

THE GATE CHURCH HIGH DESERT
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WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT 6:30PM
JAN - APR, 2021

BACK TO THE FUTURE

A STUDY OF REVELATIONS AND THE VICTORY OF CHRIST

A PROPER APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING - THE BOOK OF REVELATION

CHAPTER ONE

Developing the Right Hermeneutic (*Interpretation of Scripture*)

Literal, Figurative, Symbolic and Figurative Language
Systems of Eschatology and the Approach to End Times
Preterism, Futurism, Historicism and Idealism
A-millennialism, Pre-Millennialism and Post Millennialism

CHAPTER TWO

Deciphering the Old Testament Prophecies (*Daniel, Zechariah*)

Zechariah's Description of the Temple
Daniel's Vision of the Four Kingdoms
Daniel's Timeline of the Seventy Weeks

CHAPTER THREE

Discovering the First Century Relevance of Jesus' Prophecy (*Matthew 23-25*)

The Temple Experience and a Walk in the Garden
The Disciples Questions and a Curiosity for the Unknown
The Future Unveiled and the Prophecies Unfold

CHAPTER FOUR

Detailing the Observations as Seen in the Visions of John (*Revelation*)

The Purpose of the Book (Christ and His Church Victorious)

The Person of the Book (*Christ*)

Jesus Christ the Lamb of God | Jesus Christ the Lord of All

The Prophecy of the Book (Warnings, Judgments and Outcomes)

Dating the Revelation: Crucial to Understanding the Book

Warnings to the Churches of Asia Minor

Judgments on the Jews, the Romans Empire and the Nations of Earth

Second Coming, the Kingdom of God and New Creation

LESSON FIVE

Systems of Eschatology and the Approach to End Times

A-Millennialism, Pre-Millennialism and Post Millennialism

Postmillennialism

When it comes to post-millennialism, there are two things that make it distinct:

- The Victory of the Church

(Matthew 16:18; 28:18-20; Ephesians 1:20-21; Ephesians 2:6; Luke 10:17-18; 1 John 3:8; 4:4; 5:4-5; Philippians 4:13; 2 Cor. 2:14; Ephesians 3:20; Romans 5:17,20; 8:31-32, 37)

- A Historical Interpretation of the Great Tribulation Based Upon Jesus' Prophecy that the Tribulation would Occur by A.D. 70 (*Matt. 24:34*)

Preterism is a Christian eschatological view that interprets some or all prophecies of the Bible as events which have already happened.

What distinguishes postmillennialism from all other views is its **optimism** concerning the success of the gospel in the Church Age. The questions are:

Will there be universal peace, prosperity, and spiritual revival?

Will the Church carry out and complete the Great Commission?

Will all nations eventually serve the Lord Jesus? (*This doesn't mean every individual, but every nation as a whole*)

Will the gospel prevail? "Yes!" says the postmillennialist.

The postmillennial view of last things begins with Genesis.

The first Adam was commanded to rule over the earth under God, but he lost this dominion because of his sin. The Last Adam, Jesus, came the first time to restore dominion to those who submit to God.

Thus, according to postmillennialism,

- Christ established His kingdom at His first coming.
- He triumphed over Satan,
- Ascended into heaven at the right hand of power, above all rule and authority in heaven and on earth, and
- Sent His Spirit to empower His Church to disciple the nations.
- The unbelieving among the Jews and the Roman government were great hindrances to the early church, but Jesus destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70, ending forever the Old Testament ceremonial system.
- The Roman Empire was eventually defeated as well.
- Christ continues to rule over the nations, gradually advancing His kingdom to the ends of the earth.
- His enemies are either destroyed or converted by the gospel.

The goal, according to post-millennialists is not merely to witness to all nations or preach to all nations, but to disciple all nations.

The gospel brings historical progress in culture. God's servants are to build a Christian civilization in conjunction with preparing their souls for heaven.

When the vast majority of the nations have been converted to Christ, there will be a great revival among the Jews, which will bring blessings like the world has never seen (Rom. 11:12,15).

After a long, un-foretold length of time of obedience to Christ and blessing, Satan will be allowed to deceive the nations one last, short time (Rev. 20:3, 7-10). Satan's people will launch a suicidal attack on God's people. But before they can do any damage, they are destroyed by Christ.

Christ then returns bodily. The unrighteous are resurrected and sent into outer darkness to be no more. The righteous are resurrected and received into the consummate new heavens and new earth.

A-millennialism

A-Millennialism is similar to Post-Millennialism, in that, Christ returns at the end of the Millennium and resurrects the dead, both saved and unsaved.

Unlike postmillennialism, the Millennium for the a-mil is a spiritual reign of souls in heaven, and maybe a spiritual reign of the church. But the church does not save a great number of souls or gain great influence in institutions outside the church.

A Brief Sketch of A-millennial Eschatology

There are two primary areas of consideration the it comes to a-millennialism:

Inaugurated Eschatology and Future Eschatology

Inaugurated Eschatology simply means that the end-times or last things have already begun in this present age during the gospel era.

With regard to inaugurated eschatology, a-millennialism affirms the following:

- Christ has won the decisive victory over sin, death and Satan.
- The kingdom of God is both present and future.

*“But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you”
(Matthew 12:28).*

When the Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God was coming, he replied,

“The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, ‘Lo, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.” (Luke 17:20-21)

A common source of tension among evangelicals today is the question of whether the church should be primarily concerned with **evangelism** or **social and political action**. A proper kingdom vision, it seems to me, will help us to keep our balance on this question.

- Though the last day is still future, we are in the latter days now.

The expression “the last days” is not merely referring to the time just before Christ’s return, but as a description of the entire era between Christ’s first and second comings.

- As far as the thousand years of Revelation 20 are concerned, we are in the millennium now.

With regard to future eschatology, a-millennialism affirms the following:

- The “signs of the times” have both present and future relevance.
- The Second Coming of Christ will be a single event.

- At the time of Christ's return, there will be a general resurrection, both of believers and unbelievers.
- The "rapture" of all believers now takes place.

Dispensationalists teach that after the rapture the entire church will be taken up to heaven for a period of seven years while those still on earth are undergoing the great tribulation.

A-millennialists see no scriptural evidence for such a seven-year period or for a transference of the church from earth to heaven during that period.

- Now follows the final judgment.

Whereas dispensationalists commonly teach that there will be at least three separate judgments, a-millennialists do not agree. The latter see scriptural evidence for only one Day of Judgment which will occur at the time of Christ's return. All men must then appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

- After the judgment the final state is ushered in.

Unbelievers and all those who have rejected Christ shall spend eternity in hell, whereas believers will enter into everlasting glory on the new earth.

"You have made them [those whom you purchased with your blood] to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10)

“And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojourning’s, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.” (Genesis 17:8)

“And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God.” (Amos 9:15)

We do not feel compelled to restrict the meaning of these words to national Israel and the land of Palestine. We understand them to be a prediction of the eternal dwelling of all God’s people, Gentiles as well as Jews, on the new earth of which Canaan was a type.

Some Implications of A-millennial Eschatology

What, in conclusion, are some of the implications of a-millennial eschatology for our theological understanding? Let me mention four of them:

- What binds the Old and New Testaments together is the unity of the covenant of grace.
- The kingdom of God is central in human history.
- Jesus Christ is the Lord of history.

The Goal

All of history is moving toward a goal: the total redemption of the universe.

- A-millennial eschatology looks for a culmination of apostasy and tribulation in the final emergence of a personal **Antichrist** before Christ comes again.
- A-millennialists do not expect to see the perfect society realized during this present age.