

# The Millennium and The End of the World – Part 2

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## Introduction

1. The Bible is the word of God (see “[The Bible Is True](#)” brochure)!
2. **God** created the world (Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3), **God** is in control of all things (Lam. 3:37-38), and **God** will bring the world to an end according to His timing (Acts 17:31).
  - a. **Genesis 1:1** – “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”
  - b. **Hebrews 11:3** – “By faith we [U] understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”
  - c. **Lamentations 3:37-38** – “Who is there who speaks, and it comes to pass, Unless the Lord has commanded *it*? *Is it* not from the mouth of the Most High That both good and ill go forth?
  - d. **Acts 17:31** – “...He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”
3. God’s creation was very good (Gen. 1:31), but the first people disobeyed God (Gen. 3:6), which brought **immediate spiritual death** (Gen. 2:16-17), **eventual physical death** (Gen. 5:5). On very day of the fall, **God promised to send a future descendant of the woman who would defeat the devil and make the one way to heaven** (Gen. 3:15; John 14:6; Acts 4:12).
  - a. **Genesis 1:31** – God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was **very good**. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.
  - b. **Genesis 3:6** – When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, **she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.**
  - c. **Genesis 2:16-17** – The LORD God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for **in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.**”
  - d. **Genesis 5:5** – So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and **he died.**
  - e. **Genesis 3:15** – “And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; **He shall bruise you on the head,** And you shall bruise him on the heel.”
  - f. **John 14:6** – Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; **no one comes to the Father but through Me.**”
  - g. **Acts 4:12** – “And **there is salvation in no one else;** for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”

4. Jesus' first coming was prophesied throughout the OT era, then He put on flesh in the fullness of time. // **Galatians 4:4-5** – ...**when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son**, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.
5. **Jesus lived** a sinless life in our place (Heb. 4:15) and served a three-and-a-half-year ministry to show He was the promised Messiah through ♦countless miracles and ♦important teachings. **Jesus taught** about ♦the way of salvation, ♦living as Christians, ♦the NT era, and ♦His promised return, which would be at the end of the world, include the resurrection of all bodies, and be the final judgment. // **Hebrews 4:15** – ...**we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.**

## The New Testament Era and The End of the World

1. **As OT believers** struggled to understand the details of Jesus' first coming, **so we as NT believers struggle** to understand the details of His second coming.
2. We do **not** know the length of the NT era, **but** the current timing should not surprise us – since it was approximately 4,000 years between ♦the first promise that Jesus would come and ♦His first coming into the world.
3. It's normal and natural to wonder about Jesus' return, *since Jesus' own disciples did the same* (Acts 1:6), but **Jesus wants us to focus on reaching others with the saving truth of the gospel** (Acts 1:7-8).
  - a. **Acts 1:6** – ...when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, **"Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"**
  - b. **Acts 1:7-8** – He said to them, "It is not for you to know times *[periods of time]* or epochs *[appointed times]* which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.**"
4. **Nevertheless**, as we study the Bible and read about future events, we try to put them together in ways that are ♦understandable and ♦in agreement with sound Biblical interpretation.

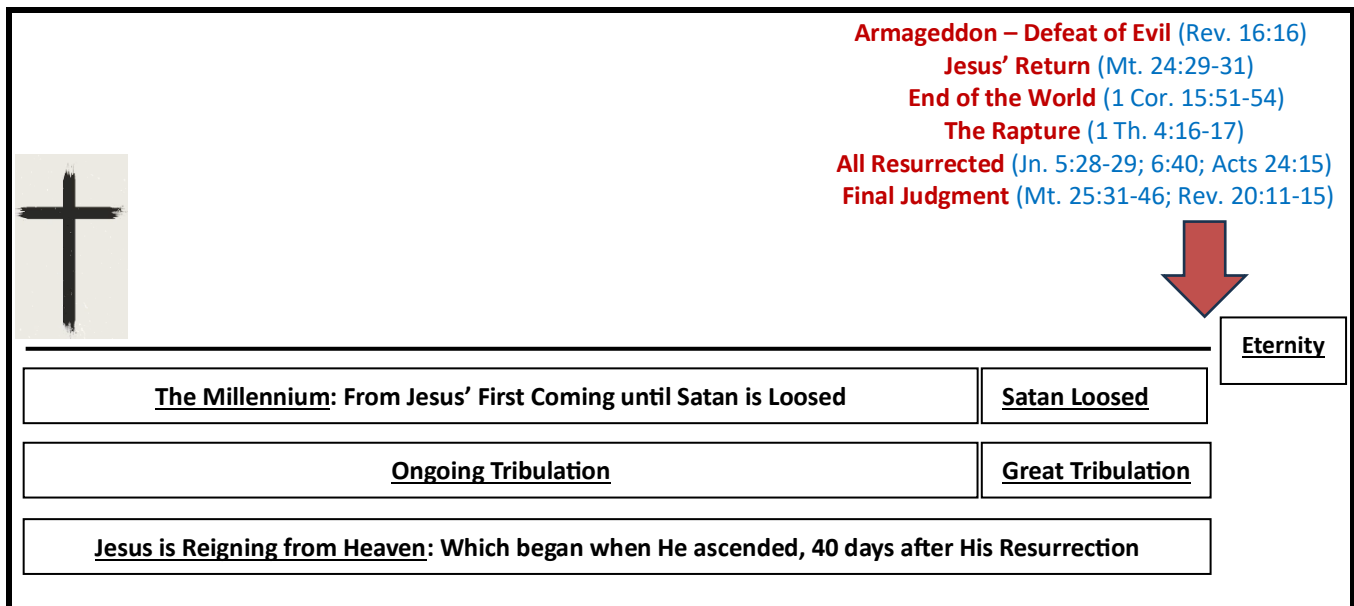
## Two Popular Views

1. The second part of this millennium study focuses on two popular views of the NT era and the end of the world:
  - a. **Amillennialism** – Believed by Many Since the 5th Century (for 1600 years).
  - b. **Dispensational Premillennialism** – Believed by Many Evangelicals Since the 19th Century (for 200 Years).
2. What is apocalyptic literature? "Apocalyptic literature is a literary genre, particularly prominent in ancient Jewish and early Christian writings, that focuses on the end of the world and the coming of a new age. It's characterized by visions, revelations, and symbolic language, often depicting cataclysmic events and a final judgment" (AI).
3. A major difference is how the two views interpret apocalyptic literature, such as **Revelation** and parts of **Daniel, Ezekiel, Joel, Isaiah, Zechariah, Matthew, Mark, and Luke**.
  - a. Amillennialism – interprets **symbolically** and **non-chronologically**.
  - b. Dispensational Premillennialism – interprets **literally** and **chronologically**.

4. An Apocalyptic Literature Example – Dr. Luther's summary of Ezekiel from TLSB:

- a. “This vision in the first part of Ezekiel [1:4–28], ...is nothing else than a revelation [a revealing] of the kingdom of Christ in faith here upon earth... To put it briefly: this vision is the spiritual chariot of Christ in which he rides here in the world...
- b. This vision... signified the end... of the priesthood, the worship, and the church organization instituted and given them by Moses. For all of these were instituted only until Christ should come...”
  - i. **Matthew 11:13** “...all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John.”
  - ii. **Romans 8:2-3** For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh...
  - iii. **2 Corinthians 3:6** ...the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
- c. “For this prophecy contains two things.
  - i. **The first** is that Israel and Judah shall return to their land after their captivity. This came to pass through King Cyrus and the Persians, before the birth of Christ... They also came to Jerusalem every year to the feasts, even from foreign countries where they maintained their residence... But the hope of the Jews that there shall yet be another physical return, when all of them together shall come back into the land and set up again the old Mosaic order of things, this is something they have dreamed up themselves. There is not a letter in the prophets or in Scripture which says or signifies anything of the kind.... [Today – Jews: 46% Israel; 54% elsewhere]
  - ii. **The second** thing, and the best thing in this prophecy... is that God promises to create something new in the land, to make a new covenant unlike the old covenant of Moses that they dream about. This is plain from **Jeremiah 31** [vv. 31-32 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke...”]. No longer are there to be two kingdoms but one kingdom [see Eph. 2:11-22], under their King David who is to come [the Christ]; and his shall be an everlasting kingdom, even in that same physical land. This, too, has been fulfilled. For when Christ came and found the people of both Israel and Judah gathered again out of all lands so that the country was full, he started something new: he established the promised new covenant. He did this not at a spiritual place, or at some other physical place, but exactly in that same physical land of Canaan, and at that same physical Jerusalem—as had been promised—to which they had been brought back out of all lands....
- d. These two things Ezekiel teaches us when he comforts the people concerning the return from Babylon, but even more when he prophesies the new Israel and the kingdom of Christ. That is his vision of the chariot, and... his temple, in the last part of his book [**40:2–48:35**].... **Therefore**, this building of Ezekiel is not to be understood to mean a physical building, but like the chariot at the beginning [**1:4–28**] so this building at the end [**40–48**] is nothing else than the kingdom of Christ, the holy church or Christendom here on earth until the last day (AE 35:284–290).”

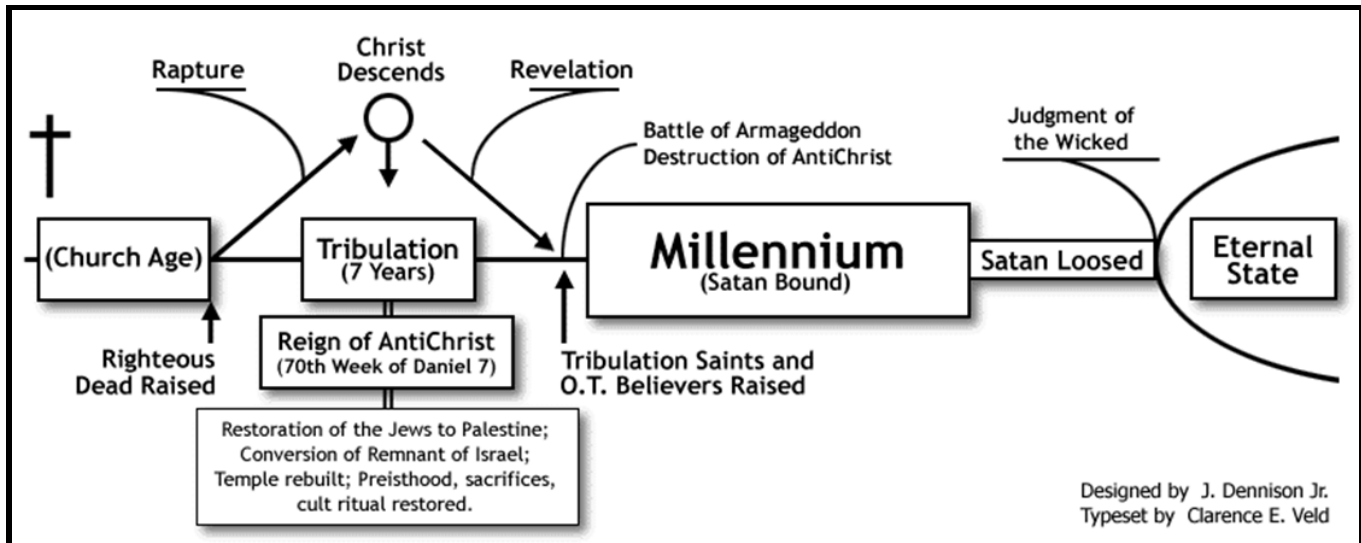
## Amillennialism – Believed by Many Since the 5<sup>th</sup> Century (for 1600 years)



### Basic Teachings:

1. The millennium is a *complete period* (10 x 10 x 10) from when Satan began to be bound until the time when he was loosed.
  - a. **Satan began to be bound during Jesus' ministry:** **1 John 3:8** ...The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. // **Luke 10:17-18** The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning."
  - b. **Satan was bound when Jesus won the victory over sin, death, and Satan** through His sinless living, sacrificial death, and glorious resurrection: **Matthew 12:28-29** "...if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house [*Satan's house*] and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house."
  - c. **Jesus ascended into heaven**, forty days after He was raised; now He is reigning.
  - d. **While Satan was bound**, the gospel had more freedom.
2. Satan being loosed may have *begun* at the age of enlightenment (1685):
  - a. **The age of enlightenment** focused on reason, individualism, and skepticism.
  - b. **The historical-critical method of Bible interpretation** began to be developed: Read the Bible, then ask: *What does it really mean?* (The Historical-grammatical method, used at Bethlehem, takes the Bible to *mean what it says*.)
  - c. **Satan being loosed** has also resulted in increased tribulation: **Matthew 24:21** "...there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world..."
3. At the appointed time, Jesus will return, the world will end, all will be resurrected, and the final judgment will take place (Mt. 25:31-46; Jn. 5:28-29; Heb. 9:27-28; 2Pe. 3:10-13; Rev. 20:11-15): Repentant ones, *the sheep*, being welcomed in. Unrepentant ones, *the goats*, being sent away.
4. Believed by Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, Methodist, and Messianic Jews.

## Dispensational Premillennialism – Believed by Many Evangelicals Since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (for 200 Years)



### Basic Teachings:

1. We are currently living in the church age.
2. Before a seven-year period of intense tribulation, Christ will come to take His church (living and dead) into heaven.
3. During the seven years of tribulation, the temple will be rebuilt, and the priesthood and sacrifices will be restored (see TLSB comment below).
4. After this period of fulfillment of divine wrath at the end of the seven years of tribulation, Jesus shall return to rule from the New Jerusalem over the earthly nations for one thousand years.
5. After the thousand years, Satan, who was bound up during Christ's earthly reign, will be loosed to deceive the nations, gather an army of the deceived, and take up to battle against the Lord.
6. This battle will end in both the judgment of the wicked and Satan and the entrance into the eternal state of glory by the righteous.
7. This view is called Premillennialism because it places the return of Christ before the Millennium, and it is called Dispensational because it is founded in the doctrines of dispensationalism (a popular way of reading the Bible, beginning in the nineteenth century under John Nelson Darby).
8. Believed by Plymouth Brethren, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Baptist Bible Fellowship International, Calvary Chapel, Assemblies of God, independent fundamentalist Baptist churches, and many nondenominational Bible churches.
9. **Comment:** Dispensational Premillennialists base the rebuilding of the temple and the re-institution of the sacrifices on Ezekiel chapters 40-48. Consider this comment from TLSB on Ezekiel 40-48: "The Lord shows Ezekiel a vision of fulfillment regarding the things he had proclaimed in [chaps. 33-39](#).... Because Ezekiel was to declare all he saw in the vision to his immediate audience, he describes the coming covenant of peace **in terms of the old covenant**.... But Ezekiel did not see a mirage without body or substance, or a literal blueprint for an end-times temple. We rejoice to be the benefactors of his fulfilled prophetic vision: restoration to communion with God through "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ" ([Heb 10:10](#)), "worship in spirit and truth" ([Jn. 4:24](#)) ..., and fellowship in the Holy Christian Church, which will endure forever. When St John had a vision of what awaits us on Judgment Day, he, too, described its perfect bliss **in the same figures of the old covenant we find in Ezekiel** (see [Rev. 21:9-22:5](#))."