



CHAPTER 4

Eschaton Terminology

The Greek word *eschatos* (ἔσχατος) appears throughout the New Testament. It means:¹

- Last: Referring to time or space, the uttermost part, the end of the earth, last in rank, grade or worth, i.e., the lowest
- Extreme: Last in time or place, last in a series of places, last in temporal succession

The New American Standard Bible (NAS) uses *eschatos* 52 times as an adjective. It translates *eschatos* into English seven different ways: end (1), last (46), last of all (1), last man (1), last men (1), late (1), remotest part (1).

Biblical examples of *eschatos* translated as last (NAS):

2 Tim 3:1 *But realize this, that in **the last** days difficult times will come.*

1 Pet 1:5 *who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in **the last** time.*

1 Cor 15:52 *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at **the last** trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*

John 6:40 *“For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on **the last** day.”*

¹ <http://bible.crosswalk.com/OnlineStudyBible> (1-7-06). Greek lexicon based on Thayer's and Smith's Bible Dictionary plus others; these files are public domain.

1 Cor 15:26 **The last** enemy that will be abolished is death.

- **Jesus is the First and the Last (Eschatos)**

Rev 22:13 *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and **the last**, the beginning and the end [telos]."*

Rev 1:17 ... *"Do not be afraid; I am the first and **the last**"*

Rev 2:8-9 ...*The first and **the last**, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: "I know your tribulation..."*

Relevant New Testament Greek words

- **Telos** means end, termination, the limit at which a thing ceases to be (always of the end of some act or state, but not of the end of a period of time); The end, the last in any succession or series, eternal, that by which a thing is finished, its close, issue; The end to which all things relate, the aim, purpose²

1 Pet 4:7 **The end** of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.

Luk 21:9 *"When you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but **the end** does not follow immediately."*

Rev 2:26 *And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until **the end**, to him I will give authority over the Nations;*

- **Sunteleia** means completion, consummation, and end.³

Mat 28:20 *"...I am [Jesus] with you always, even to **the end** of the age."*

Mat 13:49 *So shall it be at **the end** of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,*

² <http://bible.crosswalk.com/OnlineStudyBible> (1-7-06)

³ bible.crosswalk.com (1-7-06)

Relevant Old Testament Hebrew words

- **Qets** (used 61 times in the NASB) means the end (of time) or (of space).⁴

Dan 8:19 *He said, "Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for it pertains to the appointed time of **the end**.*

ALTERNATE USES OF THE WORD ESCHATON

"Immanentizing the Eschaton"

Immanent means "everywhere" while *imminent* means "real soon". Immanentizing the eschaton refers to a heresy where the Eschaton represents a state of being, accessible at any time, rather than a chronological event. Robert Anton Wilson and Robert Shea use this term in the "*Illuminatus!*", which is a satirical, postmodern, science fiction-influenced trilogy (*The Eye in the Pyramid*, *The Golden Apple*, and *Leviathan*). This drug, sex, and magic-laden trip through conspiracy theories (historical and imaginary) hinges around the authors' version of *The Illuminati*. Publishing began in 1975.⁵ Immanentizing the eschaton refers to an attempt to create heaven or hell in this present world instead of waiting for it in the next. Distinguished by the conviction that matter is evil and that emancipation comes through knowledge, Gnosticism attempts to immanentize the Eschaton. Incidentally, *eminent* means outstanding or distinguished.

Some authors and musicians associate the term eschaton with death, fear, grief, despair, hopelessness, and various elements of spiritual darkness. Examples in pop culture include:

- *Eschaton* represents a transhuman entity in the black humor science fiction novels *Singularity Sky* (2003) and *Iron Sunrise* (2004) by Charles Stross.

⁴ <http://bible.crosswalk.com/OnlineStudyBible> (1-7-06).

⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Illuminatus!_Trilogy (12-21-06)

- *Eschaton* signifies an imaginary sport in the novel *Infinite Jest* by David Foster Wallace (1996) in which tennis balls represent nuclear arms.
- *Eschaton* denotes an "Online Magazine of News, Commentary, and Editorial" (i.e., a politically Liberal weblog) by Dr. Duncan B. Black (a.k.a. Atrios). <http://atrios.blogspot.com/> (2006)
- *Eschaton Productions Inc.* is a publishing company directed by Brendan Tripp, which provides meeting, planning, and publicity services
- *Eschaton Band* (Matt Medeiros, 2000) was a Melodic Death Metal Band from New Jersey.⁶
- *Eskhaton* is the first album (2002) produced by the death metal/grind band *Fatal* (Le Havre, France) featuring 10 songs of intense revolutionary death.⁷
- *Eskhaton* (2002) is the fourth release of the band *Catamenia* (a fast melodic black metal band from Finland).⁸
- *Eschaton Music Works* (1980s) led by Ronan Chris Murphy, (under *Veneto West* 2001), produces and mixes for a range of musical genres in addition to consulting, management and music placement for film and television.⁹

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⁶ <http://www.brutalism.com/kalopsia.html> (3-17-06)

⁷ <http://yyy.furoncle.net/fifatal.php> (3-17-06)

⁸ <http://www.catamenia.net/> (3-17-06)

⁹ Eschaton Music Works Newsletter May 29, 2001.