

CONSENSUS STATEMENT
Fourth International Bible Conference
Rome, Italy
June 11-21, 2018
Draft 003

Introduction

The Fourth International Bible Conference was held in Rome, June 11-21, 2018, with the theme of “Biblical Eschatology.” Almost four hundred Adventist scholars, pastors, educators, and church leaders, sharing a deep commitment to Scripture and a biblical worldview, gathered from around the world to explore biblical, theological, historical, ethical, missiological and scientific perspectives on eschatology. The goal of the Conference was to affirm and explore biblical eschatology, foster fellowship and unity and to bring about a renewed sense of the times in which we live so as to be better equipped to serve the Lord and His Church. We have been spiritually and intellectually enriched through Bible study and worship, seasons of prayer, lectures, discussions, and educational tours to significant biblical, historical, and archaeological sites.

As Seventh-day Adventists, we are impelled by the personal and profound conviction of the nearness of Christ’s coming as a literal, visible, personal and worldwide event. We are keenly aware of the challenges being made to the historicist approach to biblical eschatology. These challenges include preterist, futurist, and idealist approaches to the books of Daniel and Revelation, scientific cosmologies that breed skepticism toward a divine resolution of the problem of sin and death, and speculation regarding things that have not been revealed.

Statement of Affirmation

Committed to the principles of *sola* and *tota Scriptura*, we hereby affirm that the

Seventh-day Adventist Church, raised up in fulfillment of Bible prophecy near the end of earth's history, has an eschatological perspective as an integral part of its theology, message, and mission.

We affirm that eschatology has its origin in the triune God. When the predicted time was fulfilled God the Father sent His Son Jesus Christ in order to redeem and adopt us as His children (Gal 4:4-5) and advance His plan of salvation, which will culminate in Jesus' glorious reign after His Parousia.

We affirm that Jesus Christ with His life, death and resurrection is the center of our eschatological hope. Through the Holy Spirit He confirms individual believers as being God's children and heirs, while they eagerly wait for the final liberation from all corruption (Rom 8:14-25). Through the Holy Spirit, Christ also guides His church to rightly understand and interpret the Scriptures towards the fulfillment of its mission and leads us to a joyful obedience of His word.

We affirm that biblical eschatology represents God's historical, and complete resolution of the problems caused by the entrance of sin into the universe.

We affirm that in biblical eschatology God confirms His promises and encourages His people to live meaningfully in light of the eschaton.

We affirm the historical accuracy of the biblical account of creation, the fall, and the global flood as essential to a proper understanding of biblical eschatology.

We affirm that the apocalyptic books of Daniel and Revelation are foundational for the understanding of biblical eschatology and that the historicist method is the proper approach to interpreting them.

We affirm the three angels' messages of Revelation 14, with their interconnected truths of the everlasting gospel, Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, the commandments of God, including the seventh-day Sabbath, and the testimony of Jesus, the pre-Advent judgment, the second coming of Christ to resurrect and redeem His people from the earth, followed by the millennium in heaven, the final judgment upon sin and sinners with their destruction in the lake of fire, which is the second death, and God's re-creation of this earth as His people's eternal home.

We affirm that we are responsible to care for God's creation, including our body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and to reflect God's character of love to all people, urging them to accept this final message of hope for a dying world.

Missiological Implications

All members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church should share with the world this eschatological vision. Amid increased skepticism toward this future hope and futile attempts to build a paradise on earth, we accept the challenge of proclaiming this biblical eschatology within our varied contexts and dedicate ourselves to the work of finding effective approaches to meet these challenges.