

Introduction

- The idea of the millennial reign of Christ has several difficult interpretative decisions.
- The key questions are when will Christ return?
- When does this millennium take place and what does it look like?
- Who is rebelling afterwards?
- How does resurrection play into it?

Postmillenium

- Similar to Amillennial interpretations, but less focused on Revelation.
- Jesus returns after the symbolic period of 1,000 year expansion of the gospel encompasses the entire world.
- Revelation is then fulfilled in history as the world prepares for Christ to return.
- This position is held by Jonathan Edwards, the Puritans, most early American Christians, Christian Nationalists, and many Christians before WWI.

Amillennial

- This sees Revelation as being fulfilled spiritually right now.
- They are firm in understanding all the promises made to Israel are fulfilled in the church spiritually and there is no future literal fulfillment for the nation of Israel.
- This position is held by R. C. Sproul, most of the church fathers, Calvin, Luther, and J. I. Packer.

Premillennial

- There are splits between dispensational and historic camps.
- The primary difference is whether some Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled by Israel literally or by the church.
- This position is held by the Left Behind novels, John MacArthur, DTS, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Hal Lindsey, Spurgeon, and John Piper.

1,000 Years

- Amillennialists see these 1,000 years are currently taking place on earth.
- This symbolic period of time began at the cross when Christ began to reign.
- Postmillennialists agree that this is the time period, however they focus on the world progressing positively and becoming more like the kingdom of God.
- Amillennialists see this 1,000 years as having ups and downs with Christ returning after a particular time of suffering on the earth.

Satan Restrained

- The primary amillennial explanation is that Satan was restrained at the cross.
- It is only his deceptive power to deceive the Gentiles that has been removed.

- He can no longer deceive the church or elect, like Adam, Eve, and Israel.
- This is why the church exploded after Pentecost and has spread over the globe.
- This is why Jesus describes Satan as falling from heaven.
- Colossians 2:15 describes the triumph that takes place at the cross.
- The Abyss is not a physical place but the spiritual realm.

Resurrection

- This is just describing the spiritual resurrection and regeneration all believers experience.
- The second resurrection of the dead is brought by Christ after He returns.
- The problem is how are people who have been martyred for their faith and who refused to worship Satan regenerated to faith after having expressed faith?
- The best argument in favor of this order of resurrection is the dislike of multiple resurrections or the idea of death still taking place in the millennium.
- This is more a rejection of premillennialism than a textual reading method.

Rebellion

- Amillennialism sees this as unbelievers actually trying to fight against God at the end.
- They see each of the final battles in Revelation as describing the same exact event from different perspectives.
- This is all the same battle from Zechariah 12-14 and Ezekiel 38-39.
- The largest problem for premillennialism is where the rebellious people come from.
- Revelation 19:21 and other places make it clear all unbelievers are killed off.
- Some argue not to take this literally and that some unbelievers survive to repopulate.
- Classic Dispensational Premillennialism believes not all believers experience resurrection at Christ's return.
- The believers who survive are not glorified and continue to marry and have children.
- They have children who do not sin, but are not regenerated and fall away when Satan deceives them, just as Eve was deceived in the garden.