

What Lutherans Believe

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

Keith Chuvala, Keith@BackToTheBibleCatechism.com

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The End Times – LEADER’S GUIDE

Eschatology:

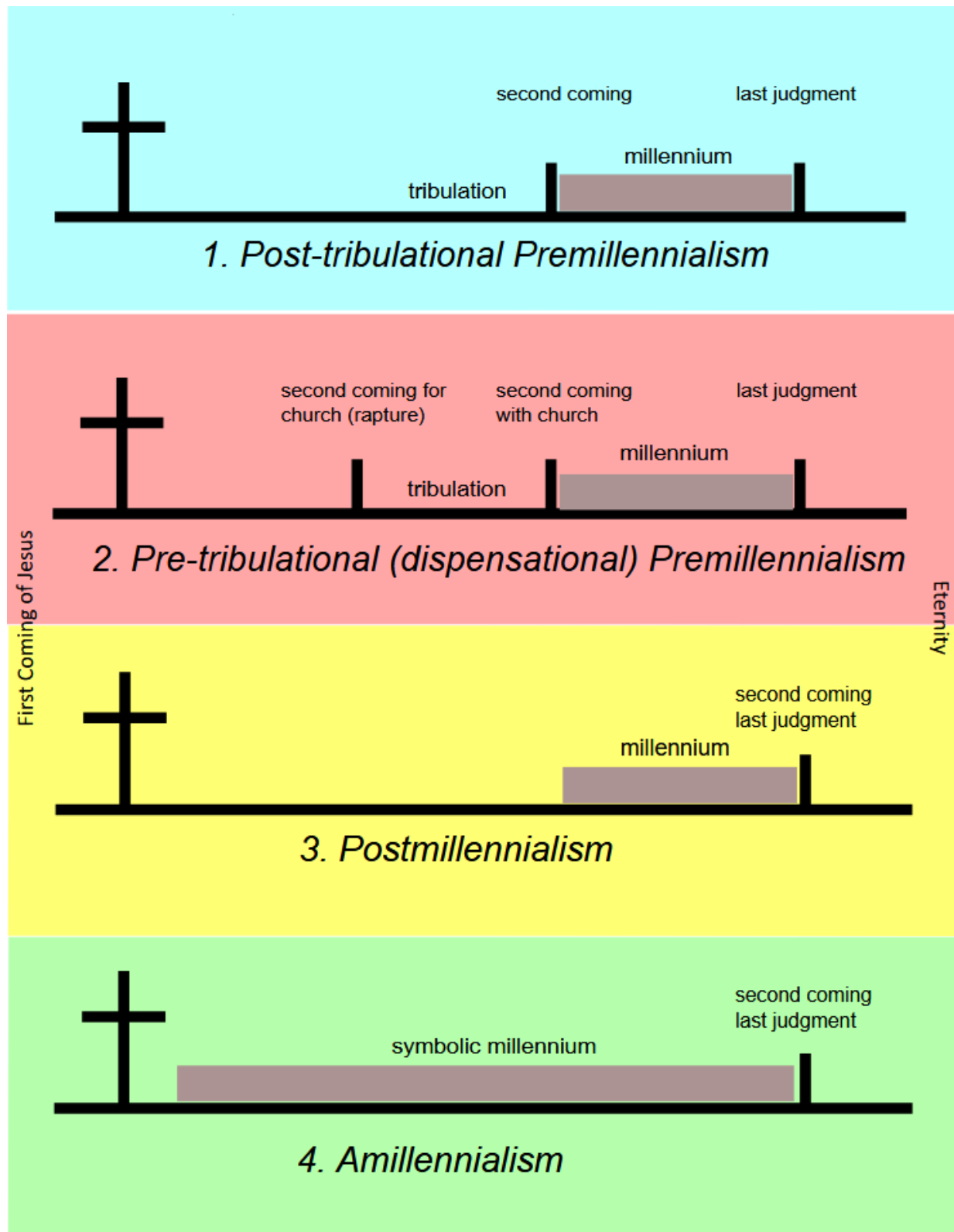
- From the Greek ἔσχατος (eschatos) meaning "last" and -logy meaning "the study of", first used in English in the mid-1800’s

Millennialism (a.k.a. Chiliasm - Read Revelation 20):

- Premillennialism:
 - Jesus will physically return to the earth (i.e., His Second Coming) before the Millennium, a literal thousand-year period of peace. The doctrine is called "premillennialism" because it holds that Jesus' physical return to earth will occur prior to the inauguration of the Millennium.
 - Based principally upon a literal interpretation of Revelation 20. Premillennialism is often used to refer specifically to those who adhere to the beliefs in an earthly millennial reign of Christ as well as a rapture of the faithful coming either before ("Dispensationalist") or after ("Historic") a Great Tribulation that will precede the Millennium.
 - The most popular adaptation of Premillennialism in modern America is so-called "Dispensational Premillennialism", discussed in detail below.
- Postmillennialism (a.k.a. "Reconstructionism"):
 - Sees Christ's Second Coming as occurring after the Millennium. Postmillennialism holds that Jesus Christ established his kingdom on earth through his preaching and redemptive work in the first century and that he equips his church with the gospel, empowers her by the Spirit, and charges it with the Great Commission to disciple all nations. Therefore "the Millennium" is now.
 - Postmillennialism expects that eventually the vast majority of people living will be saved. Increasing gospel success will gradually produce a time in history prior to Christ's return in which faith, righteousness, peace, and prosperity will prevail in the affairs of men (and of nations.)
 - Postmillennialism was the dominant Protestant theology in the 19th century, but has been largely supplanted by pre-millennialism.

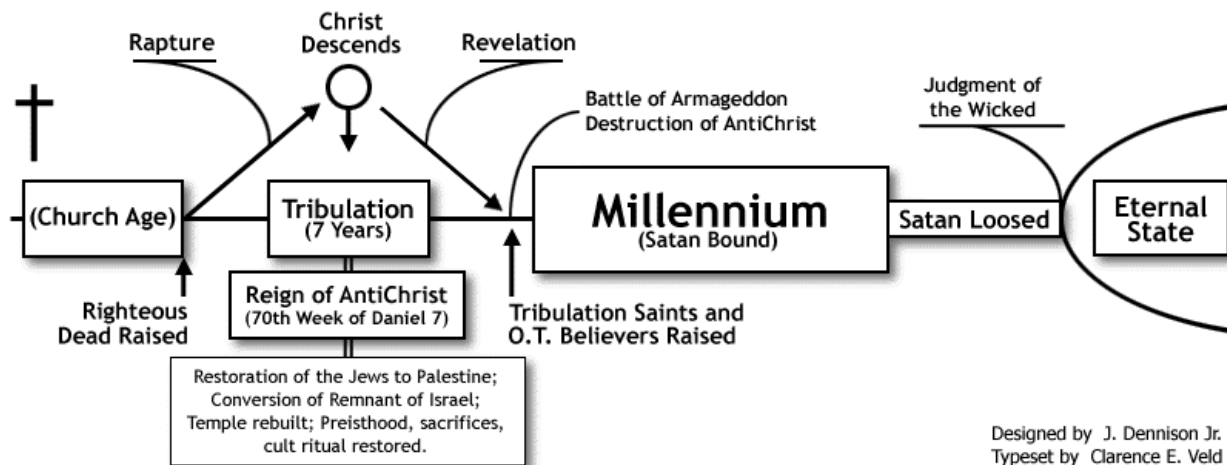
- **Amillennialism (the Lutheran view):**
 - Rejects the idea of a future millennium in which Christ will reign on Earth prior to the eternal state beginning, but rather holds that:
 - Jesus is presently reigning from heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father
 - Jesus is and will remain with the church until the end of the world, as He promised at His Ascension
 - “The millennium” began at Pentecost, per Acts 2:16-21, where Peter quotes the prophet Joel 2:28-32 on the coming of the kingdom, to explain what is happening
 - Therefore the Church and its spread of the good news is indeed Christ's Kingdom and forever will be
 - Amillennialism cites scripture references to the kingdom not being physical, e.g.:
 - Matthew 12:28, where Jesus cites his driving out of demons as evidence that the kingdom of God had come upon them
 - Luke 17:20–21, where Jesus warns that the coming of the kingdom of God cannot be observed, and that it is among them
 - Romans 14:17, where Paul speaks of the kingdom of God being in terms of the Christians' actions
 - Amillennialism regards the "thousand year" period in Revelation as a figurative duration for Christ's reign, as in Psalms 50:10, where the "thousand hills" on which God owns the cattle are all hills, or in 1 Chronicles 16:15, where the "thousand generations" to whom God will be faithful are all generations.
 - Amillennialism teaches that the binding of Satan described in Revelation has already occurred; he has been prevented from "deceiving the nations" by the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the first binding he suffered in history after his fall from heaven. Nonetheless, good and evil will remain mixed in strength throughout history and even in the church, as indicated by Jesus' parable of the Wheat and Tares.

A Visual Comparison of the “Millennialisms”

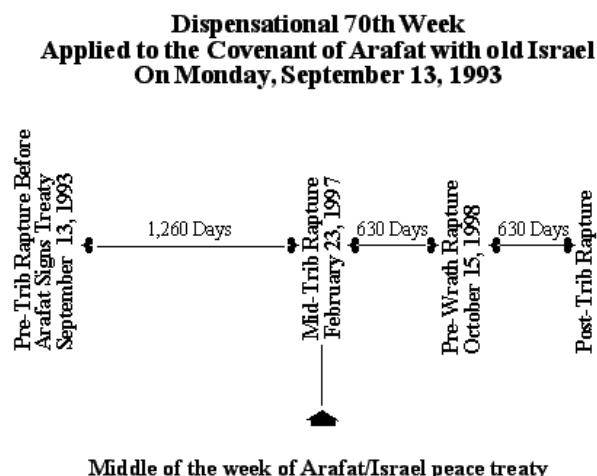


Premillennial Dispensationalism (as illustrated in “Left Behind” et al):

- This is a fairly modern teaching, first developed by John Nelson Darby ca. 1830; it was unheard of before then. It views Israel as distinct from the Christian church, and is very focused on the history and future of the Hebrew nation. The Dispensations are:
 - Innocence - Adam
 - Conscience - After man sinned, up to the flood
 - Government - After the flood, man allowed to eat meat, death penalty instituted
 - Promise - Abraham up to Moses and the giving of the Law
 - Law - Moses to the cross
 - Grace - The cross to the Millennial Kingdom
 - Millennial Kingdom - A 1000 year reign of Christ on earth centered in Jerusalem



Many of the groups (and individuals) that have attempted to peg a specific date, or a date range, to the end of the world, or to a pre-millennial rapture, come from the premillennial dispensationalist camp. Of course, thus far all have been wrong in their predictive accuracy, e.g:





What About . . .

The New Millennium

As we approached the year 2001, the beginning of a new millennium, we heard more and more predictions about the end of the world. There is a great deal of confusion about the end of the world and what the new millennium might bring. What a blessing it is to have the Word of God to help us sort through the many speculations we hear about these things!

Will the world come to an end in the third millennium?

It is simply impossible to answer this question with either a definite "yes" or a definite "no." During his earthly ministry, our Lord Jesus Christ was asked when the end of the world would be. His answer was very clear. He said, "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Matt. 24:36). The Bible repeatedly warns us about trying to set a date for the return of Christ (Mark 13:32-33; 1 Thess. 5:1-3; 2 Pet. 3:10). We are not to speculate when Jesus will return. Rather, we are to be ready at all times for His return (Matt. 24:33, 42-44; Luke 21:28; 1 Thess. 5:6).

What are the signs of the end times?

Every generation should expect Christ's return as they see the signs of the end times. The most important sign of the end is the preaching of the Gospel to all nations (Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10). The time between Christ's birth and His return is the great missionary age—the time that God is calling all people to be saved. It is the time that was predicted by the Old Testament prophets (see Isa. 2:1-4; 42:6-7; 49:6; 52:10; Amos 9:11-12).

Other signs that the world will come to an end include wars, earthquakes, famines and widespread diseases. These are all indications of God's divine judgment. The Bible describes these signs in many places (see, for instance, Isa. 19:2; 2 Chron. 15:6; Matt. 24:6-8; Mark 13:7-8; Luke 21:9-11, 25-26; Joel 2:30-31). We are not to see every incident of natural disasters as a direct punishment from God (cf. Luke 13:1-5). The upheaval and troubles in the world of nature should always remind us that our present fallen world is under the curse of God on account of sin (Gen. 3:17; Rom. 8:19-22). These signs show us God's wrath and are signals to us that all sinners need to repent (Luke 13:3, 5; Rev. 9:20-21; 16:9).

Christians especially are urged by God in His Word to regard these signs as "birth pangs" of a new and better world to come (Rom. 8:22; Matt. 24:8; Rev. 21:1-4). Believers in Christ can take comfort in God's promise to protect and preserve us even in the midst of suffering (Rev. 3:10; 7:3-4).

Jesus warned us that trouble would lie ahead for His people (Matt. 5:10-12; John 15:18-20; 16:33). Because the world will continue to oppose the Kingdom of God, Christians can expect to suffer persecution in a variety of forms throughout the time between Christ's birth and His second coming. It is for this reason that God calls on us to endure to the end, and gives us the strength to do so (Matt. 24:9; Mark 13:9-13; Luke 21:12-19).

What will happen when Christ returns?

The Bible teaches that the following events will take place when Jesus returns:

1. Christ will come visibly and all people will see Him (Acts 1:11; Matt. 24:27, 30; Luke 17:22-24; 21:27, 35; Mark 13:24-26; 14:62; Rev. 1:7).
2. Christ will come in glory surrounded by His angels (Matt. 13:39-43, 49; 16:27; 24:30-31; 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:11-14; Titus 2:13; Jude 14, 21; 1 Pet. 4:13; Zech. 14:3).
3. When Christ returns, a bodily resurrection of all the dead will take place. Believers will be raised to salvation and unbelievers to damnation (John 5:27-29; 6:39-40, 44, 54; Rev. 20:11-15; 1 Cor. 15:12-57; Dan. 12:1-2). All believers, both the dead and the living, will be "caught up" to "meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess. 4:13-17). Death will be destroyed (1 Cor. 15:26, 54-57; Rev. 20:14).
4. When Christ returns, He will judge all people, both the living and the dead (Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:27; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom. 2:16; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8; Jude 14-15; Rev. 20:11-15). Believers will receive eternal salvation and unbelievers eternal damnation (Matt. 25:31-46; 1 Pet. 1:4-5, 7; 5:4; 1 John 3:2; Heb. 9:28; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Thess. 1:6-10). Satan and Antichrist will be destroyed (2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 12:10-11).
5. When Christ returns, a "new heavens and a new earth" will be created (2 Pet. 3:10-13). Nowhere, however, do the Scriptures teach that at His return Christ will establish a this-worldly, political kingdom or "millennium."

What about the New Millennium?

What is Millennialism?

Millennialism describes a variety of erroneous speculations about a supposed 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ, here on earth, during which there will be perfect peace and the complete victory of the church on earth. These views err in that they place too much emphasis on highly figurative language in certain portions of the Bible.

Dispensational Premillennialism divides God's dealings with our world into seven distinct "dispensations." From the age of innocence before the Fall, to the Millennial Kingdom, this theory holds that God is working through periods of history, culminating in a series of dramatic battles on earth, after which Christ will return in glory, destroy all His enemies, and establish a 1,000-year reign on earth of prosperity and peace, with worship centered around a rebuilt new temple in Jerusalem.

Historic *Premillennialism* is the view that the return of Christ will be a one-time event following a period of intense suffering and tribulation. Christians will be resurrected from the dead and those still living will join Christ, who will destroy the Antichrist and Satan, and will begin a 1,000-year reign on earth. During this 1,000 years, there will be perfect tranquillity and peace. After the 1,000 years is over, Satan will be let loose for a little while and then the end will come in one last great battle. After that, the judgment will begin, sending people either to heaven or hell for all eternity.

Postmillennialism is the theory that after a 1,000-year period of peace and tranquillity, Christ will return, and the resurrection of all the dead will take place. Postmillennialists do not believe that the 1,000 years will be a literal 1,000 years, but it does claim that there will be a distinct period of peace and prosperity for the church before the return of Christ.

Amillennialism, however, is the teaching that there will be no millennium of perfect peace on earth before or after Christ's second coming. The Lutheran church, on the basis of the Bible, holds to this point of view. The Bible does not teach that there will be a definite 1,000-year period of time during which Christ will reign on earth visibly. Christ Himself said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36); furthermore, the Bible clearly teaches that we Christians are looking for "a new heaven and a new earth" (2 Pet. 3:13)—not an era of prosperity on the present earth.

What are Christians to be doing as the new millennium approaches?

God wants all people to come to believe and trust in His Son for their salvation and to lead holy lives in service to Him, eagerly awaiting with patience and perseverance His return on

the last day (Rom. 13:12-14; Titus 2:1-13; 1 Pet. 1:13-15; 2 Pet. 3:11-12; 1 John 3:2-3; 1 Tim. 6:14; Matt. 25:14-30).

Our Lord says to us: "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come" (Matt. 24:42). This is a constant theme in Scripture. St. Paul writes, "So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled" (1 Thess. 5:6).

The Apostle Peter describes what Christians are to be doing: "In keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him" (2 Pet. 3:13-14).

As the end of the world draws closer, each day the Lord gives us is one more day to serve Him and to be a part of the great effort to proclaim the Gospel. This is the great mission Christ has given His church: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20). Our Lord promises to be with us until the end of the world (Matt. 28:20), as we continue to tell the good news about Jesus (Acts 8:35).

Finally, our Lord wants us to be watchful for His coming. We have the assurance that because of His death and resurrection for us, we have the full and free forgiveness of our sins. We may not know all the details about the end of the world, but we do not need to be anxious about them. Nor should we get all caught up in speculation about the end times. We live in the great period of the "now" and the "not yet." We have salvation in Christ right now. But we do not yet have the final blessing of our salvation: life forever with the Lord in heaven.

Though we do not know when our Lord will return, we are able to look forward to His return with confident hope and joy (Rev. 22:20): " 'Yes, I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"

For further study

Much of the information contained in this pamphlet is based on the excellent study from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations titled, "*The End Times: A Study on Eschatology and Millennialism*" [September 1989]. You may purchase a copy from Concordia Publishing House.

— Dr. A. L. Barry
President

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

The "End Times"
A Study on Eschatology and Millennialism
A Report of the
Commission on Theology and Church Relations of
The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod
September 1989

Part 1

THE "END TIMES"

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INTRODUCTION

The last two decades of our century have witnessed a growing interest in various aspects of Biblical prophecy. Sociologist William Martin of Rice University once observed that "Judeo-Christian history has seen numerous outcroppings of interest in biblical prophecy, usually in times of social upheaval, but few, if any, have been as widespread and influential as that now flourishing in conservative Protestant circles."^[1] Public awareness of such end-time topics as the millennium, rapture, and Armageddon has been heightened through the preaching of television evangelists and the publication of widely-read books such as those authored by Hal Lindsey. Few perhaps would have imagined that a book beginning with the words "This is a book about prophecy--Biblical prophecy" would sell 15 million copies and that its author would be named by **The New York Times** as the best-selling author of the decade of the 1970s!

These developments, however, have caused great concern among many Christians who regard some of the currently popular teachings on the end times as highly speculative and even contrary to the Scriptures and therefore injurious to faith. At the presuppositional level, serious questions have been raised regarding the principles of Biblical interpretation (hermeneutics) employed by millennialist writers in their approach to and exposition of Biblical texts, particularly in those books commonly termed **apocalyptic** (e.g., Daniel, Ezekiel, Revelation). Moreover, the failure to read these texts in the context of **all** that the Scriptures teach about the last things has led to confusion and doubt regarding the content of the Christian hope. The deficiency in, and most often the absence of, sacramental theology and teaching on the means of grace in general in millennialist preaching are especially obvious to those familiar with Lutheran

confessional doctrine. Equally troublesome is the failure of millennialist preachers and writers to distinguish properly between Law and Gospel.

In the context of concerns such as these and in response to a specific request of the 1983 convention of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod that the Commission on Theology and Church Relations "prepare a study of the end times (eschatology), including millennialism, for the guidance of the church," the CTCR has prepared this report on eschatology and millennialism (1983 Resolution 3-25 "To Request CTCR to Study 'End Times'"). In the first section of this study the Commission presents a brief summary of four current views of the "millennium." Section two discusses pertinent hermeneutical principles, the doctrine of eschatology and some key texts that form the basis for millennialist teachings. The third part of the document presents a summary evaluation of dispensational premillennialism.

Current Millennial Views

While there are numerous variations in millennialist teaching today, a fourfold categorization has been widely accepted: (1) dispensational premillennialism; (2) historic premillennialism; (3) postmillennialism; and (4) amillennialism.[2] Of the first three categories, all of which hold to a millennium or utopian age on this earth, the most commonly held view is dispensational premillennialism. In the interest of narrowing the discussion that follows to manageable proportions and of seeking to assist the members of the Synod in their evaluation of such teaching, the Commission has chosen to focus on this more well-known and prevalent premillennialist view. Before proceeding with a more detailed examination of the various elements of millennialist doctrine, we offer the following summary of the categories mentioned above.

A. Dispensational Premillennialism

Dispensational premillennialism, or simply dispensationalism, is a theological system having its origin among the Plymouth Brethren in Ireland and England in the early 19th century. This system's originator was John Nelson Darby (1800-82), one of the chief founders of the Plymouth Brethren movement. Dispensationalism arose as a reaction against the Church of England and the widely held view of postmillennialism (see part C. below).

The teachings of dispensational premillennialism on prophecy have spread widely in Canada and the United States, due especially to the influence of the 1909 **Scofield Reference Bible** and its subsequent editions. Today, dispensationalism is by far the most prominent form of millennialism. It is officially taught at the Moody Bible Institute (Chicago), Dallas Theological Seminary, and an estimated two hundred Bible institutes in the U.S.A. It has been promoted by television evangelists such as Jerry Falwell, Pat

Robertson, Kenneth Copeland, and Jack Van Impe, by independent ministries such as "Lamb and Lion" and "World Prophecy Ministry," and in dozens of paperbacks. Among the best known of these is Hal Lindsey's **The Late Great Planet Earth**, which has made its way into film.

Dispensationalists[3] usually divide God's dealings with humanity into seven distinct "dispensations": Innocence (Gen. 1:28-3:6), Conscience or Moral Responsibility (Gen. 4:1-8:14), Human Government (Gen. 8:15-11:32), Promise (Gen. 12:1-Ex. 18:27), The Law (Ex. 19:3-Acts 1:26), The Church (Acts 2:1-Revelation 19), and the Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 20). A **dispensation** is defined as "a period of time during which man is tested in respect to his obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God." [4] In each of these periods, a distinct revelation of God's will is dominant and tests mankind's obedience to God.

What, then, are the key elements in dispensationalist eschatology? The Old Testament, it is said, promises to the Jewish people an earthly kingdom ruled by the Messiah. When Christ came, He offered this kingdom to the Jews. The Jews at that time, however, rejected Him and the kingdom. This kingdom, then, was postponed until some point in the future. In the meantime, Christ introduced the "mystery form" of the kingdom (Matthew 13) and established the church. This "parenthesis" of God's program will end at the "rapture" when all believers, exclusive of Old Testament saints, will go to heaven to celebrate with Christ "the marriage feast of the Lamb" for seven years. Then God's promised purpose for Israel resumes.

During this seven-year period, a number of events will occur on earth (Revelation 6 -19):

1. The "tribulation" begins, the latter half of which is called the "great tribulation."
2. The Antichrist begins his cruel reign and in the midst of the seven years he proscribes Jewish worship at the temple.
3. Terrible judgments fall on the earth.
4. A remnant of Israel (the 144,000 of Revelation 7) believes in Jesus as the Messiah and preaches the "Gospel of the Kingdom."
5. Through their witness a multitude of Gentiles is saved (Rev. 7:9).
6. Toward the end, a number of military battles take place leading up to the Battle of Armageddon.

At the end of this seven-year period, dispensationalists teach, Christ (together with the church) returns in glory and destroys His enemies. The vast majority of Israelites will be converted. Satan will be bound for 1000 years. Believers who die during the tribulation and Old Testament saints will be raised and join the church in heaven. Christ will judge the living **Gentiles** (Matt. 25:31-46). The "goats" will be cast into hell. The "sheep": and the believing Jews still living will enter the millennium in their natural bodies. They will

marry, reproduce, and die. (The resurrected believers will live in the heavenly Jerusalem hovering above the earthly Jerusalem.) The millennium will be a golden age, a time of prosperity and peace, with worship centering around the rebuilt temple. Though at the beginning of the millennium only believers will live on earth, some of their children and grandchildren will not believe in Christ. These unbelievers Satan will gather in one last revolt (Rev. 20:7-9). Toward the end, all believers who die during the millennium will be raised. After Satan's "little season," all the **unbelieving** dead will then be raised and judged (Rev. 20:11-15). The final stage will now be ushered in, during which period there will remain a distinction between Jews and Gentiles. Three presuppositions are critical for the dispensationalist system. These basic premises may be summarized in the following way:

1. The Distinction between Israel and the Church. According to the dispensationalist view, throughout the ages God is pursuing two distinct purposes: one related to **earthly** goals and an earthly people, that is, the **Jewish people**; and the other related to **heavenly** goals and a heavenly people, that is, the **Christian church**.^[5] The church was not foreseen in the Old Testament and therefore constitutes a "parenthesis" in God's predicted plan for Israel. In the future, the distinction between Jew and Gentile will be reestablished and will continue through- out all eternity.

2. The Literal Fulfillment of Biblical Prophecy. The Old Testament, dispensationalist writers argue, contains many promises that God will establish an earthly kingdom involving Israel. These promises are to be fulfilled literally. The central promise to Abraham was that Abraham's physical descendants would be given the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. The Davidic covenant contains the promise that a descendant of David (the Messiah) would rule over Israel forever from David's throne, i.e., from Jerusalem. The new covenant of Jer. 31:31-34, though containing features which also apply to believers in the present "church age," is essentially a covenant for Israel. A great many passages in the Psalms and prophets are interpreted to mean that Israel will be regathered in the land of Canaan under the perfect rule of the Messiah. These promises will be fulfilled literally during Christ's millennial reign. Similarly , much of Daniel and Revelation awaits a literalistic fulfillment in the future millennium.

3. The Manifestation of God's Glory as the Purpose of History While dispensationalists agree that human beings are reconciled to God by grace alone through the work of Christ in history, "the soteriological or saving program of God is not the only purpose but one of the means God is using in the total program of

glorifying Himself." [6] Thus, not salvation but the manifestation of God's glory is the main theme and broad purpose of His activity in human history in each of the dispensations.

B. Historic Premillennialism

In contrast to dispensational premillennialism, those who hold the historic premillennialist view argue that Christ's second advent will be a one-stage event after the tribulation. Either at this time or before, the vast majority of Jews will be converted. Believers who have died will be raised, those alive will be transformed, and all believers will meet Christ in the air and then descend with Him to earth. Christ will then slay the Antichrist, bind Satan, and set up His millennial kingdom on earth. Christ and His redeemed, both Jews and Gentiles as one people of God, will reign visibly over the unbelieving nations still on earth. People in resurrected bodies and natural bodies will live together on the earth. Sin and death will still exist, but external evil will be restrained. The 1000 years of the millennial kingdom will be a time of social, political, and economic justice and great prosperity. After these 1000 years, Satan will be loosed in order to deceive the unbelieving nations into making a final assault against the redeemed. Satan will be destroyed, and the resurrection of the dead **unbelievers** will occur. Then will come the judgment of all, both believers and unbelievers, and eternity.

C. Postmillennialism

In contrast to the above, the less common postmillennial view places Christ's second advent **after** (post) the millennium. Only then will the rapture, the general resurrection, the general judgment, and the eternal states occur. The millennium is not understood to involve a visible reign of Christ in the form of an earthly monarchy, nor is the millennial period to be taken literally as necessarily 1000 years long. In these respects postmillennialism corresponds closely to the amillennialist position (see below). But the postmillennial view does posit a recognizable millennial period, a golden age of prosperity and peace among all at the end of which Christ will return. The millennium will arrive gradually under the increasing influence of Christianity, leading to the pervasive reduction of evil and to greatly improved conditions in the social, economic, political and cultural spheres. In fact, the entire world will eventually be Christianized to the point that the Christian belief and value system will become the accepted norm for all nations. Matthew 28:18-20 will become a reality.

D. Amillennialism An eschatology which does not teach a literal thousand-year earthly reign of Christ may be called "amillennialist" (sometimes called "realized millennialism" because the period spoken of in Revelation 20 is now in the process of realization). Although the detailed exegesis of the pertinent texts may vary somewhat among amillennialist Christians, those who adhere to this position agree that the "thousandyear"

reference in Revelation 20 is a figurative expression for the present reign of Christ which began upon His ascension into heaven and will be fully manifested at His second coming. Christ's second coming will be one event at which time He will, in the words of Martin Luther, "raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life" (Explanation to Third Article of the Apostles' Creed). The eschatology presented in The Lutheran Confessions is clearly amillennialist (AC XVII).

Excursus on Seventh-Day Adventism

Central to Adventist eschatology is Christ's second advent.^[7] According to Adventist teaching, Christ entered into the holy place of the heavenly temple on Good Friday and remained there for eighteen centuries to plead His blood on behalf of sinners. In 1844 (2,300 "prophetic days" or years after 457 B.C.--Dan. 8:14), Christ entered the heavenly holy of holies to begin investigating the conduct of believers an "investigative judgment" which will last until His second advent. When people die, they become non-existent in body and soul until this second coming. Just before Christ returns, those who were responsible for His trial and crucifixion (Rev. 1:7) and the faithful members of the Adventist denomination who died after 1844 (Rev. 14:13) will be raised to see Him come. At His return Christ will destroy the beast, the false prophet, and the wicked who made war against God and His people at Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-16; 19:11-21). Satan will have the sins of the world placed upon him as a "scapegoat" and will be consigned to a desolate earth for 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-3). At the same time, all believers who died before 1844 and all non- Adventist believers who died after 1844 will be raised (Rev. 20:4-6). All believers who are still alive will be transformed, and both groups will go to heaven to rule with Christ 1000 years. During this period, Christ and the believers will rule for the purpose of investigating the lives of the unbelievers and determining the amount of suffering they will have to experience. After the millennium the wicked will be raised, they will suffer in various degrees on earth, and they will be gathered by Satan for a final assault on the heavenly Jerusalem which has just descended (Rev. 20:7-9). Following this, God will annihilate Satan, his evil angels, and all the wicked. Christ and all believers will then live forever on the new earth.

Selected Relevant Scripture Verses

<i>1 Corinthians 15:12-57</i>	<i>Genesis 3:17</i>
<i>1 John 3:2-3</i>	<i>Hebrews 9:28</i>
<i>1 Peter 1:13-15</i>	<i>Isaiah 19:2;</i>
<i>1 Peter 1:4-5, 7; 5:4</i>	<i>Isaiah 2:1-4; 42:6-7; 49:6; 52:10</i>
<i>1 Peter 4:13</i>	<i>Joel 2:30-31</i>
<i>1 Thessalonians 4:13-17</i>	<i>John 15:18-20; 16:33</i>
<i>1 Thessalonians 5:1-3</i>	<i>John 18:36</i>
<i>1 Thessalonians 5:6</i>	<i>John 5:27-29; 6:39-40, 44, 54</i>
<i>1 Timothy 6:14</i>	<i>Jude 14,21</i>
<i>2 Chronicles 15:6</i>	<i>Jude 14-15</i>
<i>2 Corinthians 5:10</i>	<i>Luke 13:1-5</i>
<i>2 Peter 3:10-13</i>	<i>Luke 17:22-24; 21:27,35</i>
<i>2 Peter 3:11-12</i>	<i>Luke 21:12-19</i>
<i>2 Peter 3:13-14</i>	<i>Luke 21:28</i>
<i>2 Thessalonians 1:6-10</i>	<i>Luke 21:9-11, 25-26</i>
<i>2 Thessalonians 1:7</i>	<i>Mark 13:10</i>
<i>2 Thessalonians 2:8</i>	<i>Mark 13:24-26; 14:62</i>
<i>2 Timothy 4:1,8</i>	<i>Mark 13:32-33</i>
<i>Acts 1:11</i>	<i>Mark 13:7-8</i>
<i>Acts 10:42; 17:31</i>	<i>Mark 13:9-13</i>
<i>Acts 8:35</i>	<i>Matthew 13:39-43,49; 16:27</i>
<i>Amos 9:11-12</i>	<i>Matthew 24:30-31</i>
<i>Daniel 12:1-2</i>	<i>Matthew 24:14</i>

Selected Relevant Scripture Verses

Matthew 24:27,30

Matthew 24:33, 42-44

Matthew 24:36

Matthew 24:6-8

Matthew 24:9

Matthew 25:14-30

Matthew 25:31-46

Matthew 28:19-20

Matthew 5:10-12

Revelation 1:7

Revelation 12:10-11

Revelation 19:11-14

Revelation 20:11-15

Revelation 21:1-4

Revelation 22:20

Revelation 3:10; 7:3-4

Revelation 9:20-21; 16:9

Romans 13:12-14

Romans 2:16

Romans 8:19-22

Titus 2:1-13

Zechariah 14:3