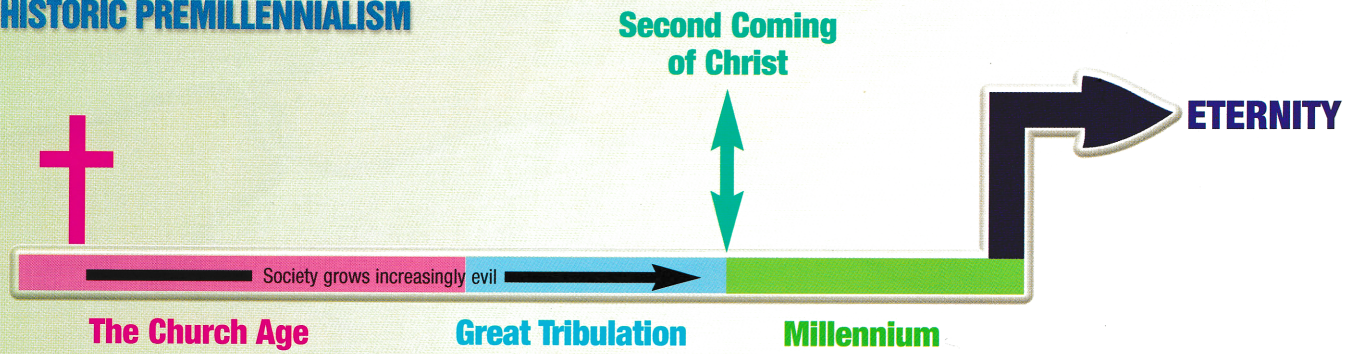


HISTORIC PREMILLENNIALISM



What is historic premillennialism?

Historic premillennialism is the belief that the Second Coming of Christ will precede the millennium and that the church has replaced the nation of Israel as God's covenant people. Also known as "covenant premillennialism," historic premillennialism treats the millennium as a literal future event. Most historic premillennialists believe that Christians will remain on the earth during the great tribulation. The tribulation will purify the churches by rooting out false believers. According to historic premillennialists . . .

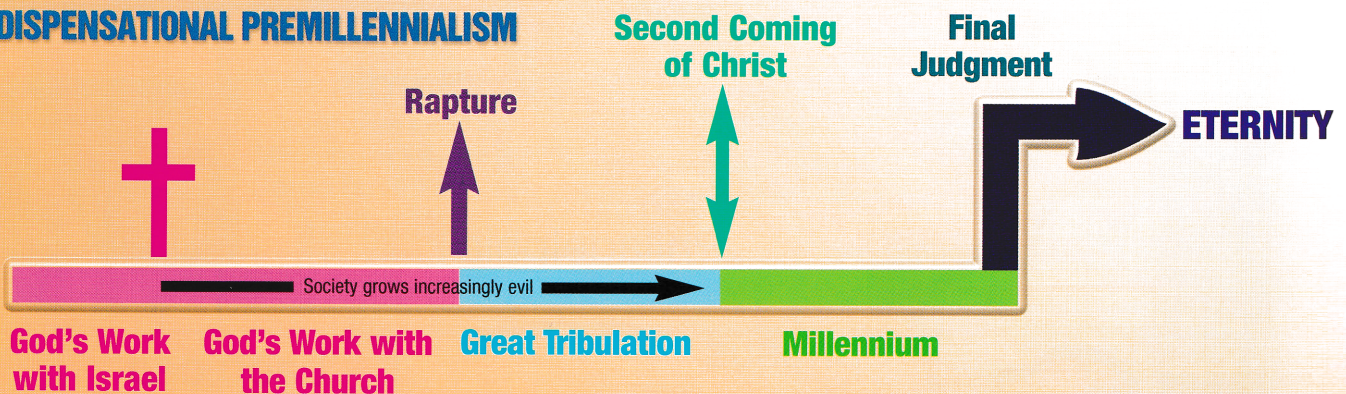
- God's promises of land and blessings to Abraham and his offspring were conditional promises, based on obedience. Israel's persistent disobedience negated God's covenant with them.
- God has maintained a covenant of grace throughout the Old and New Testaments with all who trusted in Him. These believers—embodied today in the church—are the true Israel (see Romans 9:6-8; Galatians 6:16).
- Most references to "Israel" in Revelation refer symbolically to the church.

What Scriptures seem to support historic premillennialism?

- The revealing of the Antichrist precedes Christ's return—2 Thess. 2:3, 4.
- The tribulation will root out false members from the churches—Rev. 2:22, 23;
- The saints are on earth during the tribulation—Revelation 13:7
- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were conditional—Gen. 22:18; 2 Chronicles 33:8; Isaiah 1:19, 20; Jeremiah 7:6, 7.
- The New Testament frequently uses "Israel" and "the twelve tribes" to refer to Christians—Romans 9:6-8; James 1:1.

When has historic premillennialism been popular? Historic premillennialism seems to have been the earliest view of the end-times among post-apostolic Christians. Many early church fathers—including Lactantius (AD 240-320), Irenaeus (AD 130-200), Justin Martyr (AD 100-165), and probably Papias (AD 60-130), a disciple of the apostle John—embraced historic premillennialism. Modern supporters include scholars such as John Warwick Montgomery, George R. Beasley-Murray, David Dockery, Robert Gundry, and George E. Ladd.

DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIALISM



What is dispensational premillennialism?

Dispensational premillennialism is the belief that the Second Coming of Christ will precede the millennium and that God will still give the nation of Israel the land described in Genesis 15:18.

Dispensational premillennialism treats the millennium as a literal, future event. Most dispensational premillennialists are pre-tribulationists; they understand Rev. 4:1, 2 to refer to "the rapture," when Christ removes Christians from the earth before the great tribulation begins. Some dispensational premillennialists, known as mid-tribulationists, believe the rapture will occur during the great tribulation. According to the dispensational premillennialists . . .

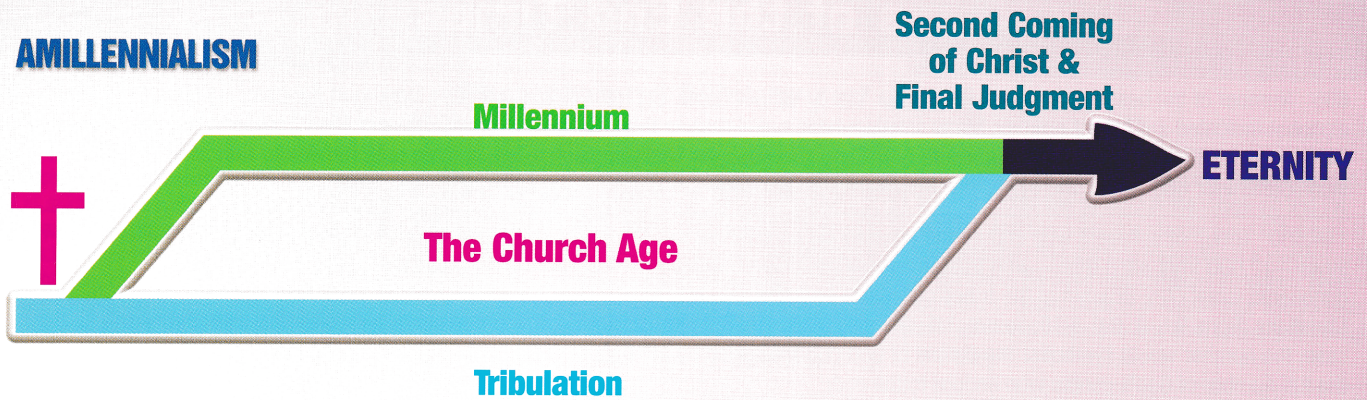
- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were unconditional; therefore, the Jews will still receive the land described in Genesis 15:18.
- During the great tribulation, many Jews will turn to Jesus Christ.
- All references to Israel in Revelation refer to the nation of Israel.

What Scriptures seem to support dispensational premillennialism?

- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were unconditional—Genesis 15:7-21.
- God will keep Christians from the outpouring of His wrath during the tribulation—I Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 3:10.
- The church is not specifically mentioned between Revelation 4 and 19.

When has dispensational premillennialism been popular? This view emerged in the 1800's among the Plymouth Brethren. Dispensational premillennialism increased in popularity in the late 1800's and has remained widespread throughout the 20th century. Proponents have included J. Nelson Darby, C.I. Scofield, Harry A. Ironside, Gleason Archer, Donald G. Barnhouse, Hal Lindsey, Chuck Smith, John MacArthur, Charles Ryrie, Charles Stanley, Norman L. Geisler, and Tim LaHaye.

AMILLENNIALISM



What is amillennialism?

Amillennialism is the belief that the millennium symbolizes Christ's reign in the lives of His people from the beginning of the church until His second coming. Rev. 19:11-21 portrays Christ's triumph over Satan through His death and resurrection. This triumph restrained the power of Satan on the earth (Rev. 20:1-3). The "first resurrection" (Rev. 20:4-6) symbolizes either the eternal life experienced by persons who die in Christ or the spiritual resurrection experienced by persons when they become Christians. When Christ returns, He will immediately defeat the powers of evil, resurrect the saved and the unsaved, judge them, and deliver them to their eternal destinies.

According to amillennialists . . .

- The great tribulation represents calamities and persecutions that have occurred throughout church history.
- Most references to "Israel" in Revelation are symbolic references to the people of God on earth (compare Romans 9:6-8; Galatians 6:16).
- In apocalyptic literature, numbers represent concepts, not literal statistics. For example, six symbolizes incompleteness, seven represents completeness, ten indicates something that is extreme but limited, twelve represents the

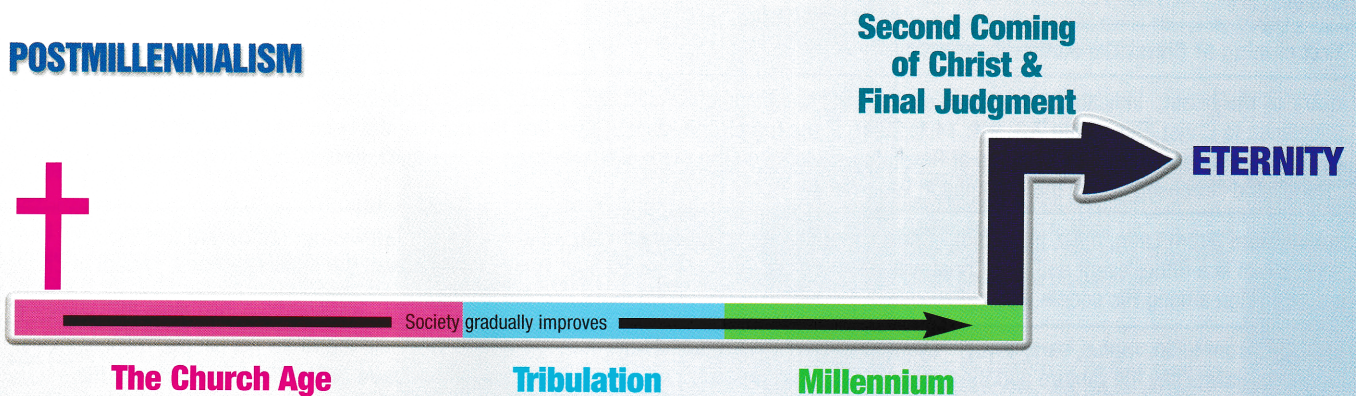
perfection of God's people, and one thousand symbolizes a great amount or long period of time.

What Scriptures seem to support amillennialism?

- The Bible frequently uses the number 1,000 figuratively—Psalms 50:10; 90:4; 105:8; 2 Peter 3:8.
- The first resurrection (Rev. 20:4) could refer to the spiritual resurrection (the regeneration or new birth) of persons who trust Christ—Rom. 11:13-15; Ephesians 2:1-4.
- The Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection of the saved and the unsaved will occur at the same time—Daniel 12:2, 3; John 5:28, 29.
- The saints are on earth during the tribulation—Revelation 13:7.

When has amillennialism been popular? Amillennialism became popular in the fifth century. Amillennialism has remained widespread throughout church history. Prominent amillennialists include the Protestant reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin, as well as evangelical theologians such as E.Y. Mullins, Abraham Kuyper, G.C. Berkouwer, Herschel Hobbs, Stanley Grenz, and J. I. Packer. Many students of church history believe that the church father Augustine of Hippo was the first amillennialist.

POSTMILLENNIALISM



What is postmillennialism?

Postmillennialism is the belief that the Second Coming of Christ will occur after the millennium. The millennial reign described in Rev. 20:1-6 represents a long time period when, through the preaching of the gospel, most of the world will submit to Jesus Christ. During this time, Satan will have no power over the earth, and evil regimes will collapse (see Rev. 19:19-20:3). A period of great tribulation may precede the millennium. According to postmillennialists . . .

- During the millennium, Christ will rule the earth through His Spirit and through His church; He will not, however, be physically present on the earth.
- The resurrection depicted in Rev. 20:4 represents the spiritual regeneration of people who trust Jesus Christ.
- The Second Coming of Christ, the final conflict between good and evil, the defeat of Satan, the physical resurrection of all people, and the final judgment will occur together, immediately after the millennium (Rev. 20:7-15).

What Scriptures seem to support postmillennialism?

- Every ethnic group will receive the gospel before the Second Coming—Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10.
- The first resurrection (Rev. 20:4) could refer to the spiritual resurrection (the regeneration or new birth) of persons who trust Christ—Romans 11:13-15; Ephesians 2:1-4.
- The Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection of all people, saved and unsaved, will occur at the same time—Dan. 12:2, 3; John 5:28, 29.

When has postmillennialism been popular? The earliest postmillennialist writer was Joachim of Fiore (AD 1135-1202). Postmillennialism became popular in the 19th century, partly because of that era's optimism about the future. Prominent postmillennialists include early church leaders such as Eusebius and Athanasius; preachers such as Jonathan Edwards and Charles Haddon Spurgeon; and theologians such as B. B. Warfield, Augustus H. Strong, Charles Hodge, R.L. Dabney, Loraine Boettner, and R.C. Sproul.