

END TIMES



4 VIEWS ON THE 2ND COMING OF CHRIST

Blessed is the one reads aloud the words of this prophecy....for the time is near. (Revelation 1:3)

OBJECTIVES

- Introduce the 4 main orthodox views of the end times. (Dispensationalism, Historic Premillennialism, Amillennialism, Postmillennialism)
- Provide Biblical support for each.
- What is the millennium?
- What does each view say about the tribulation and final judgement?
- Discuss the role of the nation of Israel.
- Antichrist/Satan.
- Practical Implications.
- Q&A...Discussion.

CAVEATS

- The presenters (Brax, Mike, Greg & Matt) are far from experts.
- The presenters desire to have the heart of a teacher. We want this class to be positive, informative and encouraging. We do not want to pit one view against another.
- The presenters may or may not personally hold the view they are teaching.
- NRF affirms each position as Biblical and within orthodoxy. You do not have to have X view to be a member.
- In the same way that the OT saints missed and misunderstood much of what God said and intended about the 1st coming of Christ, it is very possible that we may also miss and misunderstand much of what He said and intended about the 2nd coming of Christ.
- While our goal is to answer every question; the presenters simply may not know. (see bullet point 1)
- Scripture is the final authority.

MAIN BIBLICAL TEXTS

- Revelation Chapter 20
- Book of Daniel
- Matthew 24
- Romans 11 (Israel and the church)
- 1 Thessalonians 4
- 2 Thessalonians 2

Revelation 20:1-12

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit^[a] and a great chain. **2** And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, **3** and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

4 Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. **5** The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. **6** Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years

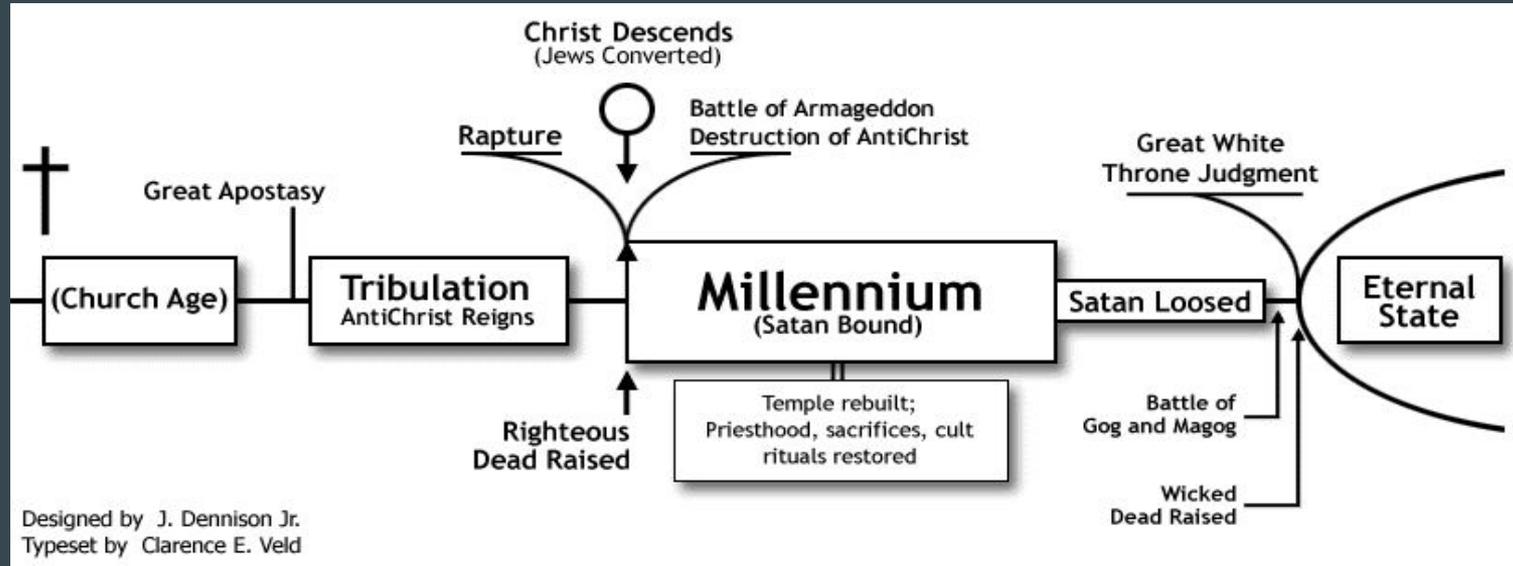
Revelation 20:1-12 cont.

7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison **8** and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. **9** And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven^[b] and consumed them, **10** and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. **12** And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. **13** And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. **14** Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. **15** And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

HISTORIC PREMILLENNIALISM

This position holds that Jesus will return physically to earth and reign as King on earth for 1,000 years (some say a literal 1,000 years, others say it's not literal). This will be a period of unprecedented prosperity and belief in Jesus Christ.



Biblical Texts that support Historic Premillennialism

1. Revelation 20:1–6. “They came to life and reigned with Christ *for a thousand years.*”
2. Isaiah 65:20. “No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.”

Biblical support for Premillennialism in regard to Satan: Logic

1. Revelation 12:7–9, “Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back,⁸ but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven.⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.” We also know that Satan is active on earth right now from other NT texts: “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). “In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:4).
2. Revelation 20:1–3, “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain.² And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,³ and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that ‘he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.”
3. Because Satan is thrown down to earth but still active now, we know that there must come a day in which Revelation 20:1–3 must happen where Satan is totally bound.

Biblical support for Premillennialism as regards resurrection: Logic

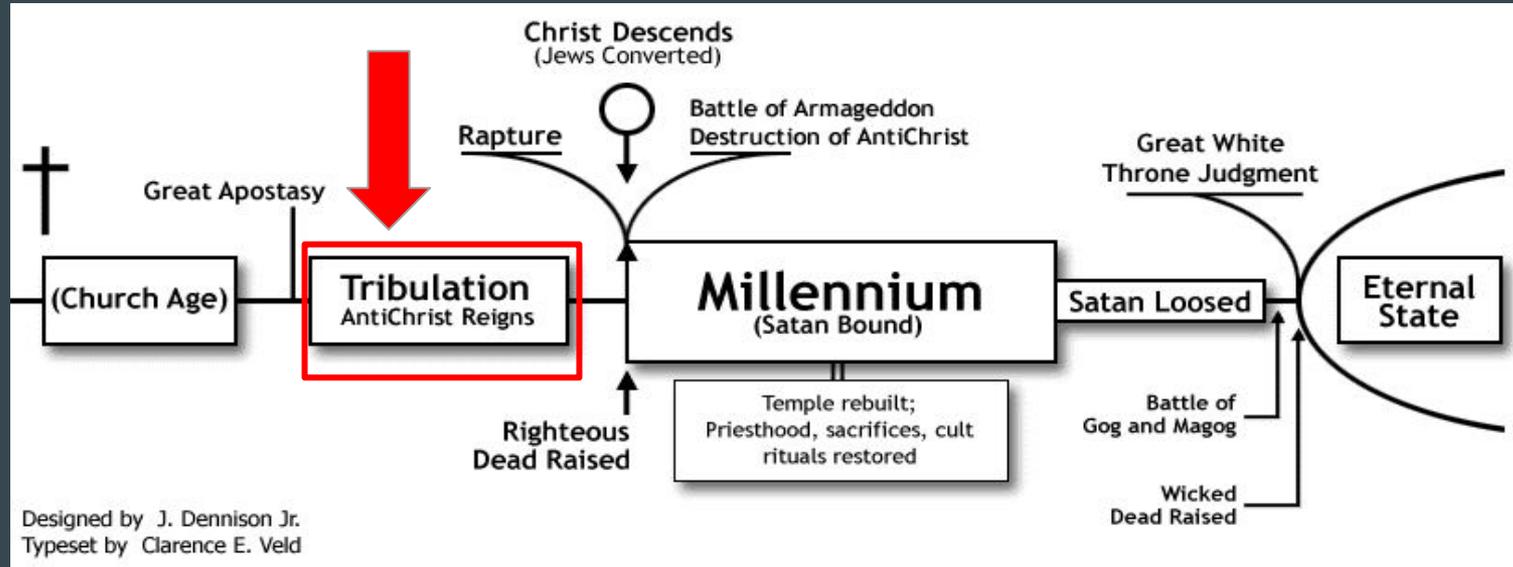
1. Revelation 20:4–6, “Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him *for a thousand years*.”
2. N.T. Wright’s *The Resurrection of the Son of God* shows that the word for resurrection here (“anastasis”) always refers to a physical resurrection after death in the New Testament. He even says about this very passage, “to use the word ‘resurrection’ to refer to death in an attempt to invest it with a new meaning seems to me to strain usage well beyond breaking point.”
3. Therefore, there is a physical resurrection from the dead where the saints get to reign with Christ for a thousand years physically on earth.

Biblical support for Premillennialism in the OT

1. Isaiah 65:17, 20, “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind... No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.”
2. Revelation 21:1 refers to the new heavens and the new earth. But Revelation 21:4 says that death will be no more.
3. Jesus must, therefore, be giving us a foretaste of the new heavens and the new earth in his thousand year reign. It is an overlap between the new and the old.

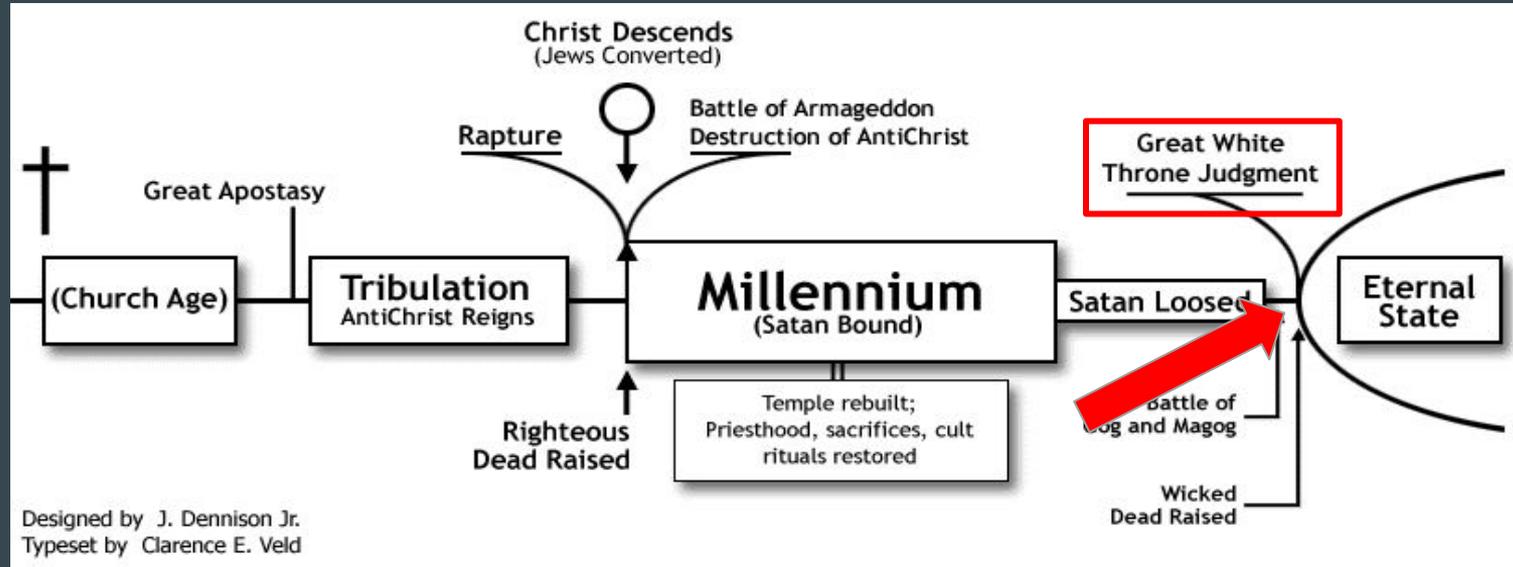
Premillennialism and the tribulation

Premillennialism holds to the idea that there is a great tribulation before the millennial reign of Christ on earth. This is most consistent with the New Testament's teaching about persecution and that humanity outside of the Church will continue to get worse.



Postmillennialism and the final judgment

The final judgment occurs after Satan is loosed and after the battle of Gog and Magog.

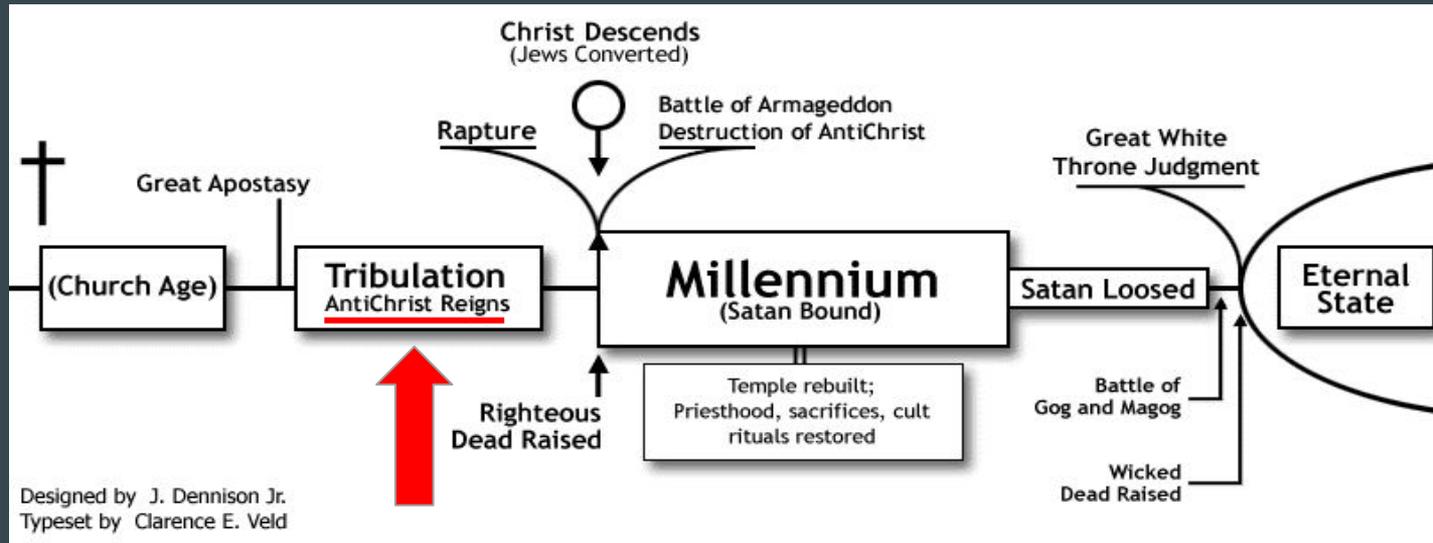


Premillennialism and Israel

Not a major focus of Historic Premillennialism. The Church itself is the people of God and ethnic Israel does not have any special position.

Premillennialism and the Antichrist

The antichrist is the cause of the great tribulation. There is the “spirit of the antichrist” that is active in the world before the tribulation, but there is a specific person who will be this antichrist who is the “man of lawlessness” who deceives the nations and sets himself up as god.

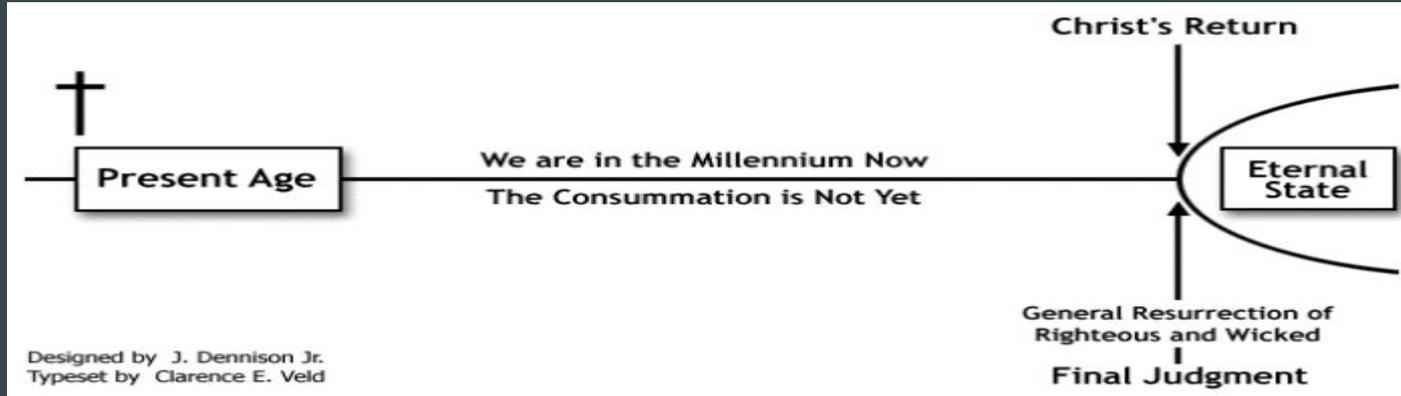


Practical Implications

1. As Christians, we should expect persecution. Things will go from bad to worse morally in our world. “Brothers, do not be surprised at the fiery trial that has come upon you as if something strange were happening to you” (1 Peter). So we should arm ourselves with the same perseverance as Christ himself.
2. Satan will be completely bound someday on earth and the gospel will experience unprecedented spread! So we should have great hope!
3. We will reign with Christ for 1,000 years! Be filled with hope for that day!

AMILLENNIALISM

- Amillennialism - This position does not affirm a literal 1,000-year reign of Jesus on the earth in the future. The 1,000 years is viewed as the reign of Christ through the church in the present age. We are currently living in the millennium as Christ reigns through the Spirit.



Amillennialism

- In this position, the millennium is now. Christ and those martyred for their faith are currently ruling (Rev 20:4).
- Matthew 28:18 - Jesus says He has all authority and His very presence is already with His people.
- The millennium is figurative in length and a figure of speech (2 Peter 3:8). A thousand years is like a day, and a day is a thousand years.
- When a thousand years is used throughout the Bible (Psalm 90:4, 2 Peter 3:8, Ecclesiastes 6:6) it is always seen as figurative.

Amil- Christ Return

- Sudden (2 Peter 3:10), Personal (1 Thess 4:16), Visible (Rev 1:7) and Bodily (Acts 1:11)
- Amillennialists hold to a resurrection of believers at the return of Christ, the final judgement and the new heaven and new earth. All these things are happening at the same time.
- Christ can return literally at any moment.
- What about future prophecy that must be fulfilled? Most of Matthew 24 already occurred in 70 A.D with the destruction of the Jewish Temple (Preterist view)

AMIL- TRIBULATION AND FINAL JUDGEMENT

- We are living in the “Last Days” (Hebrews 1:1-2)
- Great Tribulation is now. Destruction can be found throughout history and all over the earth. From the early church and the persecution of Nero, to brothers and sisters today being tortured and killed for their faith.
- All believers will be raptured at the return of Christ. (2 Thess 4:16-18)

Amil--MAN OF LAWLESSNESS (2 THESS 2:1-11)

- The difficulty of this passage is nothing short of legendary. Therefore there simply isn't an agreement on who Paul was referencing.
 - Man of Lawlessness during Paul's time? (vs 7) If Paul was referencing someone in the 1st century most scholars believe he was talking about Nero (Emperor of Rome).
 - Man of Lawlessness in the future? (Great rebellion comes first and then he is revealed vs 3).
 - Man of Lawlessness is not any one person but a spirit from Satan. (vs 9-10)

AMIL- ROLE OF SATAN

- Satan is bound and prevented from making the gospel ineffective. He is also bound from premature armageddon.
 - Satan is able to influence and tempt people to sin, but he is limited by God.
 - In Jesus' earthly ministry (Mt. 12:28-9, Lk. 10:18) Jesus sees Satan fall like lightning and Jesus talks of binding the strong man. These are descriptions of Jesus decreasing Satan's power in this age.
 - The church takes the Gospel to all nations, beginning with Pentecost, to make this true in the here and now.
- Satan has one final rebellion before he is thrown into the lake of fire at the end of the final judgement. (Rev 20:10)

AMIL-ROLE OF ISRAEL (Romans 11)

- Holds the view that there is only one “People of God” (The church or true Israel).
- Ethnic Israel does not have a separate future from the church.
- The bride of Christ (the church) is true Israel.
- Christ will return when the full number of Ethnic Jews and Gentiles come to saving faith.

LIVING AS AN AMILLENNIALIST (implications)

- Live in victory. No fear!. Christ is reigning now.
- Urgency to spread the Gospel. (Christ can return at any moment)
- Do not see America or its relationship with the nation of Israel as the center of the world. God's people are not bound by political or geographical lines.
- Interpret Revelation as follows
 - 1-3 Historical Churches
 - 4-19 Generally Historic
 - 20-22 Coming of Christ; judgement; eternal state (Future events)

Amillennialists

- J. I. Packer
- R.C. Sproul (The Last Days According to Jesus)
- Tim Keller
- Sam Storms (Kingdom Come)
- Anthony Hoekema (The Bible and the Future)