16. Eschatology

16.1. INTRODUCTION

The Sunbogeum church borrowed its eschatology from the American Assemblies of God. Therefore, it shares the same theological outlook with that of pentecostalism in general.1 The article of the Korean Assemblies of God, which is contained in its constitution, writes of the hope for rapture, the millennium, the lake of fire, and the new heaven and new earth.2 However, seeing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the Latter Rain which has to do with the harvest, and holding pretribulationism and antinomianism in connection with eschatology, Sunbogeum eschatology has a more urgent motivation for world evangelization/mission than pentecostalism generally has.3 Jan A. B. Jongeneel, who discusses eschatology in relation to missiology, coined the term ‘missionary eschatology.’4 Sunbogeum eschatology can also be understood as a missionary eschatology even though it does not label itself as such.

There are two currents of thought when discussing eschatology in Sunbogeumism. One is Yonggi Cho’s teaching about the last days expressed in his book of collected sermons on the A Commentary on Daniel for Laymen and the A Commentary on the Revelation to John for Laymen (both published in 1976). The other is the theological discussion of eschatology from a pentecostal view produced by the International Theological Institute at Yoido Sunbogeum Church and by Jeong-Ryeol Pak. These two different trends of Korean Sunbogeumism (Cho’s Bible-interpreting radical Sunbogeumism and theologically-considered classical pentecostalism of same Sunbogeumists)5 are especially highlighted in the subject of eschatology. We will discuss the latter as a criticism of Cho’s eschatology because his radical view discloses both strengths and weakness in pentecostal eschatology. In a sense, Sunbogeum eschatology is still in the process of development just as pentecostalism is.6 In addition, we will spend more time addressing general

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1 D. J. Wilson, “Eschatology, Pentecostal Perspectives On,” in DPCM, pp.264-268. The theological background to pentecostal eschatology is formulated as follows: premillennialism, expecting parousia prior to the millennium; futurist-leaning dispensationalism, expecting the fulfillment of prophecies in the future; pretribulationism, expecting rapture prior to the 7 years’ tribulation; and antinomianism, viewing latter-day morals as antinomian.
3 Wilson, ibid.
5 See 6.2.9; 6.4.3; 7.3.2.1; 7.3.2.4. Yonggi Cho’s radical pentecostalism (Sunbogeumism) has been most debatable.
6 In addition to the theological formulation of the ITI about eschatology, Jeong-Ryeol Pak discussed eschatology through introducing other viewpoints and suggesting the view of general pentecostalism (Pentecostal Theology, 1996, 403-473) while Cho found room for reconsideration on his eschatology (interpretation of John’s Revelation and Book of Daniel). Jeong-Geun Pak has not dealt with eschatology in his publication yet; James G. Glass, “Eschatology: A Clear and Present Danger – A Sure and Certain Hope,” in Pentecostal Perspectives, edited by Keith Warrington, Carlisle, Cumbria (U.K.), 1998, pp.120-146. The Elim Pentecostal Church and the British Assemblies of God had to reaffirm the classical pentecostal view of premillennialism because of a perceived threat in the 1970s.
eschatology than special eschatology because Cho’s eschatology, which follows strict futurist dispensational eschatology, pays more attention to general eschatology.

In this chapter, we will sketch and analyze Sunboguem special (individual) eschatology (16.2) and thereafter its general eschatology (16.3). The main reference books will be A Commentary on the Revelation to John for Laymen (1976) and A Commentary on Daniel for Laymen (1976) by Yonggi Cho. Eschatology (1989/1993) by the International Theological Institute (ex-Yeong-San Institute) at the Yoido Sunboguem Church and Pentecostal Theology (1996) by Jeong-Ryeol Pak will be referred to for different theological views of Sunboguem eschatology. Theologie der Hoffnung (1964/3ed., 1966) by Jürgen Moltmann and “A Report of the Result of Study over Yonggi Cho’s Pseudo-Christianity” (1994) by the 79th General Assembly of the Tonghap Presbyterian Church will be used as the main polemical sources.

16.2. INDIVIDUAL ESCHATOLOGY

Sunboguemism has not developed any unique doctrines about death and life after death from that of evangelicalism because both take the Biblical descriptions about them literally. This section, then, deals with physical death, the immortality of soul, and the intermediate state.

6.2.1. Physical Death

Sunboguem emphasizes that physical death takes place as the consequence of spiritual death (cf. 8.3.2; 10.3). When Adam was created, he was innocent, good, and holy according to the image of God. He was free from sin but not free from choosing to sin. He had order and harmony among his spirit, soul, and body. He was able to communicate with God through his spirit. When he sinned, however, his spirit was separated from God. Thus he fell into spiritual death. Now in darkness, his soul also died because it was subject to the flesh. The harmony among his spirit, soul, and flesh was broken, and he experienced physical death. Physical death means the separation of body and the immortal spirit (soul), and it originates in sin. It marks the end of our worldly physical existence. Yonggi Cho writes that physical death does not mean the termination of existence, rather it is the entrance to the

For the Elim Church, premillennialism was removed from its fundamental beliefs by 1994 while the Assemblies of God restated the previous position. Glass suggested the reasons for the shift or the crossroads of pentecostal eschatology were as follows: the hope of the imminent parousia was frustrated and the first and second generations, who had believed that they would be raptured in their life times, began to pass away; the charismatic movement and the third wave, through which the Holy Spirit renewed and restored the traditional churches, gave a new perspective that the kingdom of God was present as a reality rather than expecting the imminent coming of the Lord; the theological development of pentecostalism caused it to reconsider Biblical prophecies in a more critical way rather than following the sensationalism; and the change of social standing of pentecostals, from low class to middle class, provided them with more optimism.

eternal world. Human beings are destined to die because all are sinners by birth. Further, every living creature is bound to destruction (death) physically. Only those who are in Christ have the hope to be finally resurrected and to no longer experience physical death.

16.2.2. Immortality of the soul

There exists a certain folk faith about spiritual existence after death in Korea. Shamanism is one of them. They generally think that the disembodied soul/spirit goes to a world beyond (heaven) or exists in this world for a certain period of time, later to be annihilated. Nevertheless, the idea of immortality of soul is not clear. Sunboguemism teaches the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Jeong-Ryeol Pak argues that this doctrine is based on the statement that God created man in His own image by breathing His life into him (Gen.1: 26,27; 2:7) and on other Scriptural references in the Old and New Testaments. Based on the Scriptures, humans as spiritual beings are as immortal as God is. He further argues against the unbiblical views of this doctrine by referring to two aspects of Berkhof’s Systematic Theology: one objection to this doctrine of personal immortality is the influence of a materialistic philosophy which claims that the “soul has no independent substantial existence” but is only a “function of brain activity”; the other variants of this doctrine are the ideas of a racial immortality instead of personal immortality, immortality of commemoration through leaving one’s unforgettable name in history, and the immortality of influence through the influencing of posterity with one’s accomplishments.

16.2.3. Intermediate State

Sunboguem believes in an intermediate state of death. The views of the International Theological Institute of the Yoido Sunboguem Church and Jeong-Ryeol Pak on this doctrine are substantially the same. Both saved souls and unsaved souls are headed for sheol-hades, which is divided into two levels. The upper level (paradise in sheol-hades) is for saved souls, where they are blessed with comfort and gladness, while the lower place (hell or gehenna) is for unsaved souls and is a place of torture. There, both kinds of souls wait for the resurrection – righteous ones for the parousia and evil ones for the final white throne of judgement. It further divides the lower level into three sections: one for the unsaved/evil souls (Ps.9:17); a lower section for demons (Rev.9:1-11); and the lowest level for fallen angels (2 Pet.2:4; Jude 1:6). Sunboguemism considers these places localities in a literal sense. When its purpose for being has been fulfilled sheol-hades will be thrown into the lake of fire (Rev.20:14). Sunboguemism also distinguishes between sheol and hades. Righteous souls of the Old Testament residing in the upper part of sheol were moved to

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8 Cho, ibid., p.465.
9 Tae-Ung Sin, Study on Korean Demons, Seoul, 1990, pp.21-55. There is no unified view on this matter because Korean folk religious phenomenon is not an institutionalized religion.
paradise in heaven when Christ Jesus was resurrected (Eph.4:8; 1 Pet.3:19; 4:6; Rev.1:18). Consequently, those souls saved after Christ’s resurrection will be taken to heavenly paradise directly without stopping at hades (Luk.23:43; 2Cor.5:8).

Sunbogeumism believes that souls in this intermediate state have a clear consciousness (Luk.16:19-31; 23:43; Acts 7:59; 2 Cor.5:8; Phil.1:23). Therefore, it rejects the theory that souls sleep after death. It neither accepts the doctrine of purgatory nor the possibility of salvation during the period of the intermediate state (second probation). It also rejects the theory of the annihilation of evil souls.  

16.3. GENERAL ESCHATOLOGY

Sunbogeumism can be classified as a type of dispensational premillennialism (pre-tribulation rapture theory). With respect to the interpretation of John’s Revelation, it takes a futurist view. It also interprets the prophecies of the Scriptures as literally as the context allows (9.3). Nevertheless, Cho’s teaching about the last events of the universe (general eschatology), needs exploration. This section will deal with Christ’s return and the rapture of the church (16.3.1), the Anti-Christ and the great tribulation (16.3.2), Christ’s Second Coming and the millennium (16.3.3), Israel in relation to its eschatology (16.3.4), and the final judgement and the new heaven and new earth (16.3.5).

16.3.1. The Return of Christ and the Rapture of the Church

Sunbogeumism expects a twofold coming of Christ in a seven year interval, which includes the secret rapture of His own saints in the air before the great tribulation and the Second Coming to earth to establish millennium after the tribulation. There will be signs and events preceding the rapture. Jeong-Ryeol Pak lists them as follows: the Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached to the whole world (Matt.24:14); the Jewish people will return to an independent nation of Israel (Is.11:1,12; Matt.24:32); apostacy will pervade and morality, politics, and religion will degenerate (Matt.24:12; 2 Tim.3:1-8); wars and the rumours of wars will be heard (Matt.24:6,7); the earth will experience natural disasters (Matt.24:7b); traffic and knowledge will advance (Dan.12:4); and a temporary presence of peace will be felt (1 Thes.5:1-3). Pentecostalism in general holds similar views as this.

Yonggi Cho, however, presented the preceeding events in a sensational way. The discernment of the return of Christ according to the preceeding signs attracts the interest of the pre-tribulationists. His teachings can be found in his collected sermons on the Book of Daniel and the Revelation to John. When he interpreted Revelation chapters 4-19 in connection with the 70th week of Daniel (Dan.9: 24-27)

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13 Pak, ibid., pp.414-417.
15 Pak, ed., “The Lecture on the Systematic Theology,” Seoul, 1985, p.203. This view takes Revelation 4 to 19 for the coming seven years’ great tribulation and for the 70th week of the vision of Daniel.
16 Pak, Pentecostal Theology, pp.424-425.
17 D. J. Wilson, ibid.
as the seven year great tribulation and linked this with the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 (Matt. 24: 32-34) and the European Communities (Dan. 2:31-35; 7: 1-28; Rev. 13: 1-10), he used the events as symbols of the imminence of the parousia.18 In this regard, it is also needed to refer to expressions such as: “to our surprise, the anti-Christ is already born” (A Commentary on the Revelation, 146, 234, 266); “we know that ten European nations will be united and a little horn, the anti-Christ, will emerge from a Syrian lineage in this European republic … will be the president and rule the whole world … we do not know the date if it will be in five or ten years, but we know that we stand at the threshold of the last days” (A Commentary on Daniel, 45, 126, 148-149); and “today, the Revelation of John is an opened book (Rev. 22:10) … we can understand all the words of prophecy because the Holy Spirit convinces us as the time draws near” (Revelation, 314). These words might have convinced some Korean pentecostals that Christ would come soon, before the new millennium.19 Here we can observe some “striking parallels between empirical philosophy”20 and his dispensationalist eschatology. At the same time, we can also see that his eschatology is characterized as a missionary eschatology in that he encouraged believers to evangelize the world in the last days before His return.

Since the interdenominational debate over Cho’s pseudo-Christianity (7.3.2.4), Cho began to tone down his eschatology,21 while the International Theological Institute (ex-Yoeng-San Institute) of the Yoido Sunbogeum Church published Eschatology (1989), which complemented Cho’s eschatology in many respects. The leading theologian of the American Assemblies of God, Stanley M. Horton, warns that we must not give too much attention to signs, but keep our attention on Jesus.22

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19 Yonggi Cho, A Commentary on the Revelation to John for Laymen, Seoul, 1976; idem, A Commentary on Daniel for Laymen, Seoul, 1976. As a futurist in understanding the Revelation, Cho had the same opinion of applying seven churches each to the ‘seven periods’ of church history: the church in Ephesus to the church of A.D.33-100; the church in Smyrna to the church of A.D. 100-312; the church in Pergamum to the church of A.D. 312-590; the church in Thyatira to the church of A.D. 590-1517; the church in Sardis to the church of A.D. 1517-1750; the church in Philadelphia to the church of A.D. 1750-1905; and the church in Laodicea to the church of A.D. 1905-rapture. For example, his comparison of the church in Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22) with the church of the 20th century (Revelation/82-92), which has experienced worldwide revival and the pentecostal movement, can hardly be welcomed (66-72, 82-92). Actually, the European Communities comprised 10 nations in 1981, 12 nations in 1986, and 15 nations in 1995, but nothing happened.
20 Curtis I. Crenshaw and Grove E. Gunn, III, Dispensationalism: Today, Yesterday, and Tomorrow, Memphis, TN, 1989, pp.379-383. Two of Gunn’s contentions about why dispensationalism is popular are: its materialization of the modern world (the rise of Russia, the State of Israel, European Communities, WCC etc.); and its parallelism in philosophical thought (empiricism of Francis Bacon/ George M. Marsden) which employs scientific methodology. It prefers, consequently, literal and precise language to figurative expression and interprets the Scriptures in the literal sense. Here we can see the same tendency between dispensationalism and Sunbogeunism (8.3.3).
21 Cho, A Commentary on the Gospel of Mark, Seoul, 1992, pp.274-275. Cho does not mention the independence of Israel (1948) and one generation as 50 years in the commentary on Mark 13:28-30 (1992). However, in his commentary of Matt. 24:32-34 (30.4. 1986), he mentioned the independence of Israel in 1948 and 50 years as a generation as the symbol of the imminence of the last days. Nevertheless, he emphasized that nobody knows the time and date (ITI, Faith and Theology ... II, 1993, pp.160-162); In 1993, Cho’s eschatology became one of the reasons that caused the Tonghap denomination to study further his pseudo-Christianity (7.3.2.4).
In discussing the *parousia*, Cho takes First Corinthians 15:23, First Thessalonians 4:16,17, and Revelation 4:1 as the same event: the rapture of the believers at His coming. This secret rapture will be only for His New Testament church, namely, those who sleep in Christ and those who are born again and filled with the Holy Spirit. Only they will be invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb as His bride (Matt.25:1-13; Rev.19:6-8). This rapture of the church is different from the first resurrection, which will take place after the seven year tribulation (Rev.20:4-6).

The International Theological Institute and Jeong-Ryeol Pak differ from Cho about who will be raptured. They believe that all the saved saints of the Old Testament and the New Testament periods will be included as the bride of Christ. Their views correspond with that of the American Assemblies of God. Cho’s extreme futurist and literal interpretation about these apocalyptic Biblical texts was moderated by other Sunbogeum theologians and the American Assemblies of God. More differences between Cho’s view and that of two other Korean pentecostals will be discussed in the following sections.

16.3.2. The Anti-Christ and the Great Tribulation

According to *Sunbogeumism*, when the church is raptured and the Holy Spirit has moved at His *parousia*, this world will meet with unprecedented tribulation. This is the period of God’s wrath on unbelievers, the tribulation as well as salvation of Israel, and the last opportunity for others to be saved by God. Yonggi Cho expressed his views about when and how the Anti-Christ would appear in his teaching of Daniel and the Revelation to John. Linking the revivals of the State of Israel and the European Communities with the fulfillment of prophecies for the emerging of the Anti-Christ and the great tribulation (16.3.1), he stated his opinion that the Anti-Christ will emerge as “the beast with ten horns and seven heads” (Rev.13:1-10). As the president of the world powers (the president of the European Communities), he will conclude a seven-year mutual peace agreement with Israel (Dan.9:27). During the first half of the period, 144,000 sealed Israelites will evangelize the world and a great multitude from all tribes and nations will be saved through their ministries (Rev.7:1-17). Then the great dragon, Satan, will be thrown down to earth (Rev.12:9) and give his power, throne, and authority to the Anti-Christ (Rev.13) at the beginning of the second half of the period. The beast will then not only break the treaty with Israel (Dan. 9:24-27) but he will also make himself god, and there will be a great persecution of Israel and believers. Another beast, the false prophet, will deceive people on earth by performing signs so that they may follow the Anti-Christ (Rev.13:11-18). Making this false prophet the religious leader, the “church” in this period, a unity of various religions (Islam, Buddhism, Taoism etc., and liberal Christians) will serve the politics of the Anti-Christ as the great harlot (Rev.17).

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Israel will be kept in the wilderness by God (Matt.24:15-22; Rev.12:1-6, 13-17) and believers will be martyred (Rev.15:2-4) during the latter half of the great tribulation. The wrath of God on the Anti-Christ and the world will be terminated when Christ comes again (revelation) with His resurrected saints after the marriage ceremony. He will meet the Anti-Christ and his cohorts at Armageddon. This is the final war and judgement on earth (the great day of God, the Almighty). The beast and false prophet will be seized and thrown into the lake of fire and the rest will be destroyed (Rev.16:12-21; 19:1-21).  

Christ’s church will not only escape the tribulation but will also be ushered into judgement for rewards and the preparation for the wedding as the bride of the Lamb. This will take seven years and then there will be the marriage supper of the Lamb at the end.  

Sunbogeumism explains why His church will not pass through the great tribulation as follows: first, the church as the Body of Christ cannot be judged again because Christ has already suffered; second, Jesus hinted about the church’s avoidance of the tribulation through metaphors from the days of Noah and Lot (Luke 17:26-30); third, in chapters 4-19 of the Revelation, the word ‘church’ does not appear, which indicates the church will not suffer during the tribulation; and fourth, some verses of the Scriptures testify that the church must awake and escape it (Luke 21:34-36; 1 Thes.1:10; Rev.3:10). Then the church will be presented as Christ’s bride to God sitting on the throne in heaven.

Cho asserts that Christ’s church will be exclusively invited to the wedding. All those who will be saved or martyred during the tribulation will be called the “friends of the bride” at the wedding. They include the souls under the altar (Rev.6:9-11), a great multitude clothed in white clothes (Rev.7:9-17), those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his image ... standing on the sea of glass (Rev.15:2-4), and the saints of the Old Testament, who will be the bridegroom’s friends (John 3:29). This strict literal and futurist interpretation was modified by the writings of the International Theological Institute and Pak (16.3.1). Cho’s interpretation implies that Sunbogeumism emphasizes the glory of Christ’s church and its task as the fullness of Him who fills all in all (Eph.1:22-23). It encourages believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit and be alert at all times with prayer, while engaging in evangelization (a missionary eschatology). 

16.3.3. Second Coming of Christ, Resurrection and Millennium

The reign of the beast will be terminated when Christ appears with His angels and bride. Christ will destroy him and the allied forces in the last war, at Armageddon.

26 Cho, Revelation, and Daniel, passim.
27 Cho, Revelation, pp.100, 114, 275-276. Cho writes that the raptured church will be presented to God on the throne in heaven (114) while he also mentions that the raptured church will meet Christ in the air and celebrate their wedding at the end (275-276). This is confused in his writing because ‘air’ and ‘heaven’ are implied by it as localities.
28 Cho, Revelation, pp.100-106; Pak, ibid., pp.421-423.
29 Cho, ibid., pp.276-277.
31 idem, Daniel, pp.132, 134, 177, 225; idem, Revelation, pp.97, 104, 293-294, 316-317.
(Rev.16:12-16; 19:11-21). The beast and the false prophet will be thrown alive into the lake of fire. The dragon, Satan, will be shut up in the abyss for a thousand years (Rev.19:19-20:3). The second coming of Christ into this world will set up the millennium, then follows the resurrection. Cho teaches three types of resurrections, excluding Christ’s resurrection: first, the rapture of the church at parousia (Rev.4:1-4); second, the so-called first resurrection before the millennium, which is the resurrection of those who were killed during the great tribulation (Rev.20:4-6); and third, the resurrection of all the unsaved prior to the white throne judgement (Rev.20:11-15). Cho even identifies three different phases of resurrection during the tribulation: the martyred souls under the altar (Rev.6:9-11); the great multitude who are saved by the evangelization of the 144,000 (Rev.7:9-17); and those who are saved by the two witnesses, i.e. the reincarnated Elijah and Moses (Rev.11:1-13). This literal interpretation was not accepted by the International Theological Institute and Jeong-Ryeol Pak, who identify only two resurrections – the resurrection at the parousia which will be the first resurrection of the Old Testament saints and the church, and the second resurrection prior to the final white throne judgement.

Then the millennium will begin. According to Cho, Christ and His bride, resurrected saints who were martyred during the great tribulation, Israelites who were kept in the wilderness during the tribulation, and those who were separated as sheep among those living during the tribulation without receiving the mark of the beast (Matt.25: 31-46), will constitute the citizens. This means that three groups of believers will live in the millennium: the translated bride of Christ who will come down with Him at His revelation; the group at the first resurrection, who will reign with Christ in the millennium; and the group (unresurrected) who will remain throughout the tribulation.

Cho’s strict qualifications for Christ’s bride, His friends, his separation between the bride and reigning saints in the millennium, and his three resurrections are problematic. For example, he did not clearly mention when the Old Testament saints will be resurrected. If they are to be resurrected at the parousia (even though he did not say this clearly), they must be included as His bride, but Cho denied this. Then the Old Testament saints must be resurrected after the millennium and be brought to the white throne judgement, yet Cho claimed that this resurrection will only be for unbelievers; however, he does treat that they are invited as the friends of the Lamb at the wedding ceremony – a logical error. According to him, those who are martyred during the tribulation and are resurrected after the tribulation will reign with Christ in the millennium. But he did not explain what His bride will do in this millennium. His stern, literal-futurist interpretation seemed to cause confusions. These problems were also modified by the eschatologies of the International Theological Institute and Pak. Both believe that all the saints of the Old and New

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32 idem, Revelation, pp.280-281. These followers and those assembled at the war will be killed by the sword which came from the mouth of Christ and will be headed for hades.
33 ITI, ibid., pp.55-57, 85, 89; Pak, Pentecostal Theology, pp.428-429, 436-437. Most pentecostals hold the same view as that of ITI and Pak.
34 This is the second resurrection event according to Cho (Rev.20:5-6).
35 Cf. Appendix 10. The dogmatic creed of Yoido Sunbogeum Church.
Testaments, who are raptured or resurrected prior to the tribulation, will be the bride and will rule with Christ in the new millennium.\textsuperscript{37}

This universal kingdom, the very first and the last, will be the period in which God restores the blessing of the lost garden in Eden. It will also be a period of peace without war, under the reign of Christ and a period when the Holy Spirit dwells in humans universally. Material prosperity, longevity and the healing of all the deformed will be part of the kingdom. Israel will be elevated among all nations and Jerusalem will be the capital city.\textsuperscript{38} At the close of this kingdom, Satan will be released and have one last chance to deceive the nations, Gog and Magog, and wage war against the holy government. When the fire from heaven devours them, the long-pending rebellion of Satan and humans will be finally extinguished (Rev. 20:7-10).

16.3.4. Israel as the Barometer for Eschatology

Pentecostals as dispensational premillennialists are concerned about the history of Israel in connection with eschatology because they believe that its development is closely related to the fulfillment of God’s prophecy.\textsuperscript{39} Keeping in step with this thought, Yonggi Cho warns of Christ’s imminent return in course with the history of Israel:\textsuperscript{40} the independence of Israel in 1948 was correlated to the parable of the fig tree (Matt.24:32-33); the parousia will happen in one generation, a period of 50 years (Matt.24:34-35); the rapture will take place when Israel makes a seven-year mutual peace treaty with the European Communities, which will be the revived Roman Empire of ten nations (Dan.9:24-27); the 144,000 Israelites, who will be chosen as the last witnesses of the Gospel during the first half of the seven years tribulation (Rev.7:1-17), will be taken to heaven while remaining Israelites will be protected from the persecution of the anti-Christ during the latter half of the tribulation (Rev.14:1-5, 12:1-6); and Christ would come to the earth at the Armageddon war so that His hostility be destroyed and would establish millennial kingdom making Jerusalem the capital city (Rev.19:17-21).

Two other Sunhoguem eschatologies did not focus on the nation of Israel as Cho did. Jeong-Ryeol Pak simply writes that the establishment of the nation of Israel is a symbol of the fulfillment of the Word of God in connection with eschatology. He also acknowledges the suffering and conversion of Israel during the tribulation. The International Theological Institute interprets the 70 weeks of Daniel’s prophecy as relating to Israel with the last week representing the seven years of tribulation (Dan.7:24-27). This Institute also discusses the treaty between the Anti-Christ and Israel, the suffering and national conversion of Israel to Christ, and the restoration of Jerusalem as the capital city of the millennium. Neither Pak nor the International Theological Institute identifies of the last times in connection to the establishment of Israel.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{37} ITI, ibid., pp.56, 89; Pak, ibid., pp.428-429.
\textsuperscript{38} Pak, ibid., pp.452-462.
\textsuperscript{39} D.J.Wilson, ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Israel as the unique chosen nation for God’s providence in relation to His revelation for salvation is different from the so-called ‘Korea as a chosen nation for evangelization of the Gospel.’
\textsuperscript{41} Neither discussed the issue that the president of the EC will be the Anti-Christ.
The Tonghap Presbyterian Church dismisses Cho’s eschatology, especially his idea of connecting eschatology to the history of Israel. They assert that his eschatology is dangerous and wrong just as the dispensational eschatology which teaches that human history before the millennium is 6,000 years long and then Christ will return around A.D.2000. However, the Tonghap denomination concluded that although Cho’s teaching about the signs of the rapture (state of Israel in 1948 and one generation as 50 years) has crossed the boundary of a time-limited eschatology,42 his wrong interpretation of the Bible as a dispensational premillenialist should not be regarded as heretical nor peculiar.43

16.3.5. Final Judgement, New Heaven and New Earth versus the Lake of Fire

Teaching believers to look and prepare for the parousia, Sunbogeumism fixes its final and eternal hope on a new heaven and earth.44 It believes in the second resurrection prior to the great white throne judgement, even though there is no united view about who will be resurrected. Cho and the International Theological Institute hold the view that all unbelievers throughout the history will be resurrected to face judgement, whereas Pak holds the opinion that unbelievers and those who died during the millennium will be resurrected and the white throne judgement will be applicable to believers as well.45 At this judgement, all those whose names are not found in the book of life will be thrown into the lake of fire, the second death, and the new heaven and earth will receive all the redeemed. There will be no more death, mourning, or pain because God makes all things new (Rev. 21:1-7). However, there will be different grades of reward according to the deeds of the believers so each individual joy may be perfect and full.46 The capital city of the new heaven and earth, the new Jerusalem, where the headquarters of the Trinitarian God lie and where the bride of Christ, the church, will live, will come out of heaven from God. Yonggi Cho, the International Theological Institute, and Jeong-Ryeol Pak all make a distinction between the new Jerusalem and the new heaven and earth as individual localities. But they do not agree who will be in the city and who would be outside of it. Cho believes that only those who belong to the church, the bride of the Lamb, will live in the new Jerusalem while others, such as Old Testament believers and those who are saved after the rapture, will live outside the city in the new heaven and earth (Rev. 21:24-27).47 The theological significance for Sunbogeumism’s doctrine for the new heaven and the earth can be formulated as follows: first, the

42 Taberah World Mission, The Last Plan of God, Seoul, 1991. Jang-Lim Lee and his followers insisted that the rapture will take place on 28.10.1992 and Christ will come on earth in October 1999. They claimed they received the message from God directly through young prophets.
44 Cho, Revelation, p.298; KAOG, ibid., Article 20.
45 Cho, ibid., pp.289-290; ITI, ibid., p.89; Pak, ibid., pp.437, 465-473.
47 Cho, ibid., pp.297-310; ITI, ibid., p.109; Pak, Pentecostal Theology, pp.466-473; Horton, ibid., pp.636-637. Horton (AAOG) does not explain about the new heaven and earth because, according to him, they are not described in the Bible. He identifies the new Jerusalem with heaven. Here, we can see that Sunbogeum eschatology, especially Cho’s, has the tendency of interpreting more details about the prophetic writings.
purpose of God’s creation will be fulfilled; second, God’s chosen people will live in
the presence of God and be blessed with His fullness corresponding to their
existence; and third, godliness and ungodliness will be fundamentally judged and
eternally separate.48

Minjung theology has an entirely different eschatology which excludes the
transcendental kingdom of God. Its object is to establish a socio-political environ-
ment where the masses are treated equally under righteousness and democracy. Its
method is participation in reform activities.49 Shamanism has a concept of the world
beyond but without a concrete idea of the kingdom of the new heaven and new
earth.

Yonggi Cho’s intense literal and futurist interpretation of the Revelation to John
illustrates its characteristics. In addition to the two divisions of thought within
Sunbogeuism is the leading theologian of the American Assemblies of God, Stanly
M. Horton, who also differs from Cho on many points of this apocalyptic book:
Revelation 4:1 is not the symbol of the rapture of the First Thessalonians 4:17
(16.3.1); the seven churches are not compared to all the church ages separately
(footnote 19 of 16.3.1); there is no mention about the blasphemous world ruler who
will be the president of the European Communities (16.3.1); the Lamb’s bride
includes all the redeemed, including those martyred during the tribulation (16.3.2);
those on the thrones in the millennium are all believers (16.3.3); and the new
Jerusalem will be open to all God’s people regardless of the Old Testament Israel
(16.3.5).50 Sunbogeu’s supernatural-vertical and God’s judgement-oriented
eschatology can be compared and criticized by the eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann,
who has a horizontal-hope and eschatological-participation view of eschatology.
Moltmann advocates the view that Christ’s church should make the cross event the
eschatological foundation/beginning and actively share the suffering of the
resurrected Christ by the power of the Spirit in this world while waiting for the
glorious resurrection of God. This contradicts Sunbogeu’s belief which teaches
that Christ’s church can only wait passively for His parousia, revelation, judgement
and His kingdom while actively evangelizing the world.51

16.4. CONCLUSION

The fundamental idea of Sunbogeu eschatology is identical to the dispensational
premillennialism of classical pentecostalism. It also shares a common view of
individual eschatology with other pentecostals and evangelicals without showing
any noticeable divergence. Noticeable points of its personal eschatology include the
emphasis that physical death is the result of spiritual death (separation between God
and man) and its detailed classification of the sheol-hades into four sections (the
upper one for saved souls and three lower levels for the unsaved evil souls, demons,
and fallen angels).

48 cf. Pak, ibid., 469-473.
50 Stanley M. Horton, The Ultimate Victory: Exposition of the Book of Revelation, Springfield, MO,
Sunbogeum eschatology characterizes its general eschatology through Yonggi Cho’s radical-Biblical view and the theological-systematic considerations of the International Theological Institute and Jeong-Ryeol Pak. It is Cho’s view which arouses our interest. Cho presented his eschatology through his preaching on the Book of Daniel and the Revelation to John on the basis of a strict and literal interpretation of the Bible, within the frame of dispensationalism. His belief that the parousia will happen concretely in the framework of modern history characterized his eschatology. He often gave Korean pentecostals the impression that Christ might return around the turning of the new millennium, approximately 50 years after the establishment of the nation of Israel (1948) and the development of the European Union through ten nations (Tonghap Presbyterian Denomination). According to Cho, the president of the ‘New Roman Empire’ of ten united European nations (the European Union) will be the Anti-Christ. He is greatly concerned about the role of Israel at the end of times. As a preacher, he wanted to interpret all the verses of John’s Revelation and the Book of Daniel, an endeavour which can be dangerous.

The sharp distinction between the bride of the Lamb (the church), who will be raptured at the parousia and those who were saved before the church age and those who will be saved in the period of tribulation, has the tendency to emphasize the contemporary faithfulness of believers, but it also distinguishes between salvation through Christ in church history and salvation before and after church history. Cho’s classification of believers has implications for his understanding of the new heaven and the new earth: only the raptured church, His bride, will live in the new Jerusalem, whereas all other saints will live outside that city. In addition to this, we can find logical discrepancies in his writings about general eschatology (Revelation). These elements show the weaknesses of his eschatology. This radical view, however, has been changed into a moderate one since the last decade of the 20th century. Furthermore, some theological reflections on eschatology by the International Theological Institute and Jeong-Ryeol Pak have criticized Cho’s extreme futurist and literal profiling of eschatology. Without a unified view of various aspects of eschatology, Sunbogeum eschatology is an eschatology in the making. Furthermore, Sunbogeum eschatology needs to reconsider the Biblical apocalyptics in a framework of sound hermeneutics.

The strengths of Sunbogeum eschatology, however, is its application of eschatology in daily life. It has resulted in encouraging people to be filled with the Holy Spirit and makes them aware of the soon return of Christ. This eschatology also has a missiological dimension of preaching the Gospel in preparation for the end of times. In addition to this, it needs to be emphasized that its teaching on the rapture, the millennium, and the new heaven and the new earth will help keep the balance between its emphasis upon the contemporary Triple Blessing and eschatological hope.