

Modes of Interpretation

Preterism

This interpretation emphasizes the time markers “soon” and “at hand,” and considers the prophecies in Rev. chapters 1-19 to have already been fulfilled by specific events (which ones are often not agreed upon) in the early church period. Interpretations draw heavily from ancient extra-biblical historical and literary sources. *Hyper-preterism* asserts that even chapters 20-22 have already been

Historicism

The people & events in the Revelation correspond to specific people & events throughout all of church history between the two comings of Christ. The progress of events in the book is generally chronological. Extensive historical sources and knowledge are necessarily to interpret the book, and great differences of opinion exist as to which events fulfill which prophecies in Revelation.

Futurism

Virtually all the prophecies of the book after chapter 3 are yet to take place at a time of great crisis just prior to the end of the age. Many futurists say that, although the letters to the churches in ch. 2-3 were addressed primarily to the early church, they represent the spiritual condition of the church in various ages of church history, with the last one, Laodicea, representing the faithless church that will usher in the end-time events of chapters 4-22.

Idealism

The people and events of the book represent important themes in the spiritual warfare between God and Satan. Like O.T. prophecies, events are a series of visions, not necessarily chronological, and do not necessarily have a one-on-one correspondence to specific historical events. Rather, they represent different perspectives on the spiritual battle that occur and recur (i.e., *recapitulate*) throughout church history. These recurring events intensify (i.e., *progress*) until the cataclysmic events that immediately precede Christ's return.

Views of the Millennium

Postmillennialism

1. The “Millennium” is an age characterized by the worldwide success of the gospel and its power in transforming not only individuals but families, cultures, countries, and world civilizations as a whole.
2. Christ returns visibly at the end of the millennium after a brief period of intense rebellion, to create a new heavens and earth and bring in an eternal sinless state.

Amillennialism

1. The “Millennium” is the current age, which began with Christ's First Coming and represents the conquest of the gospel in calling out the members of His spiritual kingdom from the world, despite Satan's attempts to resist it.
2. Christ returns after this period (i.e., at the end of this present age) to set up His eternal kingdom in a renewed heaven and earth.

Premillennialism – Historical

1. The “Millennium” is a period of peace and prosperity on this earth under Christ the King who reigns from Jerusalem for a literal 1,000 years.
2. Christ returns for His faithful prior to the Millennium but *after* a period of intense rebellion against God, during which Satan, knowing his time is short, pours out his wrath against God on the church of that age. After this, Satan is bound, and the Millennium begins.

Premillennialism – Dispensational

1. The “Millennium” is a period of peace & prosperity on this earth under Christ the King who reigns from Jerusalem for a literal 1,000 years.
2. Before the Millennium, Christ returns for His church in a secret “rapture” which is followed by 7 years of tribulation on earth. At the end of this period, Christ returns visibly to redeem the earthly nation of Israel, which will reign on earth while the church is with God in heaven. At the end of the thousand years on earth, a final rebellion will be quelled before the eternal state.