

THE PRESENT 2023 PALESTINIAN & ISRAELI CONFLICT

Based on the *Bible*, We Ask, “What Is a **Christian** to Think?”

PART A

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION: THE *BIBLICAL BACKGROUND & TONE*

1. Like the present Palestinians and Israelis, the ongoing history of **nations** revolves around the “ **blessing/curse**” motif of Scripture (cp. **Deuteronomy 28**).

This *contrasting motif* is set into motion in one of two ways. **EITHER** nations & individuals repent with Godly sorrow toward sin and then trust in **Christ** for **forgiveness** **OR** they reject **Jesus**, refuse to repent, and thereby endorse **Satan**'s ways of sin and unbelief. This leaves such **non-Christians** to depend on their own efforts or good works to save them *eternally*.

The majority of both Palestinians [*Muslims*] and Israelis [*Jews*] endorse such salvation by works, not by **faith** in **Christ**. In **Galatians 3:5-11** the apostle Paul asks his audience:

...does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you **by your doing** what the **Law** says, **or by believing what you are hearing?**

Abraham is a good example: He **believed** **God**, and **it was credited to him as righteousness**. (See **Genesis 15:6**.) You see, then, that **those who believe** are **Abraham's real** sons, that is, since the Scripture foresaw that **God** would **justify [acquit]** the **nations by faith**.

He announced **the Gospel** to **Abraham** beforehand, saying: “Through you [**Abraham**] **all nations** will be **blessed** [that is, because **Jesus** was to come from **Abraham's** genealogy].” Paul then continues by saying, “So **those who believe** are **blessed** together with **Abraham**, a man of **faith**.”

The apostle now spells out the contrast: “There is a **curse** on all who depend on doing what the **Law** says, because it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the book of the Law.” It is clear that **no one** is **justified [declared righteous]** before **God** **by doing** what the **Law** says, because the **just [the ones declared righteous]** will live by **faith**.”

Now let's consider **God's** *promise* of “**blessings** or **curses**” on the **nations**

In **Genesis 12:3a** **GOD** predicted: “I will **bless** those who **bless** you, and in you [**Abraham**] all the people in the world will be **blessed**” (cp. 2 Corinthians 5:15).

Genesis 12:3b: Then **GOD** also predicted: “I will...**curse** anyone who **curse**s you [**Abraham**, that is, who does not **believe** in your eventual **Offspring, Jesus**],....”

At this point biblical truth-seekers need to remember the words of John the Baptizer as he spoke to **unbelieving** Jews in **Matthew 3:9**: He said: “Do not think that you can tell yourselves, ‘**Abraham** is our father.’ For I tell you, **GOD** can raise up children for **Abraham** from these stones,” meaning that **unbelieving** Jews could not be saved since they were not **SPIRITUAL** sons and daughters of **Abraham** nor of **GOD**.

Point in fact, neither **unbelieving** *Muslims* nor *Jews* in the present **Palestinian & Israeli Conflict** are to be favored **SPIRITUALLY** by **Christians**. Individuals from both groups can only be saved by the **Holy Spirit** through **Christian** evangelism. They cannot be saved for eternity by our *emotions* **OR** by our *cultural and political* preferences. This is a hard truth that will be expanded-on in our **4-PART** study. So hang on, here we go!!!

2. Tension between *Islam* and *Judaism* from the time of Muhammad (AD 570-632) until today has played-out over-and-over again. (**PART D** of our study will contend that *Islam* is the “political” **Antichrist** of **Revelation 13:1-12** and that *Jews* will still be around to be saved until the end of time (**Isaiah 66:20-22**).

3. Barack Obama’s take on things, as quoted from the Internet (November 5, 2023): “Nobody’s hands are clean.” **Giessler**: **GOD** protects **Christians** against **unbelieving** *Muslims & Jews* by often pitting these *Muslims & Jews* against one another in order to protect **Christians** from slaughter.

4. The **Balford Declaration** of 1917: The **Balfour Declaration** was a public statement issued by the British government in 1917 during the First World War announcing its support for the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people” in Palestine,.... The declaration had many long-lasting consequences. It greatly increased popular support for **Zionism** within Jewish communities worldwide, and became a core component of the British Mandate for Palestine, the founding document of Mandatory Palestine. It indirectly led to the emergence of Israel and is considered a principal cause of the ongoing Israeli–Palestinian conflict, often described as the world’s most ongoing conflict. Controversy remains over a number of areas, such as whether the declaration contradicted earlier promises the British made to the Sharif of Mecca in the McMahon–Hussein correspondence.

5. The **EXODUS** — The Ship that Launched a Nation

The story of the **Exodus**, the ship that carried 4,500 Jewish refugees from Europe to Palestine in 1947, summarizes the essence of Israel’s creation — a journey, an exodus, from the hellish depths of the Holocaust to independence and nationhood.

6. What is “**Zionism**”? From Wikipedia: “**Zionism** (derived from the name Zion) is a nationalist movement that emerged in the 19th century to enable the establishment of a homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine, a region roughly corresponding to the Land of Israel in Jewish tradition. Following the establishment of Israel, **Zionism** became an ideology that supports ‘the development and protection of the State of Israel.’”

7. American policy based on a *false* assumption: **Exegesis of Genesis 12:1-3:**

¹The LORD said to Abram, “Leave your land, your relatives, and your father’s home, and go to a **land** I will show you. ²I will make you a *great nation*. I will *bless* you and give you a *great name*, and you will be a *blessing*. ³I will *bless* those who *bless* you [Abraham], and **curse** anyone who **curse**s you [Abraham], and in you **all the people in the world** will be *blessed*.”

A comment on **Genesis 22:18**: The pre-incarnate **Christ** said to Abraham, “In your **Descendant** all the people on earth will be *blessed*.” (This explains Paul’s **Galatians 3:16** conclusion.)

As we shall see in #8. below, the **unbelieving** Jews of **Jesus’s** day and onward are under the **curse** of **Genesis 12:3b**—and the **land** no longer belongs to them, in fact, the **land** of the whole world now belongs to **Christians** (cp. **Matthew 28:19**: “baptize all *nations*”), **nations** who by **faith** in **Jesus** can be covered by the **blessing** of **forgiveness**.

8. Understand that **Matthew 23:37-39** is spoken *against* the *Jewish spiritual* leaders! (Note the seven [7] repeats of the statement by **Jesus** where in verses 13-29 He says, “**WOE** to you, *scribes and Pharisees!*”)

a. In **Matthew 23:33-35a, 36**: **Jesus** said: “You snakes! Brood of poisonous snakes! How can you escape being condemned to hell? That is why I am sending you prophets, wise men, and teachers of the Scriptures [that is, to tell you that you are condemned to hell]. You will kill and crucify some of them. Others you will whip in your synagogues and persecute from town to town. In this way all the innocent blood shed on the earth will come upon you, I tell you the truth, all these things will come upon this generation. (This was *initially* fulfilled when the Romans leveled Jerusalem & its Temple in AD 70.)

b. In **Matthew 23:37-39**, **Jesus** continued: “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who murdered the prophets and stoned those who were sent to you, how often I wanted to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! **Behold! Your house is left to you desolate.** For **I** tell you, you will never see **Me** again until you say, ‘Blessed is **He** who comes in the Name of the **Lord.**’”

c. In the latter passage, **Jesus** “**divorces**” the *Jews* as a **nation**. As a **nation** they had **served their purpose**; through them the *genealogy* of **Jesus** had been preserved. But now **Jesus**—by **Himself**—would generate a “**New Israel**” (namely, the **Holy Christian Church**), not generate a *resurgence* of the present *Jewish nation* or the “*Old Israel*”!

9. **Christians** should **not** take **SPIRITUAL** sides; however, they can take *political* sides!

WHY?

a. *Israel* is a “parliamentary democracy”!

b. *Islam* (ex. Hamas) is a **Christian** threat (remember America’s “9-11”)

PART B

TO THE HEART AND CORE OF THE PROBLEM

Christians need to understand **Romans 9–11**, especially the *pertinent* verses of **Romans 11:25-27**. The apostle Paul writes:

25 To keep you from thinking too highly of yourselves, my **fellow Christians**, I want you to know this **mystery**: The minds of a part of the *Jews* were closed until the full number of the *Gentiles* comes in. **26** **And in this way all **Israel** will be saved**, as it is written: The **Savior** will come from **Zion**; He will get rid of **ungodliness** in Jacob. **27** And this will be **My “last will and testament”** with them when I take away their **sins**.

Three [3] views of Romans 11:26a are given by Armin J. Panning in his NPH commentary on *Romans* (p. 193). **View 1**: Premillennialism, is rejected by true *Amillennial* Lutherans. See Article XVII of the Augsburg Confession where conservative-confessing Lutherans denounce **“certain Jewish opinions which are even now making an appearance and which teach that, before the resurrection of the dead, saints and godly men will possess a worldly kingdom and annihilate all the godless.”**

Premillennialism is rejected by **Jesus** when He said to Pontus Pilate, **“My Kingdom is not of this world.”** (Some Lutherans accept a *limited* form of Premillennialism, and thereby reject the more *drastic* form of Premillennialism, namely, Dispensationalism, as endorsed by Dallas Theological Seminary and Moody Bible Institute. This, however, does not excuse so-called Lutherans [LINO’s] from going against the *Lutheran Confessions*, teaching that **Jesus** will rule on earth for **1,000** years prior to Judgment day.)

We now cite Panning’s listing of the three [3] prominent views of **Romans 11:26**, in particular the phrase, **“all Israel will be saved!”** (**Views 2 & 3** are seen by true Lutherans as *viable* possibilities; **View 1** is not!)

- a. View 1:** “All Israel” refers to the **nation** descended from Abraham (hence all people of Jewish extraction will eventually be saved).
- b. View 2:** “All Israel” refers to the **Christian Church**, the sum total of all **God**’s elect, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*.
- c. View 3:** “All Israel” refers to **GOD**’s elect from among the *Jewish nation*, with all of this *Jewish remnant* being saved.

Why is this so difficult to understand? Because it is in the wheelhouse of a **GOD-mystery!!!** (**View 1**, which implies **“partiality”** on **GOD**’s part, is an *impossibility* on the basis of **Romans 2:11**: “for **GOD** does not favor one person over another.” **Think:** If **GOD** were to save all *Jews*, and **not** all *Gentiles*, this would be showing **“partiality”!!!**)

ABOUT THE BOOK OF *REVELATION*—AND ITS OUTLINE

1. Revelation 1:1: *Literal* OR *Symbolic/Figurative*?

This is the revelation [unveiling] of **JESUS CHRIST** which **GOD** gave **Him** to show **His** servants the things that must happen without delay; and which **He** made known by visual signs when **He** sent it through **His** angel to **His** servant John. (Literal translation!)

This is the revelation [unveiling] of **JESUS CHRIST** which **GOD** gave **Him** to show **His** servants the things that must happen without delay; and **He** sent this revelation by way of symbols through **His** angel to **His** servant John. (Semi-paraphrastic translation!)

2. The **7-fold** outline of the book of *Revelation*—in repeat mode:

A. Introduction (1:1-20)

1. **First vision:** Seven letters (2:1—3:22)
2. **Second vision:** Seven seals (4:1—7:17)
3. **Third vision:** Seven trumpets (8:1—11:19)
4. **Fourth vision:** The woman and the dragon (12:1—15:4)
5. **Fifth vision:** Seven bowls (15:5—16:21)
6. **Sixth vision:** God’s final triumph (17:1—20:15)
7. **Seventh vision:** God’s new world (21:1—22:5)

B. Conclusion (22:6-21)

3. Revelation 1:1—22:21: *Chronological* OR *Repetitious*? A **3-fold** example—

- a. **Revelation 12:7** (“**dragon**”); **13:1a** (“**beast** from the sea”); & **13:11a** (“**beast** from the earth”)! In **19:19, 20**, one should note both the “**beast** from the sea” and the “**beast** from the earth” are paired up. (The *latter* is now called the “**false prophet**”!)

12:7: And then a war broke out in heaven—**Michael** and his angels had to fight with the **dragon**; and the **dragon** fought and his angels;

13:1a: And I saw a **beast** coming up out of the sea—

13:11a: And I saw another **beast** come up out of the earth;

19:19, 20: And I saw the **beast** [“the **beast** out of the sea,” cf. **13:1ff.**] and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered to fight against the **Rider** on the horse and **His** army. And the **beast** was captured and with him the **false prophet** [“the **beast** out of the earth” (cf. **13:11**)], who had worked miraculous signs for the **beast** [the one “out of the sea”] by which he [the **false prophet**] deceived those who had received the brand of the **beast** and worshiped his image; both were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

b. Revelation 9:13-16:

13 And the sixth angel blew his trumpet. And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God. **14** It said to the sixth angel (he was the one who had the trumpet): “Free the four angels who are held bound at the great river Euphrates.”

15 And the four angels who had been held ready for that hour and day and month and year were untied to kill a third of the people. **16** And the number of soldiers on horses was 200,000,000; I heard how many there were.

c. Revelation 16:12-14:

12 And the sixth poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates. And the water in it dried up to prepare the road for the kings from the east. **13** And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the **dragon** and out of the mouth of the **beast** and out of the mouth of the **false prophet** [the “**beast** out of the earth”]. **14** For they are spirits of **demons**, working miraculous signs, who go out to the kings of the whole world to gather them for the war [**Armageddon**] on the great Day/Judgment Day of the Almighty **GOD**.

d. And what about the “millennial” interpretation of Revelation 4:1?

1 After these things I [John the apostle] looked, and there a door open in heaven, and I heard the first voice like a trumpet speaking to me. It said: “Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after these things.” **The “rapture”? NOT!**

PARTS A & B—A Summary of & Addition to:**SUMMARY**

1. Everything concerning the past (from the AD 600s) & present Palestinian & Israeli conflicts **is** about the “ **blessing/curse**” motif laid out in **Genesis 12:3a, b**. The *Muslim* faction, as well as the *Jewish* faction, have rejected **Jesus** as **Savior** and **His** plan of **redemption**. Thus, both groups have come under the **curse** of the Almighty **GOD**, because both groups denounce the doctrine of the **HOLY TRINITY** and **HIS** spelled-out way of **salvation**, namely, trust in **Jesus** for the **forgiveness** of human transgressions. Since the *Jews* rejected **Jesus** when **He** was on earth, **Matthew 23** tells us that **Jesus** **divorced** the *Jews* as a **nation**, putting them under **GOD’s** **curse** and taking the **land** of Canaan away from them. After that, **Jesus** gave the **land** of the whole world to **Christians** and told them to *evangelize* it before **they** die and inherit the **land** of heaven. As for *Muslims*, they also fall under **GOD’s** **curse** since they also have rejected the true **genealogical line** of Abraham which ran through **Isaac** down to **Jesus**. Instead, they have chosen to follow the **non-messianic line** of Abraham which ran through Abraham’s non-chosen son, **Ishmael** (see **Galatians 4:21-23**).

2. During our last session, we also concluded that Paul's statement in **Romans 9:26**, namely, "all Israel shall be saved," cannot mean that at the end of time every living Jew will come to **faith**—and be taken to heaven. That would be showing **favoritism** on **GOD's** part if He did not also take every *Gentile* to heaven. **Romans 2:11** teaches that God does not show "**partiality**"! (Of course, this conclusion is rejected by the *majority* of evangelicals who, for the most part, are of a Premillennialist or Dispensational persuasion.)

ADDITIONS—WITH SOME REPEAT TO LET "TRUTH" SINK IN

1. Great confusion often fills the minds of Lutherans (both pastors and laypersons) who listen to media personalities like David Jeremiah, Hal Lindsey, Chuck Missler, John Hagee, etc. They all preach "**Christ** and **Him** crucified," assumedly are saved **Christians**, and are very dynamic and persuasive preachers. However, they are not to be trusted when they treat the *apocalyptic* sections of books like *Isaiah* and *Ezekiel*—and this especially includes the book of *Revelation*. These heralds of the "**secret rapture**," advocating two [2] Comings of **Jesus** prior to **His** Final Coming, well, they throw many biblical teachings out of kilter, contrary to our Lutheran Confessions.

A sample of just one wild interpretation: Hal Lindsey/Chuck Missler and the "locusts" of **Revelation 9:7a**: "locusts looked like horses prepared for battle." Both men say the "locusts" are a prediction of "helicopters" that will fight against **Christians** in the last days. (**NOTE:** They switch from *literal* to *symbolic* at will.)

2. Remember the words of Article XVII of the Augsburg Confession where conservative-confessing Lutherans denounce "**certain Jewish opinions which are even now making an appearance and which teach that, before the resurrection of the dead, saints and godly men will possess a worldly kingdom and annihilate all the godless.**"

Also recall that the idea of "premillennialism" is rejected by **Jesus** when He said to Pontus Pilate, "**My** Kingdom is not of this world." **Christ** will not be reigning on earth for a **thousand [1,000] years**] **BEFORE** Judgment Day.

3. Those Lutherans, who endorse "millennialism," are not true *Amillennial* Lutherans. *Amillennial* Lutherans do not believe that **Revelation 20** teaches a "**literal**" **1,000** year reign **BEFORE Satan** is "loosed" for a "short period of time". (We shall deal with **Revelation 20** next time in **PART C** of our study—for the whole session.)

As stated last week, these *deceived* Lutherans can be called **LINO's**, "Lutherans-In-Name-Only"! They definitely side with Israel against the Palestinians, feeling that **GOD** sides with Israel—**politically**. They do not have a clue that **GOD** looks at the Palestinian-Israeli conflict **SPIRITUALLY**. They also tend to rip **Psalms 122:6** where it says, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee"--KJV) out of its OT context and

away from its **SPIRITUAL** meaning. Once again, this is right in line with *secular* American politics which fears that **GOD's curse** will fall on any *nation* that does not side with Israel. Of course, this is a total misinterpretation of **Genesis 12:3**, as we have taught. Those who do not have **sharp SPIRITUAL** eyes will only see things from a **political** viewpoint. So sad and dishonoring to our **GOD!!!**

PART C

THE "REVELATION 20" DEBATE

1. Two [2] basic views of the number **1,000** years in **Revelation 20**:

- a. The "*literal*" view
- b. The "*symbolic/figurative*" view

2. The Lutheran interpretation of **Revelation 20:1-15**:

THE DEVIL'S LAST BATTLE

Satan bound / 1 And I saw an **Angel** coming down from heaven,
 holding the key to the bottomless pit and a large chain in **His** hand;
 2 and **He** overpowered the **dragon**—
he is the **old serpent**, which is **Devil** and **Satan**—
 and **He** bound him for a **thousand** years,
 3 and threw **him** into the bottomless pit,
 and shut it
 and sealed it over **him** to keep **him** from deceiving the Gentiles anymore
 until the **thousand** years would end;
 after these things **he** must be set free **for a little while**.

Christians / rule / 4 And I saw thrones,
 and **they** sat on them and to **them** was given authority to judge;
 and I saw the souls of **those** who had been beheaded,
 because of **their** testimony of **Jesus**
 and because of the word of God.
 And they had not worshiped the **beast** nor **his** image
 and were not branded on their foreheads and on their hands;
 and **they** lived and ruled with **Christ** for a **thousand** years.
 5 The **rest of the dead** did not live until the **thousand** years came to an end.
 This is the first resurrection.

("Rest of the dead" refers to those not converted during the **1,000** years. However, those who are converted to **CHRISTianity** become part of the **First Resurrection**, that is, they became **SPIRITUALLY** alive **BEFORE** they died physically (see **Ephesians 2:1-5**).

6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection.
The second death has no power over them.
 But **they** will continue to be **priests** of **God** and of **Christ**.
 And **they** will rule with **Him** for a **thousand** years.

THE FUTURE:
An Amillennial Perspective
 —A Biblical Study of Things to Come—

Cecil Sanders

Randall House Publications, Nashville, TN (1990)

“We have now arrived at Revelation 20, the so-called keystone of prophecy. This single passage is so important to *premillennialists* that they are willing to retrace their steps back through the entire Bible and reinterpret it in the light of what they think this passage teaches. All Scripture concerning Israel, the resurrection, the judgment, etc. must now be reevaluated in the light of this passage. This seems wrong, but before proceeding with the error of this thought and the interpretation of **Revelation 20**, it is necessary to first think of *Revelation* as a whole (p. 121).

...

“Note that according to this view, the book of *Revelation* has seven sections which run somewhat parallel to each other. Each section, under a different symbol, depicts good **and** evil (church **and** world) *from the first advent of Christ to the time of His Second Coming*. **This, of course, differs greatly from the concept that what happens in one chapter always follows that which happened in the preceding chapter**” (p. 122). (The seven [7] sections/visions of *Revelation* are **not chronological**, [as Sanders pointed out], even though *millennialists* strongly disagree.)

...

Now Sanders goes on to state seven [7] features of *Revelation* (pp. 122-125):

1. “*Revelation* is *apocalyptic* literature.”
 2. “The symbols of *Revelation* cannot be interpreted *literally*.”
 3. “Biblical books written in *figurative* language should be interpreted *figuratively* unless there are indications to do otherwise.”
 4. “Obscure passages of Scripture must be interpreted by the clear and plain passages, not vice versa.” (**Interpretive principle:** “Scripture Interprets Scripture” or “Scripture Interprets Itself.” To the contrary, *millennialists* use the difficult book of *Revelation* to interpret sections of the Bible that are much clearer.)
 5. “Persecution of Christians was severe when *Revelation* was written.”
 6. “The purpose of *Revelation* was to reveal **through symbols** the conflict between good and evil **and** the results of that conflict.”
-
-

7. “The theme of *Revelation* is Christian victory.” Giessler: “Four [4] words summarize the book of *Revelation*, namely, ‘**Jesus wins; we win**’!”

Sanders divides the 20th chapter of *Revelation* into four [4] sections (pp. 125-139):

- a. 20:1-3 The Binding of Satan on Earth
- b. 20:4-6 The Reigning of Martyrs in Heaven*
- c. 20:7-10 First the Loosing then the Ultimate Overthrow of Satan
- d. 20:11-15 The Judgment

*“Some *amillennialists*, including **Augustine**, do not limit **Revelation 20:4-6** to a *heavenly* scene. These generally believe the reigning with Christ begins when one is regenerated [converted] here on earth. It, therefore, is believed to include the regenerated who have **not** died as well as those who have passed from physical life” (p. 135).

(**ADDITION:** The following NT passages seem to support Augustine’s position that **Christians** still on earth are already thought of as being in the “heavenlies”—KJV:

a. **Ephesians 2:6** “**HE** also raised **us** up with **Him** and seated **us** with **Him** in the heavens with **Christ Jesus**,...”—CSB.

b. **Ephesians 4:8c** “**You** have become **kings**...”—NET.

c. **Revelation 5:10** “and **You** made **them** a kingdom and priests to our **GOD** and **they** will continue to rule as **kings** on the earth”—NET.

d. **1 Peter 2:9** “but **you** are a chosen race, a **royal** priesthood, a holy **nation**, a **people** for **GOD**’s own possession, that **you** may proclaim the excellencies of **HIM** who has called **you** out of darkness into **HIS** marvelous light”—NAS.)

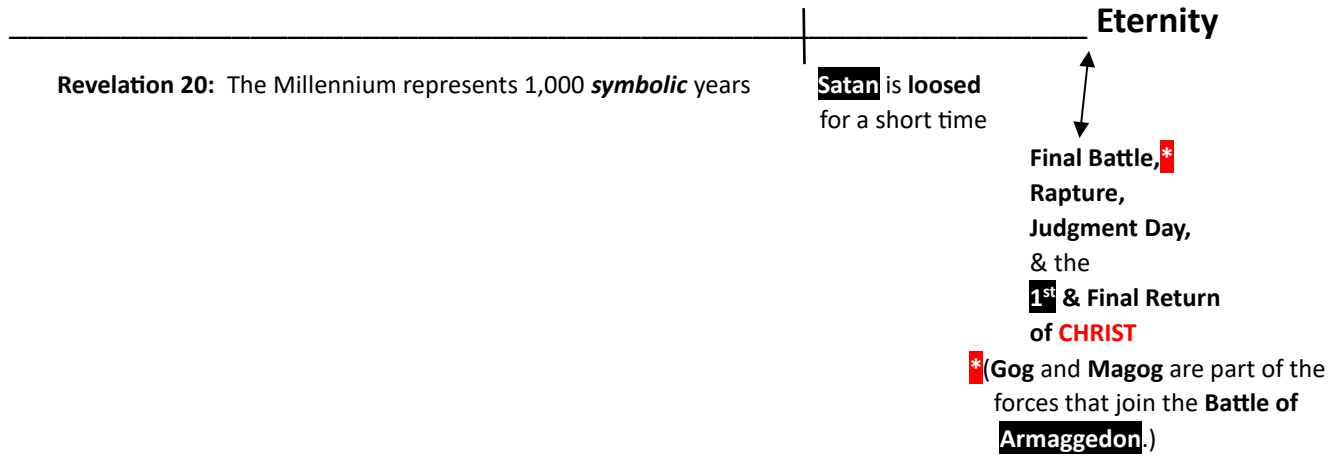
Sander’s conclusion for Revelation 20 (p. 140): “How shall we conclude our study of **Revelation 20**? The *premillennial* interpretation makes **Revelation 20** contradict both itself and the Bible as a whole. Their interpretation, rather than being a key to the understanding of prophecy, actually locks out any true prophetic understanding. It has been shown that the one passage that is supposed to fully support the *premillennial* view actually is silent about all its *major* tenants such as Jews, Palestine, Temple, sacrifices, increased productivity, longevity, etc.

“On the other hand, it has been shown that a more *symbolic* interpretation harmonizes with the rest of the Bible, the language and purpose of *Revelation* as a whole, and chapter 20 in particular. Once the *symbolism* is understood, there is no necessity to *reinterpret* the whole Bible. The one chapter which is said to clearly teach an exact one-thousand-year earthly and visible reign of Christ simply does not do so. **If premillennialism cannot succeed in Revelation 20, it cannot Scripturally prevail anywhere.**”

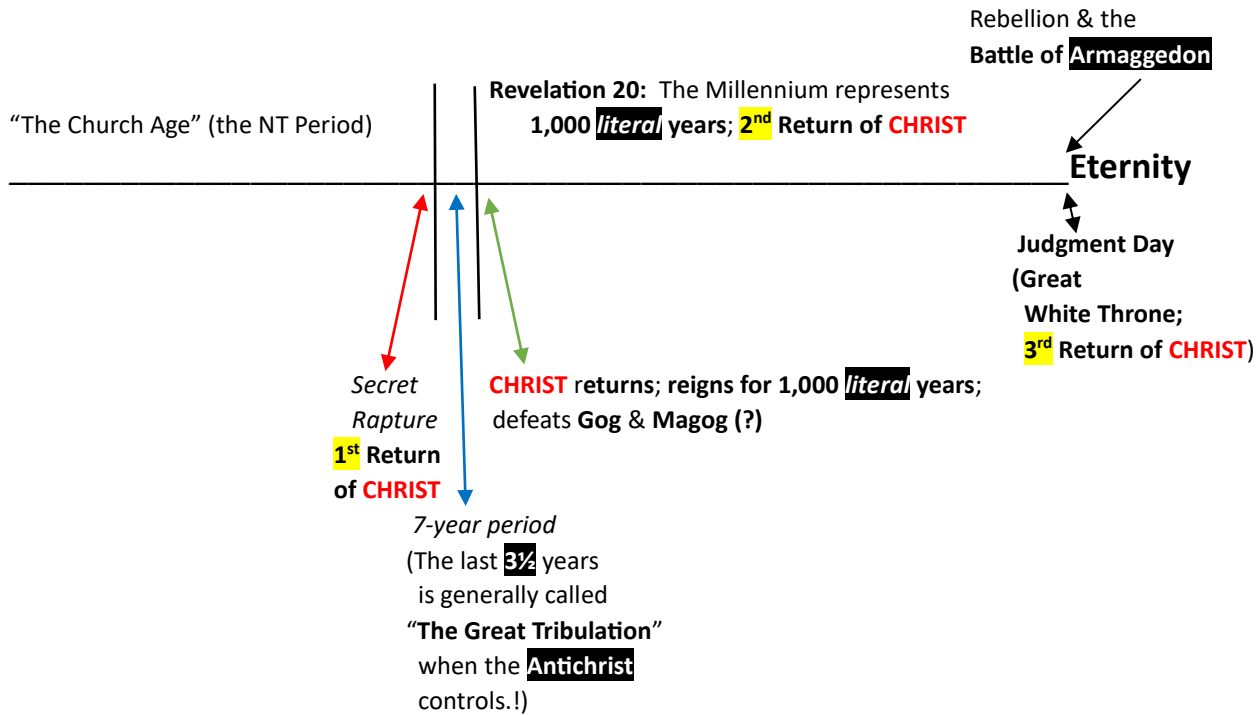
TWO SAMPLE TIME CHARTS

to show differences between Amillennialists & Premillennialists

A. Amillennialists



B. Premillennialists



OUTLINE

ADAPTED AND ENLARGED FROM PHAMPLET

DOES REVELATION 20 TEACH A MILLENNIUM?

by

F. C. G. Schumm

(S,DR20TR)

A. Read Text

B. Threefold Division (Read Again Division-by-Division)

1. **Verses 1-3:** “the period of “*a thousand [1,000] years*”
2. **Verses 4-6:** “the condition of the Kingdom during this period [of *1,000 years*]”
3. **Verses 7-15:** “the conditions that shall obtain [happen] in the world after the expiration of this period [of *1,000 years*]”

C. “The Thousand [1,000] Years” (vv. 1-3) [10³]

1. Symbolical or Literal?
 - a. Look at the language of verses 1-3.
 - b. One or the other, not both literal & symbolical (quote S,DR20TR, p. 6)
 - c. **Revelation 20:** “*locus classicus* for the ‘Biblical’ doctrine of the millennium”
2. Numbers in the Bible: Zechariah 3:9 [“7”]; Revelation 2:10c [“10 days”]; Revelation 20: 2c, 3c, 4i,5a, 6d, 7a [“thousand years” – 1,000 = 10 x 10 x 10]; “10” = completeness [cf. 10 Commandments; 10 Plagues]
3. “One Era Foretold [NT Period]”: Quote S,DR20TR, pp. 10, 11 (Gen. 49:10 & Ps. 72)

D. “The Kingdom During the Thousand Years” (vv. 4-6) [the Contrast between the “First Resurrection” & the “Second Death”]

1. Binding of Satan (Ps. 91:13; Lk. 4:18e; Matt. 4:10; Lk. 13:32; 1 Jn. 3:8; Col. 2:15; Jn. 12:31; Heb. 2:14; Col. 1:13)
2. Thrones of Judgment (Ps. 122:5; 1 Jn. 4:1; Jn. 20:23)
3. The Reign of Christ and His Saints (Quote S,DR20TR, pp. 17f.; Eph. 1:20-22; Rev. 5:10)
4. The First Resurrection ([Jn. 5:28]; Jn. 5:25 “and now is”; Eph. 2:1, 5, 6; Col. 2:12; quote S,DR20TR, p. 23; 1 Peter 2:5)

E. “What After the Thousand [1,000] Years Are Finished?” (vv. 7-15)

1. The “Little Season” [v. 3] (Rev. 12:12; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Gog & Magog [v. 8])
2. The End [vv. 10-15] (includes “the second death” – Jn. 5:28; quote S,DR20TR, pp. 34f.)

PART D**TWO SIGNIFICANT **ESCHATOLOGICAL** NEW TESTAMENT TEXTS****1. Exegesis/Interpretation of Revelation 12 & 13**

The Biblical Book Of

REVELATION*THE FOURTH VISION (12:1—15:4)**Composed of Seven [7] Sub-Visions****The Woman & The Dragon*****12TH CHAPTER****THE FIRST SUB-VISION: THE GREAT **FIRE-RED DRAGON**—**12:1-18*******The **Woman's Son** and the **Dragon** (12:1-6)***

- 1 And a great miraculous sign was seen in heaven—
a woman with the sun for her garment
and the moon under her feet
and a crown of twelve stars on her head;
- 2 and she was pregnant,
and she cried out in pain
and agony to give birth.
- 3 And another miraculous sign was seen in heaven—
and look, a large fire-red dragon with seven heads and ten horns
and with seven crowns on his heads;
- 4 and his tail swept away a third of the stars in heaven
and hurled them to the earth;
and the dragon stood in front of the woman
who was going to have a Child
to devour her Child whenever it was born.
- 5 And she gave birth to a Son, a Boy,
who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron.
And her Child was taken straight up to God and to His throne.
- 6 And the woman fled into the wilderness
where God has prepared a place for her
so that she might be fed for 1,260 days.*

*“1,260 days” and “42 months” (**Revelation 13:5**) and “a time, and times, and half a time” (**Daniel 7:25**) are terms that specify the same amount of time.

The War in Heaven (12:7-12)

- 7 And then a war broke out in heaven—
Michael and his angels had to fight with the dragon;
and the dragon fought
and his angels;
- 8 but he was not strong enough
nor was there a place for them in heaven any longer;
- 9 and the great dragon was hurled down—
the old serpent, called Devil and Satan,
who deceives the whole world,
was hurled to the earth;
and his angels were hurled down with him.
- 10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying:
"Now has come the salvation
and the power
and the Kingdom of our God
and the rule of His Christ,
because the accuser of our fellow Christians,
the one accusing them before our God—day and night—
has been thrown out;
- 11 and they conquered him because of the blood of the Lamb
and because of the word of their testimony;
and they did not love their life but were willing to die.
- 12 For this be glad, you heavens, and those who live in them.
Woe to the earth and the sea,
because the devil has come down to you with great anger,
knowing that he has little time." (Compare Revelation 20:3e—"short season"!)

Requoting Sanders (p. 10 of our present outline): "Note that *Revelation* has seven sections/.visions, which run *somewhat* parallel to each other (cp. **Revelation 12:10-12a** with **20:11-15**; **13:16h, i** with **20:4h**) Each section, under a different *symbol*, depicts **good and evil (church and world)** from the first advent of Christ to the time of His *Second Coming*. **This, of course, differs greatly from the 'millennial' concept that what happens in one chapter always follows that which happened in the preceding chapter"**

The **Dragon** Persecutes the **Woman** (12:13-18)

- 13 And when the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth,
he persecuted the woman who had given birth to the Boy.
- 14 And the woman was given two wings of the great eagle
to fly to her place in the wilderness away from the serpent,
where she would be fed for a time and times and half a time.
- 15 And from his mouth the serpent poured out a stream of water
after the woman in order to sweep her away like a river.
- 16 And the earth helped the woman.
And the earth opened its mouth
and swallowed the stream that the dragon poured from his mouth.
- 17 And the dragon was angry with the woman
and went away to fight with her other children,
those who keep what God has commanded
and who hold on to the testimony of Jesus.
- 18 And he stood on the sandy shore of the sea.

13TH CHAPTER

THE SECOND SUB-VISION: THE **BEAST** FROM THE SEA—13:1-10*

- 1 And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea—
he had ten horns
and seven heads,
and on his horns ten crowns **
and there were blasphemous names on his heads;

* Quenstedt, a great Lutheran commentator who lived nearly a century after Luther, spoke of an **Eastern [political] Antichrist** AS WELL AS a **Western [religious "within the church" Antichrist]**. The **Eastern Antichrist (Revelation 13:1-12)** represents all *governmental/secular* powers opposed to **Christ**. In its final revealing, it seems to indicate **Islam**, more of a *political* entity than a *religious* one. This is shown by **Muslim** domination once its *Sharia [Sharia Law]* is set into action via its members coming into the majority in a certain location.

The **Western Antichrist** according to **2 Thessalonians 2:4** "sits in GOD's temple"! In the "Smalcald Articles" of the *Lutheran Confessions*, Luther identifies this **second Beast** that comes out of the earth. He writes, "the pope is himself the true Antichrist." We shall speak to this point in our study of **2 Thessalonians 2** at the end of our study of the **2023 PALESTINIAN & ISRAELI CONFLICT**. In advance, we remind you that **Beast 2** is also called the "**False Prophet**" in the book of *Revelation*. This agrees with calling the **Western Antichrist** the "religious" **Antichrist**.
This footnote also applies to the "**THIRD SUB-VISION**" at **Revelation 13:11**.

and the beast which I saw was like a leopard
 and his feet were like those of a bear
 and his mouth like a lion's mouth;*
 and the dragon gave him his power
 and his throne
 and great authority.**

- 3 And one of his heads seemed to have been fatally wounded,
 but his fatal wound was healed.

And the whole world was amazed
 and followed after the beast

- 4 and worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast;
 and they worshiped the beast, saying:

"Is there anyone like the beast?
 And is there anyone who can fight with him?"

- 5 And he was given a mouth speaking proud and blasphemous things,
 and he was given authority to act for 42 months.
- 6 And he opened his mouth to blaspheme God, to blaspheme His Name
 and His TABERNACLE, those who are living [tabernacling] in heaven.
- 7 And he was given [authority]
 to wage war against the believers
 and to conquer them,
 and he was given authority
 over every tribe and people and language and nation.
- 8 And everyone living on the earth will worship him,
 [everyone] whose name is not written in the Book of Life,
 [that Book] which belongs to the Lamb
 who was slain from the beginning of the world.
- 9 If anyone has an ear, let him listen:

* Compare the “beasts” of **Daniel 7**. Calculate those four [4] **beasts** mentioned there and remember that together they have *seven* [7] heads. Also recall that the “Fourth Beast” of **Daniel 7** had *ten* [10] horns. John does not mention Daniel’s “Fourth Beast” but does mention the “10” horns. Thus, we can make **symbolical** sense of John’s description when he speaks of the **Beast out of the sea** as having 10 horns and 7 heads. (Taken from **B, TDTS**, p. 195.)

Recall **Revelation 13:1** above: “And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea—he had ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten crowns.” This is another reminder that *Revelation* is made up of many, many words and terms and quotes from the Old Testament.

** Note the *interconnection* between **Beast 1** with the **Dragon** of **Revelation 12**; also in verse 4 above.

- 10 If anyone is to be taken prisoner,
to prison he will go.
If anyone is to be killed with a sword,
with a sword he must be killed.
In this situation the believers need patient endurance and confidence.

THE THIRD SUB-VISION: THE **BEAST FROM THE EARTH—13:11-18**

- 11 And I saw another beast come up out of the earth;
and he had two horns like the Lamb [being “**Lamblike**”],
but he talked like the dragon.
- 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast before him.
And he makes the earth
and those living on it
worship the first beast,
whose fatal wound was healed.
- 13 And he works great miraculous signs
so that he even makes fire come down
from heaven to the earth
in front of the people.
- 14 And he deceives those living on the earth
because of the miraculous signs that he is given to do in front of the beast,
telling those living on the earth to make an image
for the beast who was wounded by a sword and yet lived.
- 15 And he was given power to put breath into the image of the beast
so that the image of the beast could both talk and cause
as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be put to death.
- 16 And he forces all people,
great
and small
and rich
and poor
and free
and slave
to be branded on their right hands
or on their foreheads,
- 17 and he does it so that no one may buy
or sell,
unless one has the brand—the beast’s name
or the number of his name. [Recall **Revelation 20:4 f, g**—now a *symbolic* repeat!]*

* For a little humor, quote CN, Nov. 20, 2023, p. 6.

2. Exegesis of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17

2ND CHAPTER

“The “Man of Sin”

1 Our **Lord Jesus Christ** is coming, and **we** will be gathered to meet **Him**. But we ask **you, fellow Christians**, 2 not to lose your heads quickly or become alarmed either by a "spirit" message or by a word or by a letter that *supposedly* comes from **us**, saying, "The **Day of the Lord** has already come!" 3 Do not let anyone **deceive you** in any way. For the revolt must *first* take place, and the “**man of sin**” who is doomed to destruction must be revealed. 4 **He** opposes and sets **himself** above everyone who is **GOD**'s representative or to whom honor is due, so that **he** sits in **GOD**'s temple and proclaims that **he** is **GOD**.

5 Do **you** not remember that **I** told **you** this when **I** was still with **you**? 6 And now **you** know what is holding **him** back, so that **he** will be revealed when **his** time comes. 7 For this “**rebellious thing**” is already working *secretly*, but only until **He** who is now holding it back gets out of the way. 8 Then the “**rebellious one**” will be revealed, and the **Lord Jesus** will destroy **him** with the breath of **His** mouth and make **him** powerless at **His** return appearance.

9 The coming of this “**rebellious one**” is the work of **Satan**, who uses all types of *misleading* miracles, miraculous signs, and wonderful proofs 10 and every kind of *wrongdoing* which **deceives** those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 That is why **GOD** sends a **deception** which works effectively, so that they might believe the lie [**because the Papacy appears to be** “**Lamblike**”!] 12 and all might be condemned who did not believe the truth but delighted in *wrongdoing*.

God Has Chosen You!

13 But **we** have a *continuing* obligation to thank **GOD** for **you, fellow Christians**, whom the **Lord** loves, because in the beginning **GOD** chose **you** to be made holy by the **SPIRIT**, to believe the truth, and so to be saved. 14 For this purpose also **He** called you by the Gospel which **we** preach; **He** wants **you** to have the glory of our **Lord Jesus Christ**.

15 Stand then, **fellow Christians**, and cling to the instructions **we** handed down to **you** when **we** spoke to **you** or wrote to **you**.

16 Now may our **Lord Jesus Christ Himself** and **God our Father**, who loved **us** and by **His** grace gave **us** everlasting comfort and good hope, 17 comfort **you** inwardly and strengthen **you** to do and say everything that is good.*

*Luther primarily saw the Papacy as the **Antichrist** since it denounced the doctrine of “**justification by faith alone**” during Session VI, Canon 12 of the Council of Trent.

Thus, we end our **4-PART Readers’ Digest** presentation of “**What Is a Christian to Think**” in terms of **THE PRESENT 2023 PALESTINIAN AND ISRAELI CONFLICT**.

Our Conclusions:

- a. All biblical endorsements of *any* conflicts must be decided ***SPIRITUALLY*** on the basis of Scripture's " **blessing/curse**" motif, as spelled out in **Genesis 12:3!**
 - b. Muslim rejection of the **TRINITY** and Jewish rejection of **Jesus** as **Messiah** and **Savior** of the world places both groups under the " **curses**" of **GOD**.
 - c. The world's conclusions as to choosing sides in *any nation-faces-nation* conflict finds decisions being made on the basis of **political**, not ***SPIRITUAL*** factors. **GOD** does not think like worldly politicians!!!
 - d. As to the Jews, **GOD** chose them to establish a **genealogical line** down to the birth of the **Messiah**. However, when the Jewish people rejected **Jesus** as **Savior** from sin, **He "divorced"** them as a nation when in **Matthew 23 He** said, "**I** leave to you your house desolate." This final **divorce** action was carried out in **AD 70** when the city of Jerusalem and its Temple were destroyed, even leveled and some 1,100,000 Jews were massacred and many others were made slaves.
 - e. The *non-biblical* view of millennialists, both Premillennialists & Dispensationalists, makes a mockery of Scriptural truth. The view that **Christ** will come back 1,007 years **BEFORE** Judgment Day and physically remove all **Christians** from earth via a "**secret rapture**" before the "**Great Tribulation**"! Then seven ["7"] years later, it is said that **Jesus** will *resurrect all* the Jews and deliver them from the **Antichrist**. At the same time, **Jesus** will bring back all the **Christians** who were formerly raptured. **He** will then set up an earthly Kingdom for 1,000 literal years and reign on earth from Jerusalem prior to Judgment Day. We have shown that **Revelation 20** does not teach any of this!!! In fact, **Christ** taught that **He** would not ever have an *earthly* Kingdom when **He** said to Pontus Pilate: "**My** Kingdom is not of this world."
 - f. At long length, **we** studied the book of *Revelation*, showing FOUR other crucial things:
 - 1) *Revelation* is not **chronological**; rather, seven ["7"] times it **repeats** itself, via seven visions, the data previously given, providing enhanced information.
 - 2) *Revelation* is apocalyptic/revelatory literature that speaks **symbolically**, that is, it communicates **figuratively**, in **symbols**, not primarily in a **literal** way. (We showed that **Revelation 20** is mangled when taken in a **literal** way.)
-
-
-

3. The *symbolic*/difficult passages of *Revelation* should not be used to interpret other Scriptural texts that are much more clear. As Sanders stated, “Obscure passages of Scripture must be interpreted by the clear and plain passages, not vice versa.”
4. Earthly *conflicts* are the work of **Satan** & the **Eastern & Western Antichrists** (**Revelation 12 & 13**).
- h. The terms “Last Days” & “Last Times” refers to the entire N period from Christ’s First Coming to His Second Coming.
- i. The “**signs**” that **Jesus** spelled out in **Matthew 24**, signs that reoccur time-after-time until **He** returns, can be helpful as one evaluates **THE PRESENT 2023 PALESTINIAN & ISRAELI CONFLICT**:
- 1) Lawlessness/persecution
 - 2) Apostasy/“falling away”—**Matthew 24:10**
 - 3) Turmoil in the world—bombings, beheadings, etc.
 - 4) Upheavals in nature—earthquakes, etc.
 - 5) Gospel-spreading (example: Africa; Europe; conversion of Muslims)
 - 6) Good verses bad: **LGBTQIA** intrusion finding Presbyterian & Methodist congregations leaving their former church bodies
 - 7) “Foolishness” (ex.: “spend your way out of debt”) (**Romans 1:20c-22**)

Soli Deo Gloria!!!