

Men's Ministry – 5/25/22 – Historic Premillennialism

Read Rev. 20, pray

Review: What is Premillennialism? 1) Millennium? = one thousand years (Latin = millennium) 2) Pre? = "before" – What before? Christ's return. So, Christ will return before the millennium. What cover last time? Dispensational Premillennialism.

Church Age – Resurrection of Believers/Rapture – Tribulation – Visible Return – Millennium – Resurrection of Unbelievers/Judgement - Eternal State/NHNE.

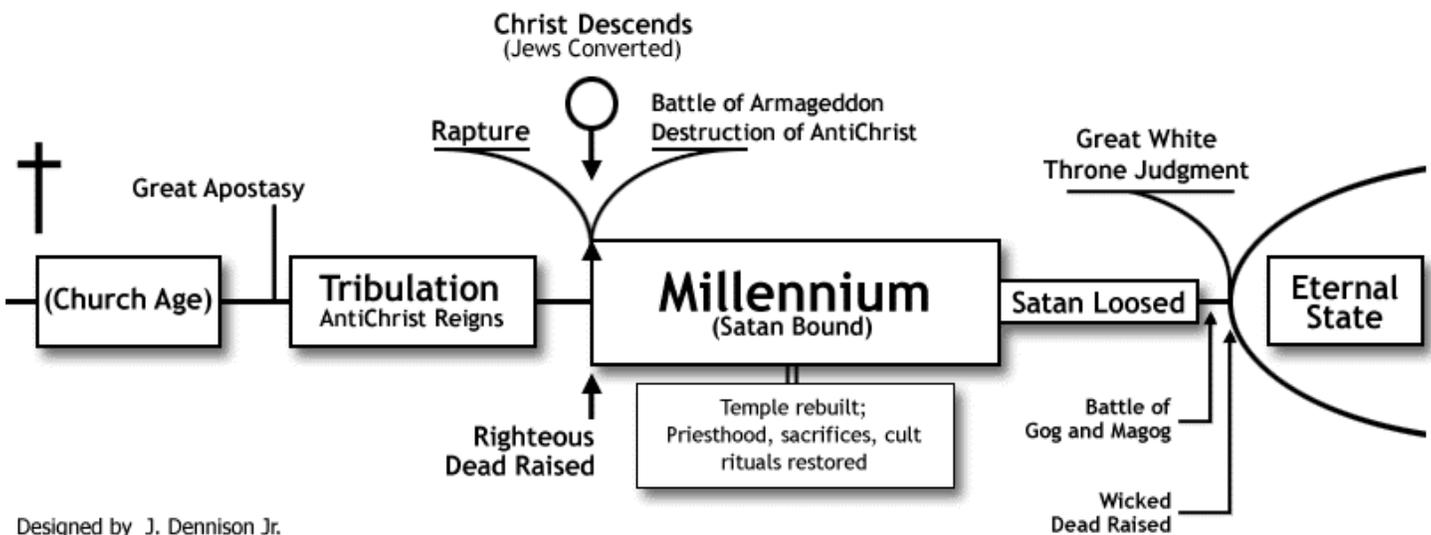
Today: Another understanding of premil = Historic Premillennialism.

Premil = Christ returns before the millennium.

"Historic"? = This view held by many in the very early church. "Chiliasm" from the Greek chiliasmos, meaning 'a thousand years

Early proponents = Barnabas, Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian.

What distinguishes H.P. from D.P.? (Hand out sheets) ***Tonight we define, not refute.*** Learn a position first before you argue against it. ☺



Historic premillennialism draws its name from the fact that many of the early Church Fathers (i.e. Irenaeus [140-203], who as a disciple of Polycarp, who had been an disciple of the apostle of John, Justin Martyr [100-165], and Papias [80-155]), apparently believed and taught that there would be a visible kingdom of God upon the earth, after the return of Christ. Without question, the best and most influential historic premillennialist was the late George Eldon Ladd. Through the work of Ladd, historic premillennialism gained scholarly respect and popularity among Evangelical and Reformed theologians since he had the right appreciation of the redemptive- historical significance

of the first coming of Christ and of the NT age. Other major historic premillennialists include the late Walter Martin, John Warwick Montgomery, J. Barton Payne, Henry Alford (the noted Greek scholar), and Theodore Zahn (the German NT specialist).

Eschatological Calendar:

The rise of Anti-Christ, and the associated persecution of the Church.

The great tribulation.

The return of Christ at the end of the age.

The resurrection of the just and the simultaneous rapture of the living saints.

The conversion of the Jews at the glorious visible return of Christ.

The institution of the millennial kingdom.

The final revolt of the unbelieving at the end of the millennium.

The resurrection of the wicked and the final judgment.

The eternal state in the new heavens and the new earth.

(<https://www.monergism.com/topics/eschatology/all-millennial-views/historic-premillennialism>)

Arguments for Premil:

1) Several O.T. passages seem to fit neither the present state or the eternal state.

Isaiah 65:20 No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.

- indicate a time far greater than now. no more infant death or dying prematurely – far diff. than now, but still do not see complete removal of all sin, rebellion, death from earth.

- may mingle elements of the millennium & the eternal state, but OT prophecy tends to not distinguish clearly among the events of the future – e.g. 1st & 2nd comings of Christ.

Isaiah 11:6-9 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. ⁹ They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

- Another passage that seems to predict a millennial kingdom. Momentous renewal of nature beyond what we see in the present age. Yet the very next text says:

Isaiah 11:10-11 In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples-- of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious. ¹¹ In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.

- some still seeking the Messiah. The Lord is still gathering a remnant from various nations. So, it would not seem that the eternal state has begun.

Psalms 72:8-14 May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth! ⁹ May desert tribes bow down before him, and his enemies lick the dust! ¹⁰ May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts! ¹¹ May all kings fall down before him, all nations serve him! ¹² For he delivers the needy when he calls, the poor and him who has no helper. ¹³ He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy. ¹⁴ From oppression and violence he redeems their life, and precious is their blood in his sight.

- This psalm goes beyond Solomon's reign to predict the glories of the reign of the Messiah. "all nations shall serve Him." There are still needy, afflicted. People who need rescue from oppression. Under this Messiah King the situation will be better than now, but not as good as the eternal state.

Zechariah 14:5-17 And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then

the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. ⁶ On that day there shall be no light, cold, or frost. ⁷ And there shall be a unique day, which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but at evening time there shall be light. ⁸ On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter. ⁹ And the LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day the LORD will be one and his name one. ¹⁰ The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft on its site from the Gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses. ¹¹ And it shall be inhabited, for there shall never again be a decree of utter destruction. Jerusalem shall dwell in security. ¹² And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples that wage war against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. ¹³ And on that day a great panic from the LORD shall fall on them, so that each will seize the hand of another, and the hand of the one will be raised against the hand of the other. ¹⁴ Even Judah will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be collected, gold, silver, and garments in great abundance. ¹⁵ And a plague like this plague shall fall on the horses, the mules, the camels, the donkeys, and whatever beasts may be in those camps. ¹⁶ Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths. ¹⁷ And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them.

- Zechariah prophesies a coming age of great transformation of all of the earth – Lord King over all earth – but still rebellion, sin, suffering, & death.

- So, situation prophesied does not fit either the eternal state or the current state. Thus, a millennium before the eternal state.

2) There are also other N.T. passages other than Rev. 20 that suggest a future millennium.

Revelation 2:26-27 The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, ²⁷ and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father.

- ruling with rod of iron; shattering earthen pots – implies a rule of force over rebellious people. Believer participate in this rule. = glorified saints ruling with Jesus. – not fit now or eternal state.

1 Corinthians 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴ Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

- "Then" refers to "after that." So = interval of time between Christ's second coming and "then end." That interval = the millennium.

3) With the above in mind, a fresh look at Rev. 20 seems to yield the following:

- Several statements here are best understood as referring to a future earthly reign of Christ prior to the future judgment.

1) The binding and imprisonment of Satan in the bottomless pit (vv. 2-3).

- This seems to imply a far greater restriction of his activity than anything we know of in the present age. (See 1 Peter 5:8)

2) The statement in v. 4 – "They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years" is best taken to refer to a bodily resurrection – "first resurrection." (v. 5) The verb translated "came to life" (*ezesan*) = same verb used Rev. 2:8 where Jesus identifies Himself as the One who "died and came to life" – obviously referring to His resurrection.

- 3) So, on a premil. Interpretation, the reign of Christ (v. 4) is something still future, not something occurring now.
- 4) Those who come to life and reign with Christ in Rev. 20 include people who "had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their forehead or hands (v. 4). They did not yield to the persecution of the antichrist (still future). (Went through Tribulation.) So, Rev. 20:1-6 does not describe the present age – future millennial reign.

These considerations taken together argue strongly for a future millennium – a future reign of Christ on the earth that will look markedly different from this present age, yet will fall far short of the glory of the eternal state.

Arguments against Premil: (Those who present next. Come back. ☺)

Thoughts/Comments?

Prayer...