goal of establishing a Christian Republic ordered by the Mosaic Law. Reconstructionism sees the homeschool movement as the primary vehicle for bringing societal change, but also encourages Christian involvement in government and other social institutions for the sake of pursuing its goals in the world.

Replacement Theology

A system of interpretation based on the idea that "the church" replaces national Israel as God's vehicle of redemption, appropriating for herself all the promises made to Israel and rendering the Jewish nation irrelevant eschatologically.

Second Coming

Also "Second Advent." The return of Christ in glory, as differentiated from his first coming in humiliation. Christ will return in bodily form to destroy His enemies and glorify His elect. (See Acts 1.11.)

Syllogism

A form of deductive reasoning consisting of a major premise, a

minor premise, and a conclusion; for example, All human beings are mortal, the major premise, I am a human being, the minor premise, therefore, I am mortal, the conclusion.

Synchronological

Occurring at more or less the same time rather than in consecutive order. Descriptions of synchronological events in prophecy tend to double back after the description of one event in order to describe other events decreed to occur at the same time, or to describe the first event again but from a different perspective.

Syncretism

The blending of elements from two different philosophies or religions.

Terminus Ante Quem

The date before which an event must have occurred.

Terminus Post Quem

The date after which an event must have occurred.

Theophany

A vision or other manifestation of God.

Tribulation, The Great

A period of unparalleled hardship (Dan. 12.1) and Satanic persecution directly preceding the Coming of Christ. It is also called the "Time of Jacob's Trouble" (Jeremiah 30.7) since Israel will endure much of the brunt of the persecution.

Type

A person, thing or event in the Bible that foreshadows a greater person, thing or event. A sort of three-dimensional prophecy. This is simply another meaning of the word for printers' type and is derived from the phenomenon of correspondence between type and the impression it makes in printing.

Typology

The study of biblical types.