

Defining Terms for Eschatology

Defining terms

Eschaton – The time between the first and second advent of Christ, or that period of time from the cross until the second coming. Also called the “*last days*” or “*end times*” and not to be confused with the time period directly preceding the Second Coming. (Acts 2:17, 2 Tim 3:1, Heb 1:2, Jam 5:3, 2 Pet 3:3)

Parousia – The Second Coming of Christ from the gk. *parousia*

Great Tribulation - A short but intense period of distress and suffering at the end of time. The exact phrase, the great tribulation, is found only once in the Bible (Rev 7:14). The great tribulation is to be distinguished from the general tribulation a believer faces in the world (Matt 13:21; John 16:33; Acts 14:22). It is also to be distinguished from God's specific wrath upon the unbelieving world at the end of the age (Mark 13:24; Rom 2:5-10; 2 Thess 1:6). Many times the tribulation is equated with the “*Seventieth Week*” of Daniel, and at times is equated only with the latter 3.5 years of the “*Seventieth Week*.”

70th Week of Daniel – The last week in a prophecy given by Daniel the prophet. In Daniel's vision, God revealed that the Captivity of His people in Babylon would come to an end and they would be restored to glory as a nation within a period of 70 weeks of seven years each-or a total of 490 years. It has been interpreted that 69 of the 70 weeks has been fulfilled culminating at the first advent, but that the “*Seventieth Week*” has not yet been fulfilled. Many see this as the final time of Great Tribulation as noted above.

Abomination of Desolation - A despicable misuse of the Temple of the Lord during a time of great trouble-an event foretold by the prophet Daniel. The phrase is found in Matt 24:15 and Mark 13:14 as a quotation from Dan 11:31 and 12:11. In Daniel, the words mean "the abomination that makes desolate." In other words, Daniel prophesied that the Temple would be used for an "abominable" purpose at some time in the future. As a result, God's faithful people would no longer worship there-so great would be their moral revulsion, contempt, and abhorrence at the sacrilege-and the Temple would become "desolate."

Day of the Lord - A special day at the end of time when God's will and purpose for mankind and His world will be fulfilled. Many Bible students believe the Day of the Lord will be a long period of time rather than a single day-- a period when Christ will reign throughout the world before He cleanses heaven and earth in preparation for the eternal state of all mankind. But others believe the Day of the Lord will be an instantaneous event when Christ will return to earth to claim His faithful believers while consigning unbelievers to eternal damnation. <Amos 5:18-20> is probably the earliest occurrence in Scripture of the phrase, "Day of the Lord." According to Amos, that day would be a time of great darkness for any in rebellion against God, whether Jew or Gentile. The day would be a time of judgment <Is. 13:6,9; Jer. 46:10>, as well as restoration <Is. 14:1; Joel 2:28-32>. (Mal 4:5, 2 Pet 3:10, Zeph 1:2-3,14-18, Isa 24:1-6, 13:9-11, Jer 25:31-33, - (Revelation 6:12-13, 14:19-20, 16, Isaiah 26:21,34:1-4,66:15-16, Jeremiah 25:29-33, Joel 2:10-11, 2:28-32, 3:13-16)

Millennium - A term that refers to the period of 1.000 years mentioned in Revelation 20:4-5 as the time of the reign of Christ and believers over the earth (from Lat. *millennium*, “thousand years”).

Antichrist - The “man of lawlessness” who will appear prior to the second coming of Christ and will cause great suffering and persecution, only to be destroyed by Jesus. The term is also used to describe other figures who embody such an opposition to Christ and are precursors of the final antichrist.

Imminency - Imminency is the belief that the Lord could return at any moment.

Rapture - The “taking up” or snatching up (from Latin *rapio*, “seize, snatch, carry away” or gk. *harpazo*) of believers to be with Christ when he returns to the earth.

New Heavens and New Earth: A description of the entirely renewed creation in which believers will dwell after the final judgment.

Dispensationalism - A theological system that began in the nineteenth century with the writings of J. N. Darby. Among the general doctrines of this system are the distinction between Israel and the church as two groups in God's overall plan, the pretribulational rapture of the church, a future literal fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies concerning Israel, and the dividing of biblical history into seven periods or “dispensations” of God's ways of relating to his people.

Covenantalism - A theological system that represents the whole of Scripture as being covered by (3) covenants; Covenant of Redemption, Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace. God's overall plan is carried out in consistency with these covenants. It is typically distinguished from Dispensationalism.

Defining Millennialism

Questions on End Times

Defining Millennialism – The idea or concept of millennialism is derived from the word “*Millennium*” which means “*a thousand years*” and is referred to six times in Revelation 20:1-10. It speaks of a specific (or general) period of time on earth when specific events spoken of in the passage will take place. There have been three major views among biblical interpreters throughout the years. These will be explained below.

Revelation 20:1-10 - 20:1 And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a **thousand years**, 3 and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the **thousand years** were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and 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 completed. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a **thousand years**.

7 And when the **thousand years** are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. 9 And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. NASB

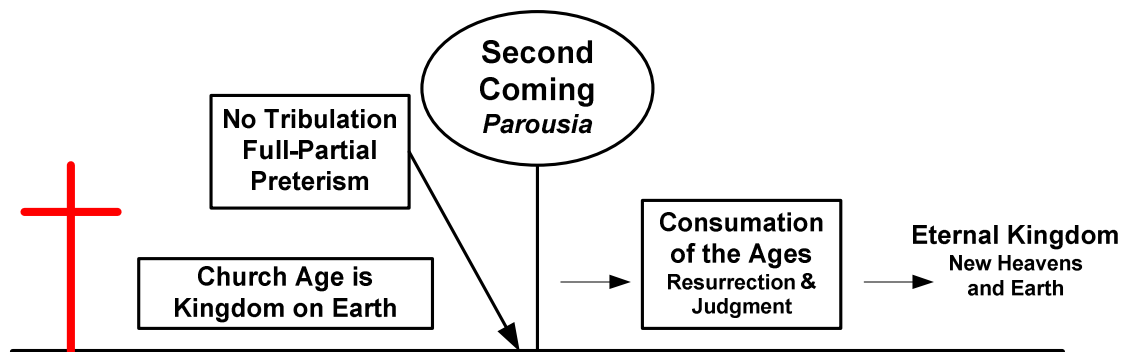
Amillennialism

Amillennialism – There is NO future Millennium. Amillennialism is the belief that the current church age is the fulfillment of the Millennium spoken of in Revelation 20:1-10. Thus, the Millennium is now. Amillennialism uses an interpretation of Revelation 20:1-10 which is allegorical and non-literal. The 1000 years is simply a figure of speech referring to a long period of time. It typically assumes that Christ will bring the final judgment and eternal state at his Second Coming. It sees no practical purpose for a future millennium on earth where Christ must rule. There are differences between Amillennial believers on various issues. Since Amillennialists believe that the millennium is now, an alternative term has been suggested called “Realized Millennialism.”

Key Points in Amillennialism

- Revelation 20:1-10 describes the present church age
- 1000 yrs is *figurative*
- Christ reigns from heaven
- Satan is currently bound
- Binding of Satan greatly enhances the spread of the gospel in the world
- Those who reign with Christ are Christians who have already died and are with Christ in heaven
- Christ returns at the end of the church age
- One resurrection of both believers and unbelievers
 - Believers to Bema Seat judgment for degrees of reward
 - Unbelievers to final judgment eternal condemnation
- New Heavens and Earth begin at Christ’s return after judgment
- Nature of the Millennium is *non-utopian* with a significant presence of sin
- Imminency – some hold, some do not
- Replacement Theology – No distinction between Church and Israel
- Covenantal, Non-dispensational

Amillennialism



Postmillennialism

Postmillennialism – Christ will return AFTER the Millennium. Postmillennialism is the belief that the Kingdom of God is now being extended in the world through the preaching of the gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit, that the world will eventually be Christianized, and that the return of Christ will occur at the close of a long period of righteousness and peace commonly called the Millennium spoken of in Revelation 20:1-10. These events will be followed by the resurrection, judgment and the eternal state. There are differences between Postmillennial believers on different issues.

Key Points in Postmillennialism

- Revelation 20:1-10 describes the present church age which culminates in a worldwide reception of the Gospel and a time of unprecedented peace at the end of which Christ will return
- 1000 yrs is *figurative*
- Christ reigns from heaven, implements authority through Church and gospel
- Satan is currently bound
- Binding of Satan greatly enhances the spread of the gospel in the world
- Postmillennialism is very optimistic about the power of the gospel to change lives and society as well
- Christ returns at the end of or AFTER the Millennium or church age
- One resurrection of both believers and unbelievers
 - Believers to Bema Seat judgment for degrees of reward
 - Unbelievers to final judgment eternal condemnation
- New Heavens and Earth begin at Christ's return after judgment
- Nature of the Millennium is *non-utopian* with a significant presence of sin
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Postmillennialism

