

The Future Kingdom of God

THE MILLENNIUM

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Agenda

- Overview of the major positions regarding the Millennium – 15 minutes
- Biblical teaching regarding the existence and nature of the Millennium – 45 minutes
- Q&A – 30 minutes (maybe more)

The Millennial Divide

- Eschatological theological systems can be categorized by their view of the Millennium.
- The prefix of "A", "Pre", "Post" refer to whether there is a Millennium at all ("A"), or whether Christ comes before ("Pre") or after ("Post") the Kingdom is set up.
- Within each major position there are a host of minor interpretations

Classical Premillennialism

- Sees no distinction between Israel and the Church.
- Is mostly Post-Tribulational – meaning Christ will rapture the Church after the tribulation and then be escorted back for His Millennial reign.
- It does believe in a literal future Kingdom.
- Proponents were Spurgeon, George Ladd, and G.N.H. Peters.

Amillennialism

- Truest to the allegorical interpretation of Biblical prophecies regarding the Kingdom.
- Held by most reformed scholars, e.g. Presbyterian, Lutheran, etc.
- Does not differentiate between Israel and the Church – sees only one people of God – Israel in the Old Testament and the Church in the New.
- Is mostly embodied in Covenant theology.
- After Christ's return there is no Kingdom – just the Eternal State.

Covenant Theology

- Believes God's interaction with mankind is through Covenants.
 - The Covenant of Works
 - Given to Adam in the Garden.
 - Based on obedience to God's command.
 - Adam failed which necessitated:
 - The Covenant of Grace
 - Based on Faith in God's Promise of Salvation

Covenant Theology

- Is strongly Calvinistic in it's Theology
- Sees a singular people of God – the Elect – which was represented in the Old Testament as Israel and in the New Testament as the Church
- Mostly rejects any concept of a Rapture or a future Millennial reign of Christ.

Postmillennialism

- Held by most liberal Bible scholars.
- Teaches if Christ comes at all, he will come when we clean up the world.
- A resurgence of post-millennialism is seen in the Dominion Theology and Christian Reconstruction movements.
- This view was very popular in the late 1800's, before WWI, WWII, and the chaos of the 20th century.

Dispensational Premillennialism

- Truest to the grammatical-historical (literal) interpretation of Biblical prophecy.
- Sees a discontinuity between the Old and New Testaments (Law and Grace).
- Differentiates between Israel and the Church.
- Is sometimes known as dispensationalism.
- Sees redemptive history as divided into several periods called dispensations in which God dealt with mankind in different ways.

Dispensationalism

- Each dispensation consists of:
 - A test – what does God require man to do.
 - A failure – man does not live up to God's requirements.
 - A judgment – because of man's failure – God ends the dispensation with a judgment.
- Most Dispensationalists see seven distinct dispensations though the number varies a bit from one flavor of dispensationalism to another and whether one counts the Tribulation as a separate dispensation.

Dispensations

- Innocence – Creation to the Fall
- Conscience – Fall to the Flood
- Human Government – Flood to Tower of Babel
- Promise – Tower of Babel to the Sinai
- Law – Sinai to Pentecost
- Grace – Pentecost to Rapture
- Millennium – Rapture to the Eternal State

Hyper-Dispensationalism

- Sees the dispensations as rigid containers so that the Scriptures are only rightly understood if we limit their application to the times for which they are written.
- An example would be the rejection of the Gospels as relevant for the church.
- An extreme example is the dismissal of all the Scriptures except 1-2 Thessalonians and the Pastorals as being applicable to the Church today.
- Other flavors even teach that the way of salvation differs depending on what dispensation one is in.

Progressive Dispensationalism

- Sees a greater continuity between the Old and New Testaments than classic dispensationalism.
- Sees the dispensations as “unfolding” God’s revelation progressively – each building on the preceding one.
- Sees Christ as currently reigning on David’s throne spiritually – thus the Kingdom is both present and future.
- Blunts the distinction between Israel and the Church.

Preterism

- The view that teaches all the prophetic passages regarding Christ's return in Matthew 24-25 and Revelation occurred in the Roman Invasion of Israel in A.D. 70.
- Does not see any future unfulfilled prophecies in Revelation with the possible exception of 20-22 that are yet to be fulfilled in the future.
- One leading proponent is Kenneth Gentry.

Why I Am A Premillennialist

- When all of the passages in the Bible regarding Christ's Second Coming are put together, the Premillennial position is truest to the Historical-Grammatical, or literal, method of interpreting Scripture.
- Too much work is required when looking at the other positions to make them fit nicely into a clear reading of the texts regarding the Second Coming

Why I Am A Premillennialist

- The Land Promises to Israel in the Old Testament
 - God repeatedly promised Israel a land and even gave the boundaries – Genesis 13:14-17, Ezekiel 40-48
 - Israel has as of yet to occupy the land given to them by God

Why I Am A Premillennialist

- The promise of a Return to the Land in the Latter Days
 - God repeatedly promises to bring Israel back to the Land he gave them in the latter days – this is seen throughout the Old Testament
 - This is especially seen in the Palestinian Covenant in Deuteronomy 30:1-10
 - And it is seen throughout the Minor Prophets – Hosea 3:4; Joel 3:18-21; Amos 9:11-15; Obadiah 17-21; Micah 4; Zephaniah 3:11-20; Haggai 2:23; Zechariah 12-14; Malachi 4

Why I Am A Premillennialist?

- The unfulfilled prophecies regarding the Kingdom in the Old Testament
 - The Davidic, Palestinian, and New Covenants all point to the existence of a literal, physical future Kingdom
 - All of these covenants are unconditional – which refutes the idea that somehow Israel forfeited the Kingdom when they rejected Christ as their Messiah

Why I Am A Premillennialist?

- The clear teaching by Christ that there is a future for Israel
 - Christ never corrected the understanding by the Disciples that there would be a future time when Christ would rule
 - In fact, Christ affirmed the promises of the Kingdom again and again
 - Christ clearly taught the existence of a future Kingdom in the Parables found in Matthew 13 as well as the rest of the Gospel records

Why I Am A Premillennialist?

- The clear teaching of the Apostles
 - All understood that there was a future time when Christ would rule
 - The Apostles were promised positions of authority in Christ's future Kingdom – something that would make no sense at all in the Eternal State
- The clear teaching of Revelation
 - It is kind of tough to explain away Revelation 20

The Duration of the Millennium

- Revelation 20 indicates the Millennium will last 1,000 years
 - Satan is bound for 1,000 years – Rev 20:2-3
 - The Saints reign with Christ 1,000 years – Rev 20:4, 6
 - The unbelieving dead are not raised until the 1,000 years are up – Rev 20:5
 - Satan is not loosed until after the 1,000 years are finished – Rev 20:6
 - In fact, 1,000 is mentioned six times in this passage – do you think God is making a point?

Who Enters the Millennium?

- Revelation 20 indicates that the saints who were martyred under the Antichrist will be resurrected and reign with Christ in the Kingdom – Rev 20:4, 6
- The Sheep/Goat Judgment of Matthew 25 indicates that the righteous who are alive at the end of the Tribulation will enter the Millennium in their mortal form

Who Enters the Millennium?

- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 2 Timothy 2:11-13 indicates that the resurrected Saints from the Church Age will enter the Millennium in their glorified bodies to rule and reign with Christ
- Daniel 12:1-2 indicates that the Old Testament Saints will be resurrected at the end of the Tribulation and enter the Kingdom
- Daniel 12:11-12 indicates that those Jews who are righteous and alive at the end of the Tribulation will enter the Kingdom

Who Does Not Enter the Millennium?

- The unrighteous at the Sheep/Goat Judgment in Matthew 25
- The tares sown among the wheat – Matthew 13:36-43
- Those that are not ready at Christ's Second Coming – Matthew 24

Who Does Not Enter the Millennium?

- Those who refuse to have Christ rule over them
– Luke 19:27
- Those who try to enter without the proper garments – Matthew 22:12-13
- The unrighteous dead – Revelation 20:5

The Nature of the Millennium

- It will be a time when God rules directly in the Person of Jesus Christ - Psalm 2:6, Isaiah 11:3-5.
- It will be a time of the universal knowledge of God - Isaiah 11:9.
- It will be a time of universal righteousness - Psalm 72:7.
- It will be a time of universal peace - Isaiah 2:4.

The Nature of the Millennium

- It will be a time when Israel is blessed by God.
 - Israel will be reunited as a nation - Jeremiah 3:18, 33:14, Ezekiel 20:40, 37:15-22, 39:25, Hosea 1:11.
 - Israel will once again be related to Jehovah by marriage - Isaiah 54:1-17; 62:2-5; Hosea 2:14-23.
 - Israel will be exalted above all other nations - Isaiah 14:1-2, 49:22-23; 60:14-17; 61:6-7.

The Nature of the Millennium

- It will be a time when Israel is blessed by God.
 - Israel will be made righteous - Isaiah 1:25; 2:4; 44:22-24; 45:17-25; 48:17; 55:7; 57:18-19; 63:16; Jeremiah 31:11; 33:8; 50:20; Ezekiel 36:25-26; Hosea 14:4; Joel 3:21; Micah 7:18-19; Zechariah 13:9; Malachi 3:2-3.
 - Israel will be God's witnesses during the Millennium - Isaiah 44:8; 61:6; 66:21; Jeremiah 16:19-21; Micah 5:7; Zephaniah 3:20; Zechariah 4:1-7; 4:11-14; 8:23.
 - Israel will be beautified to bring glory to Jehovah - Isaiah 62:3; Jeremiah 32:41; Hosea 14:5-6; Zephaniah 3:16-17; Zechariah 9:16-17).

The Nature of the Millennium

- It will be a time of universal joy - Isaiah 12:3-4; 61:3, 7.
- It will be a time when the Holy Spirit's power is manifest - Isaiah 32:15; 44:3; Ezekiel 36:29; Joel 2:28-29.
- It will be a time when the Temple is rebuilt and sacrifices are made as a memorial to the work of redemption done on the Cross - Ezekiel 40-48; Zechariah 14:16-21.
- It will be a time when the curse is removed - Isaiah 11:6-9; 35:1-2; 30:23-24.

The Nature of the Millennium

- It will be a time of great prosperity - Jeremiah 31:12; Ezekiel 34:25-27; Joel 2:21-27; Amos 9:13-14.
- It will be a time of health and healing - Isaiah 33:24; 29:18; 65:20; 30:19-20.
- It will be a time when Satan is bound in the abyss - Revelation 20:3.
- It will be a time when the saints rule with Christ - Revelation 20:4.

The End of the Millennium

- After 1,000 years there is a final rebellion headed by Satan – Rev 20:7-9
 - The number of those participating in the rebellion is innumerable – Rev 20:8
 - The rebellion is crushed by God – Rev 20:9
 - Satan is then thrown into the Lake of Fire for eternity – Rev 20:10
- The current universe is then erased and a new one created – Rev 20:11-15; 2 Peter 3:10-12
- The Eternal State begins – Rev 21-22

Questions?