



Four Views
of the
End Times

The End-Times Intrigue

For 2,000 years people have wondered about the events of the end times and when Jesus will return.

End-times ideas have filled books, movies, and even supermarket tabloids.



The End-Times Intrigue

Terms such as *millennium*, *tribulation*, *rapture*, and *antichrist*, may be common end-times words, but what do they mean?

- Will Jesus return physically and reign on earth for a thousand-year period called the millennium?
- Will Christians go through a seven-year tribulation?
- When will the antichrist appear—or has that prophecy already been fulfilled?

The End-Times Intrigue

- Will the second coming of Christ occur at the same time that believers meet Christ in the air?
- Will Christians be raptured and other people “left behind”?
- What does the nation of Israel have to do with the end times?

The End-Times Intrigue

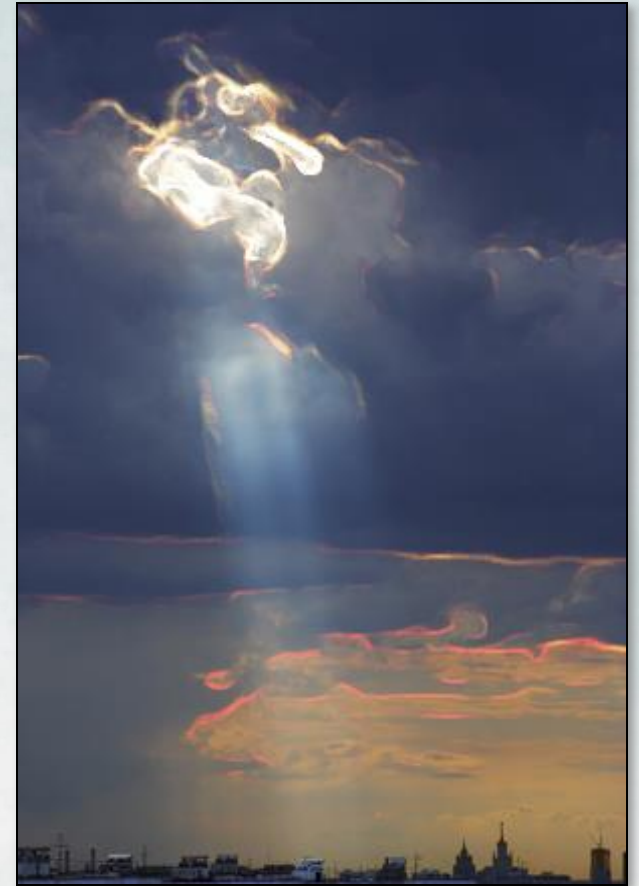
There are four views of end-times events:

- **Postmillennialism:** Christ returns after the millennium.
- **Amillennialism:** The millennium began in the first century. No literal thousand-year rule.
- **Historic Premillennialism:** Jesus returns prior to the thousand-year reign.
- **Dispensational Premillennialism:** The rapture of the church and the Second Coming of Christ are two separate events.

The End-Times Intrigue

All share some key points:

- Jesus will come again for those who love him.
- Jesus calls his followers to be ready all the time.
- No one knows the day or the hour.



Key Bible Passages



Menu

Key Bible Passages

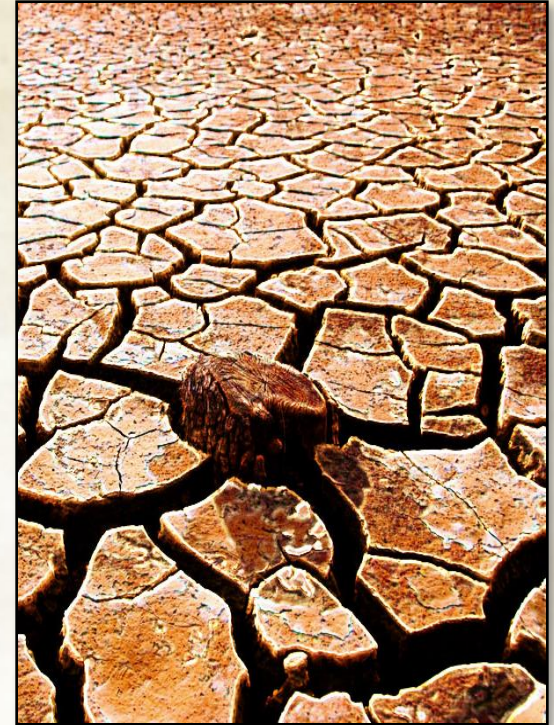
What Jesus Taught about the End

- Matthew 24–25; Mark 13; Luke 21
- Jesus promised his disciples that he would come again.
- Before his return there would be “birth pains”—events before “the signs” of the end.

Key Bible Passages

What Jesus Taught about the End

- Birth pains:
 - There will be wars, famine, earthquakes, and pestilence.
 - Wickedness will increase.
 - There will be fearful events and signs from heaven.
 - People will be deceived by many false messiahs.



Key Bible Passages

What Jesus Taught about the End

- Birth pains:
 - Believers in Christ will be persecuted and killed.
 - Believers will be witnesses of Jesus to kings.
 - Many will turn away from the faith.
 - There will be betrayals by parents, brothers, and friends.

Key Bible Passages

What Jesus Taught about the End

- The signs of the end:
 - Jerusalem will be surrounded by armies.
 - The “abomination that causes desolation” will stand in the holy place.
 - Jerusalem will be trampled on by Gentiles.



Key Bible Passages

What Jesus Taught about the End

- The signs of the end:
 - The sun will darken, the moon will not shine, and the stars will fall.
 - False prophets will perform signs, and miracles.
 - Severe ocean activity will disturb the nations.
 - People will faint with terror.



Key Bible Passages

What Jesus Taught about the End

- The signs of the end:
 - Jesus will appear in the sky.
 - The trumpet will sound.
 - Angels will gather God's elect.



Key Bible Passages

What Jesus Taught about the End

- Jesus said, “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”—*Matthew 24:36*
- “Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.”—*Matthew 24:12–13*

Key Bible Passages

What Paul Taught about the End

- 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17
- The Lord will descend.
- The dead in Christ will rise first.
- The living will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord and be with him forever.

Key Bible Passages

What Paul Taught about the End

- 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4
- Don't believe those who say the Day of the Lord has already come.
- The Day of the Lord will be preceded by:
 - Rebellion
 - The revelation of the man of lawlessness

Key Bible Passages

What Paul Taught about the End

- The man of lawlessness will:
 - Oppose and exalt himself over God.
 - Set himself up in God's temple.
 - Proclaim to be God.
 - Be revealed when the one holding him back is taken out of the way.



Key Bible Passages

What Paul Taught about the End

- The man of lawlessness will:
 - Be accompanied by satanic, counterfeit miracles.
 - Deceive those who do not love the truth.
 - Be overthrown and destroyed when Jesus comes.

End-Times Words to Know

Millennium

- The thousand-year reign of Jesus on earth, described in Revelation 20:4–6. From the Latin, *mille*, meaning “thousand.”

Premillennial

- The belief that the millennium is a future event and Jesus will return before (pre-) the millennium.

End-Times Words to Know

Amillennial

- The millennium is a symbol of Christ's present reign among his people.

Postmillennial

- Jesus will return after (post-) the millennium. The millennium is the time in which most of the world submits to Jesus, and peace and justice reign.

End-Times Words to Know

Preterism

- From a preterist view, the antichrist may refer to Emperor Nero.
- The tribulation may refer to the Jewish War (AD 66–73).
- The destruction of the temple in prophecy may have been fulfilled in AD 70.



Emperor Nero, who ruled Rome AD 54–68, severely persecuted Christians

End-Times Words to Know

Rapture

- Event described in 1 Thess. 4:16–17 when Jesus Christ returns for his people.
- From Latin, *raptus*, meaning “carry away.”
- Historical premillennialists, amillennialists, and postmillennialists understand the second coming of Jesus and the event described in 1 Thess. 4:16–17 as the same event.



End-Times Words to Know

Rapture

- Dispensational premillennialists believe that the rapture and the second coming of Jesus are two separate events.
- They place the rapture before the great tribulation and the second coming after the tribulation.



End-Times Words to Know

Tribulation (Great)

- The time when disasters happen on the earth and people who are faithful to Jesus suffer intense persecution, possibly lasting seven years.
- Premillennialists place the great tribulation near the end.
- Dispensational premillennialists typically believe that the tribulation will last exactly seven years.

End-Times Words to Know

Tribulation (Great)

- Many historical premillennialists view the reference to “seven years” as a symbol of the completeness of God’s dealings with the world as the end of time approaches.
- Most amillennialists and postmillennialists treat the tribulation as a symbol of calamities and persecutions that have occurred throughout church history.

End-Times Words to Know

Tribulation (Great)

- Some amillennialists and postmillennialists are preterists—they believe that the great tribulation occurred AD 63–70, during the Jewish-Roman War.



Destruction of the
Jewish Temple, AD 70

Dispensational Premillennialism

Christ's return and rapture
are separate events.

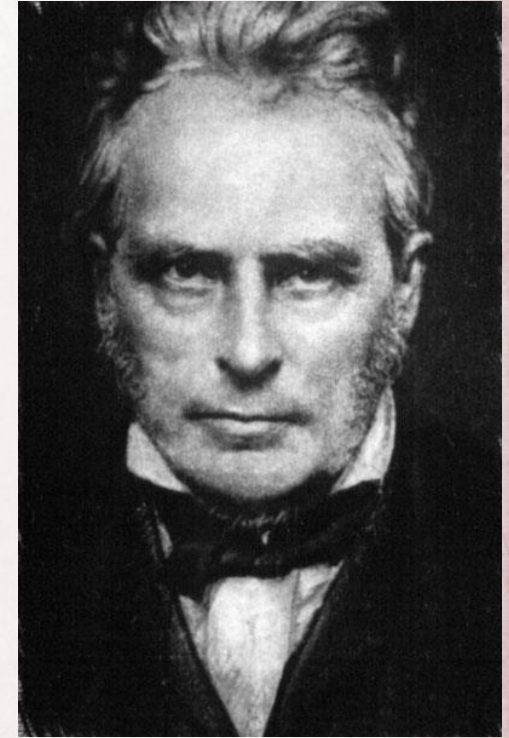


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[Dispensational Premillennialism]

When has this view been popular?

- Emerged in the 1800s among the Plymouth Brethren.
- Increased in popularity in the late 1800s and remains widespread today.

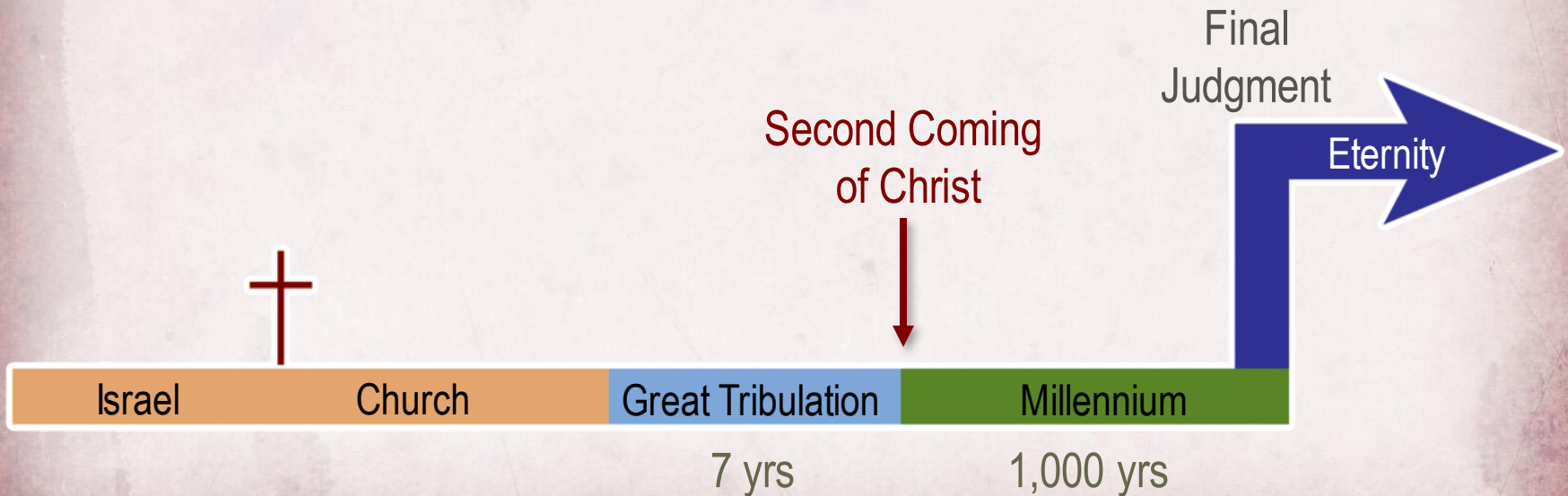


J. Nelson Darby (1800–1882) of the Plymouth Brethren advocated Dispensational Premillennialism

[Dispensational Premillennialism]

What is Dispensational Premillennialism?

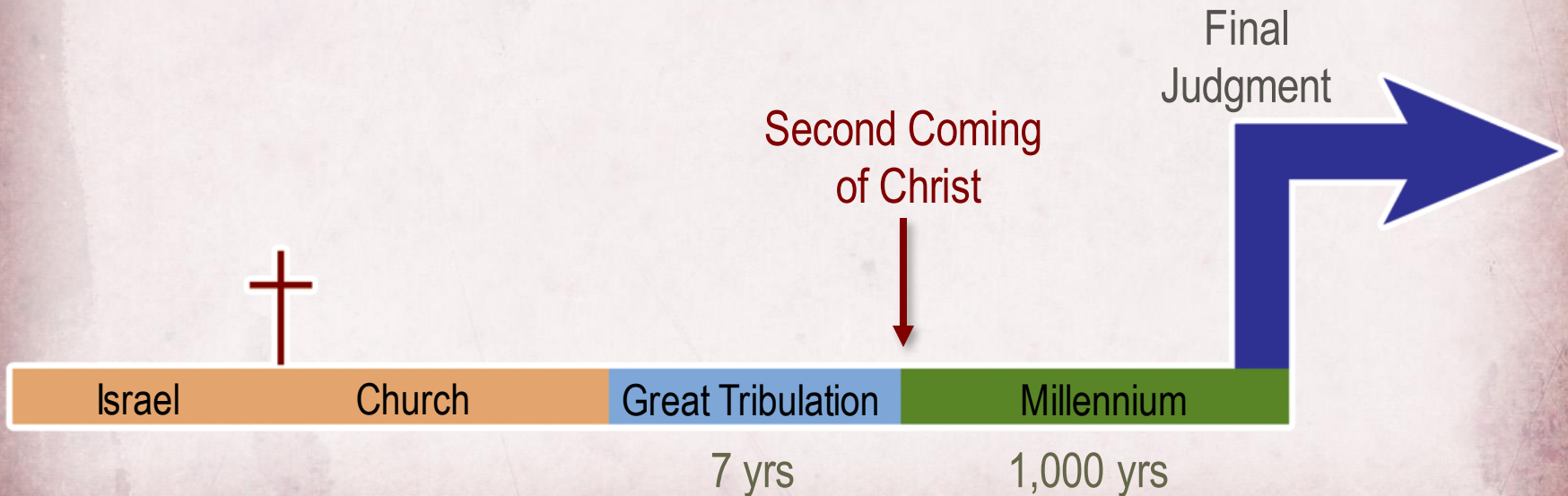
- It's the belief that Jesus will come back to earth after a seven-year tribulation and will rule during a thousand-year millennium of peace on earth.



[Dispensational Premillennialism]

What is Dispensational Premillennialism?

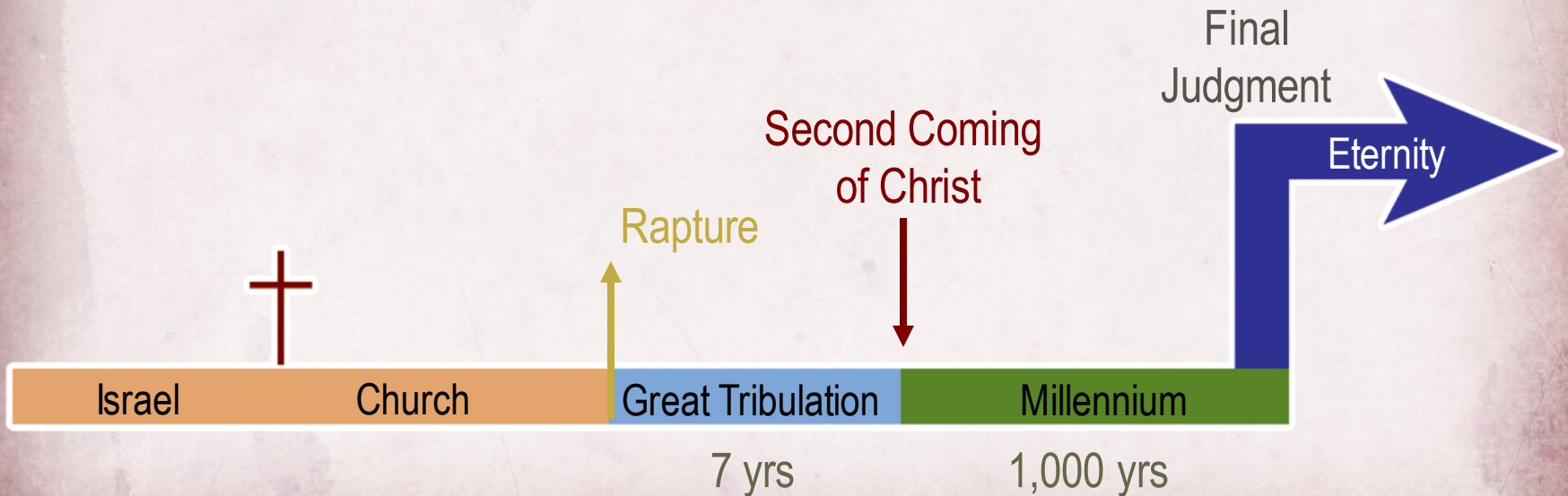
- God will give the nation of Israel the land described in Genesis 15:18.



[Dispensational Premillennialism]

What is Dispensational Premillennialism?

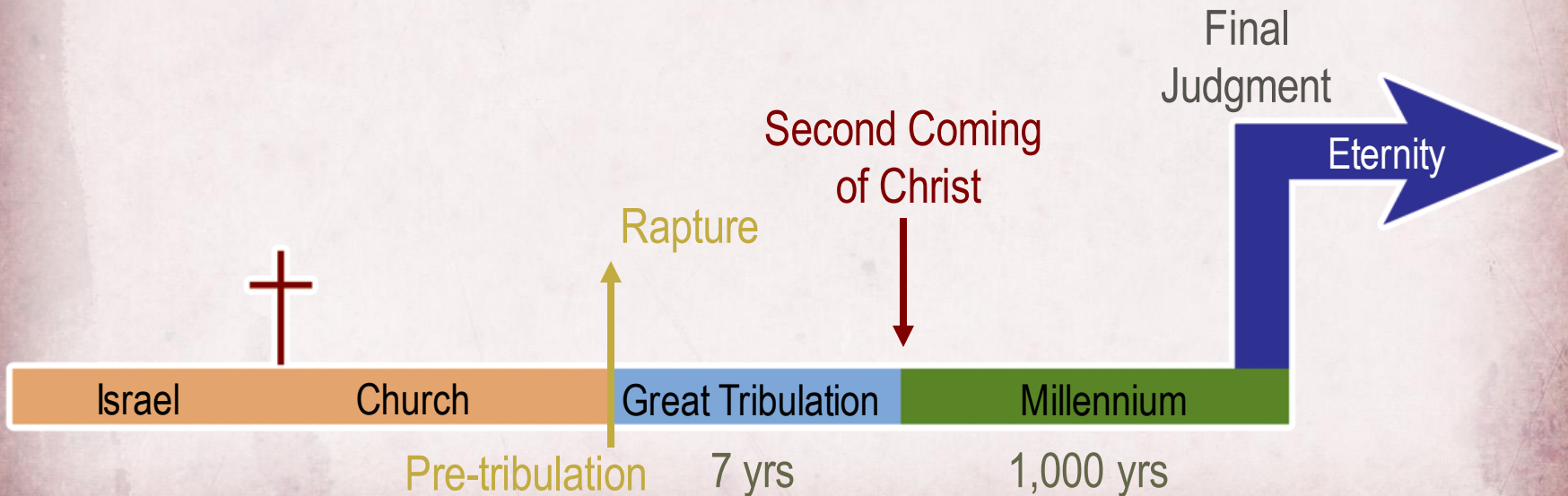
- The rapture comes before the great tribulation, and the second coming after the great tribulation.



[Dispensational Premillennialism]

What is Dispensational Premillennialism?

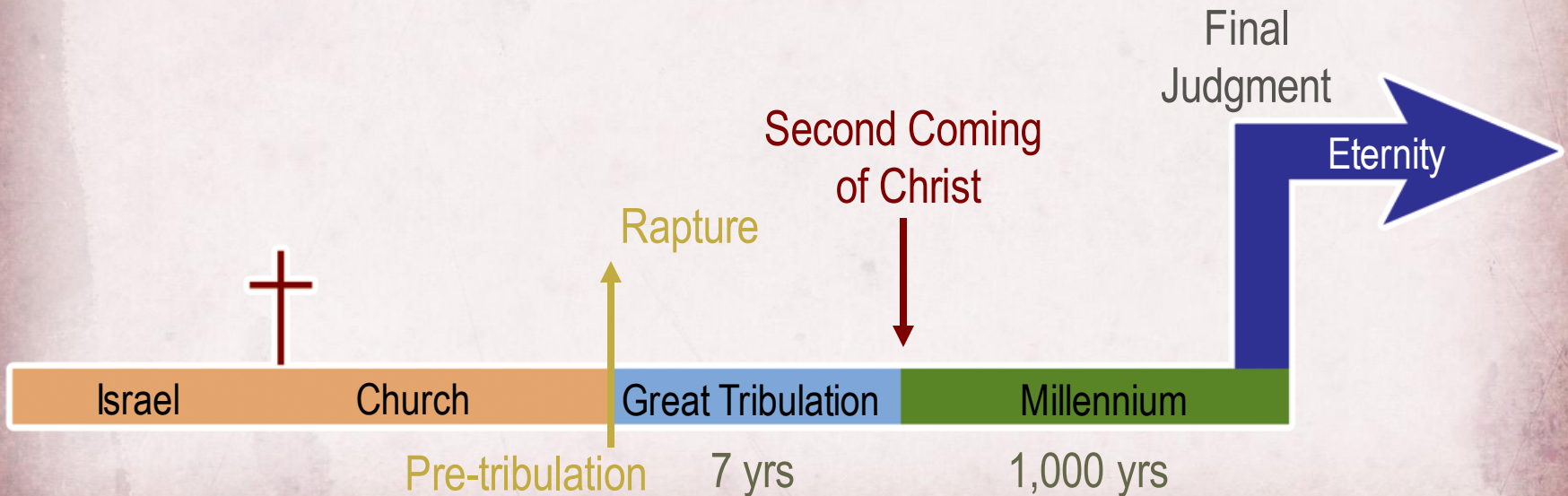
- Most dispensational premillennialists are “pre-tribulationists.” They understand Revelation 4:1–2 to refer to “the rapture.”



[Dispensational Premillennialism]

What is Dispensational Premillennialism?

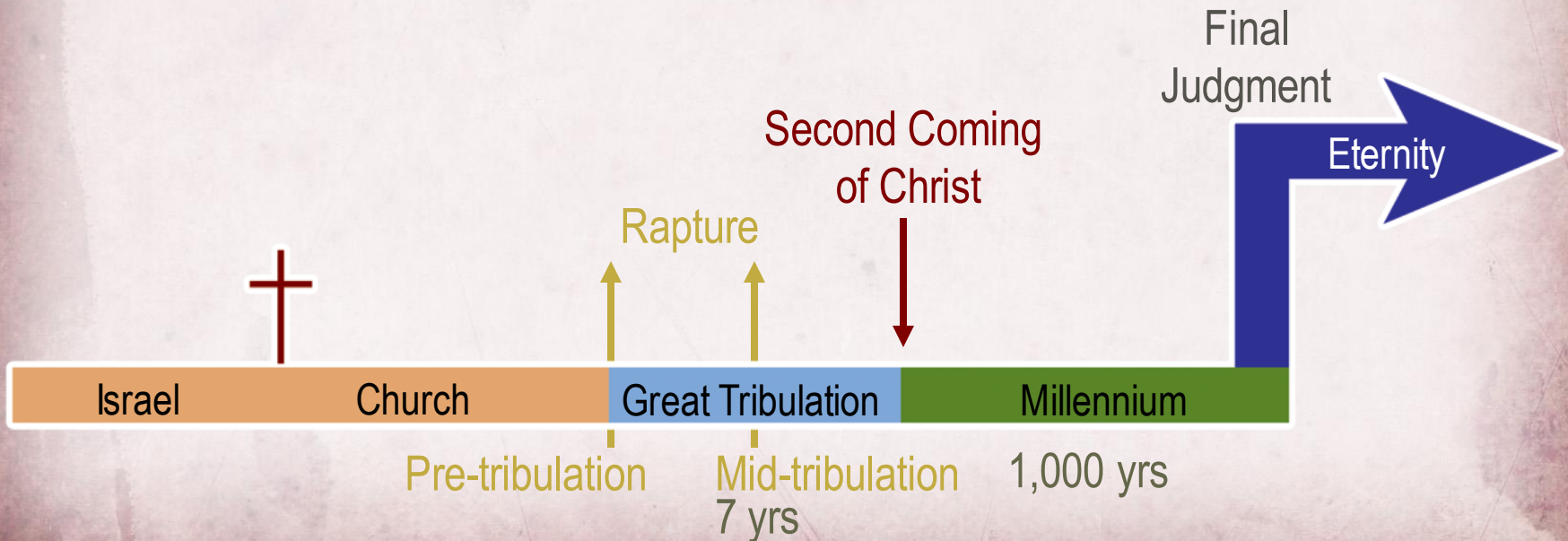
- The rapture is understood as the event when Christ removes Christians from the earth before the great tribulation begins.



[Dispensational Premillennialism]

What is Dispensational Premillennialism?

- Some dispensational premillennialists, known as mid-tribulationists, believe the rapture will occur during the great tribulation.



[Dispensational Premillennialism]

What does this view emphasize?

- During the seven years of tribulation, people who are faithful to Jesus will suffer intense persecution.
- Natural disasters and wars will occur.
- This view emphasizes literal interpretations of Revelation.



[Dispensational Premillennialism]

According to this view ...

- During the great tribulation, many Jews will turn to Jesus Christ.
- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were unconditional. Jews will still receive the land described in Genesis 15:18.



[Dispensational Premillennialism]

According to this view ...

- The establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948 fulfilled a key end-times prophecy.
- References to Israel in Revelation refer to the nation of Israel.



[Dispensational Premillennialism]

What Scriptures seem to support this view?

- God will remove Christians before the outpouring of his wrath during the tribulation (Revelation 3:10).
- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were unconditional (Genesis 15:7–21).
- The church is not specifically mentioned between Revelation 4 and 19.

Historic Premillennialism

Jesus returns before the
thousand-year reign.



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[Historic Premillennialism]

What is Historic Premillennialism?

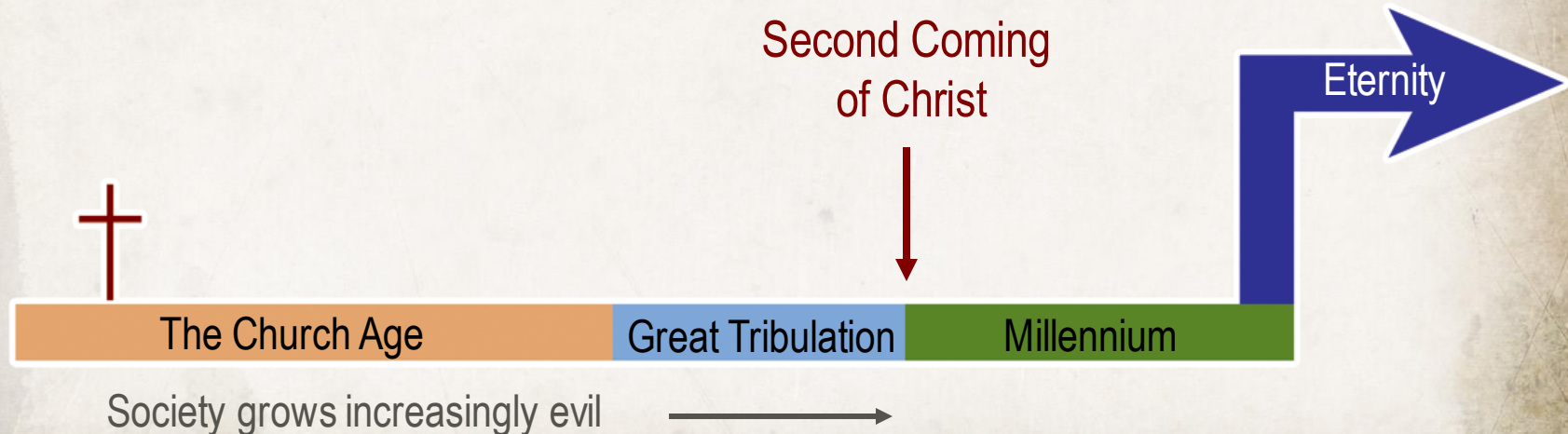
- The belief that Jesus will return prior to the thousand-year earthly reign of Christ (Millennium).
- The Second Coming is a single, glorious event.



[Historic Premillennialism]

What is Historic Premillennialism?

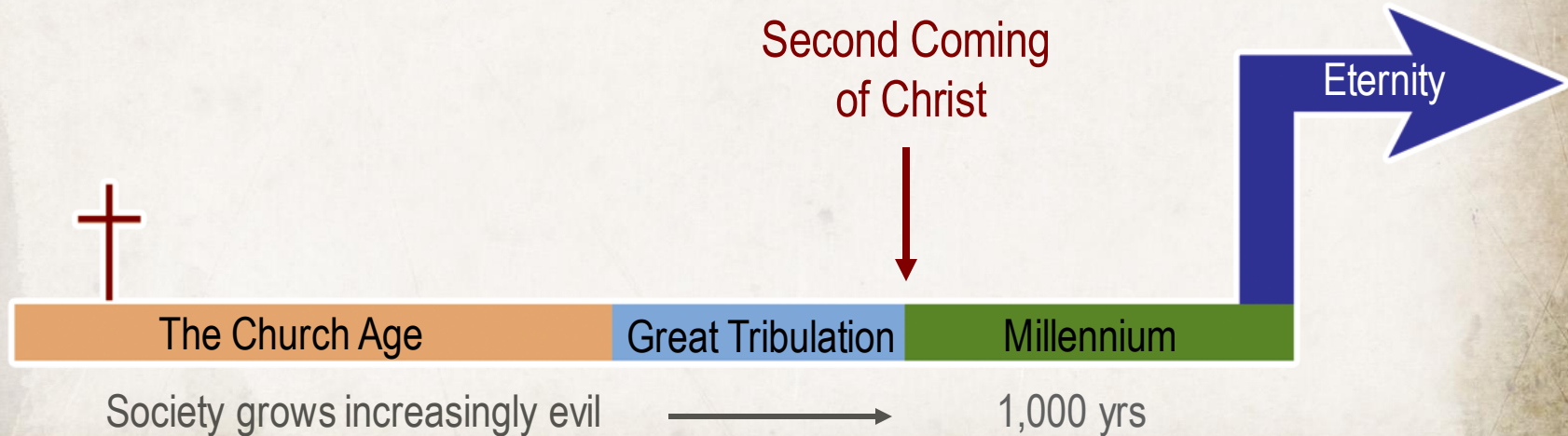
- The church has always endured tribulation.
- The last (or great) tribulation will be a time of testing and ultimate triumph for the church.
- The second coming of Christ will precede the millennium.



[Historic Premillennialism]

What is Historic Premillennialism?

- The church (both Jewish and Gentile) fulfills the promises of God made in the OT and the NT.
- The thousand-year millennium is a literal future event.



[Historic Premillennialism]

What is Historic Premillennialism?

- The earliest church fathers envisioned an earthly millennium, a physical reign of Jesus following a time of testing.
- All creation would be restored to its original goodness in a millennial kingdom.



[Historic Premillennialism]

What is Historic Premillennialism?

- Historical premillennialism began to fade as later church fathers downplayed the idea of an earthly millennium because of:
 - Greek philosophy that viewed the physical world as evil.
 - The aftermath of some Christians' false expectations of a physical millennium.

[Historic Premillennialism]

What does this view emphasize?

- Historic premillennialists try to balance symbolic and literal interpretations of Revelation.
- They emphasize both what the book meant to first-century readers and how it might apply for people's lives today.

[Historic Premillennialism]

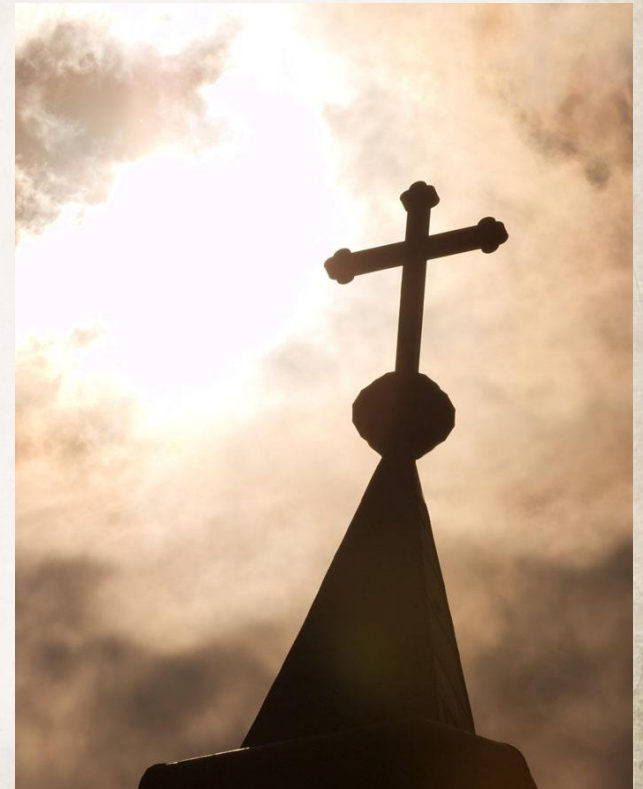
According to this view ...

- God's promises of land and blessings to Abraham and his offspring are fulfilled in the Millennium to the people of God (both Jew and Gentile).
- There is a future for ethnic Israel. In the last day, there will be a tremendous response to the gospel among the Jewish people.

[Historic Premillennialism]

According to this view ...

- God has maintained a covenant of grace throughout the Old and New Testaments with all who trusted in him.
- These believers—embodied today in the church—are the people of God.



[Historic Premillennialism]

What Scriptures seem to support this view?

- A natural reading of the Olivet Discourse envisions this scenario.
- The revealing of the Antichrist precedes Christ's return (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4).
- The saints are on earth during the tribulation (Revelation 13:7).

[Historic Premillennialism]

What Scriptures seem to support this view?

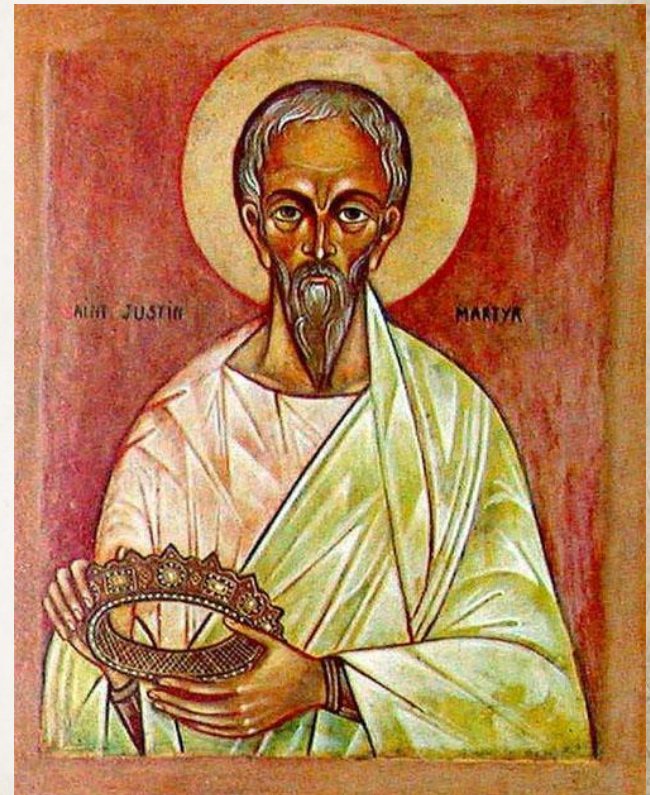
- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were conditional (Genesis 22:17–18).
- The New Testament frequently uses “Israel” and “the twelve tribes” to refer to Christians (Romans 9:6–8).
- Historical premillennialism seems to have been the earliest view of the end times among Christians who lived just after the apostles.

[Historic Premillennialism]

When has this view been popular?

- The earliest view of the end times among Christians who lived just after the apostles.
- Historic premillennialism has continued throughout history.

Justin Martyr (AD 100–165) was one of the earliest church leaders to hold this view.



Amillennialism

The Millennium began in the first century. There is no *literal* thousand-year earthly reign of Christ.

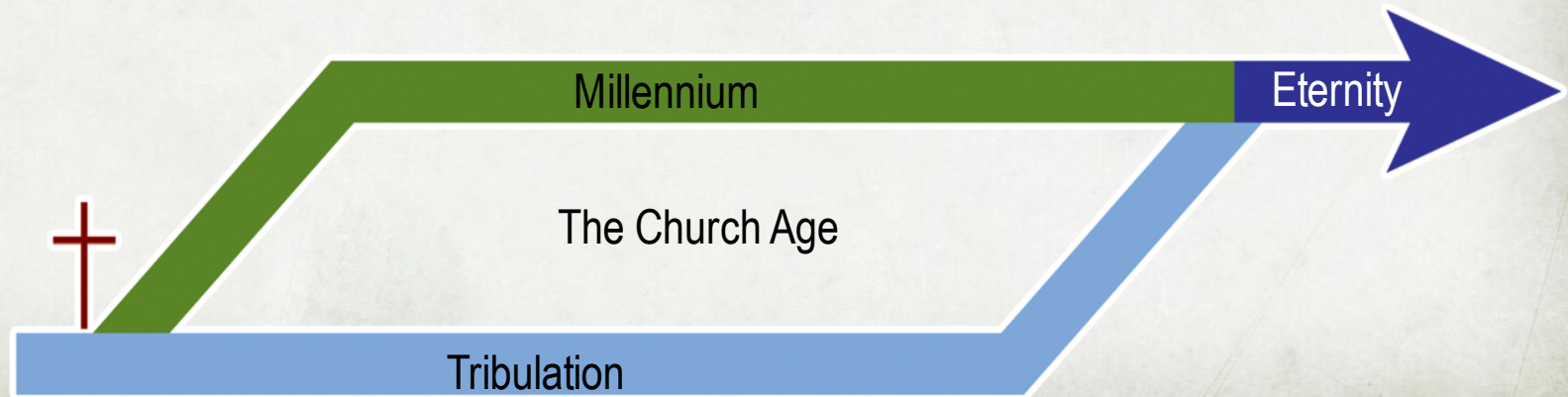


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[Amillennialism]

What is Amillennialism?

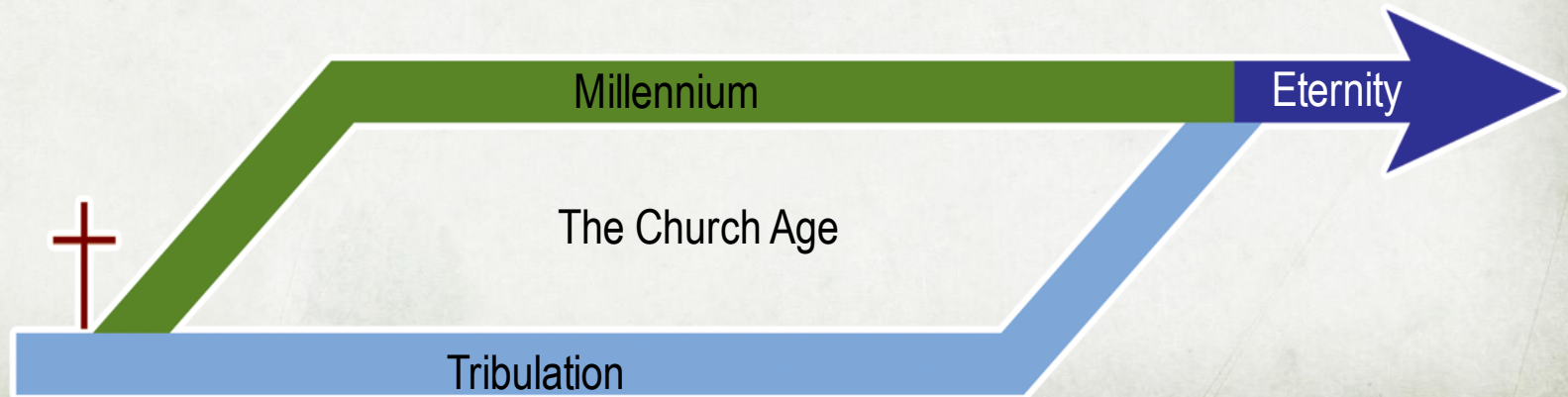
- The millennium is the spiritual reign of Jesus in the hearts, lives, and mission of his followers.



[Amillennialism]

What is Amillennialism?

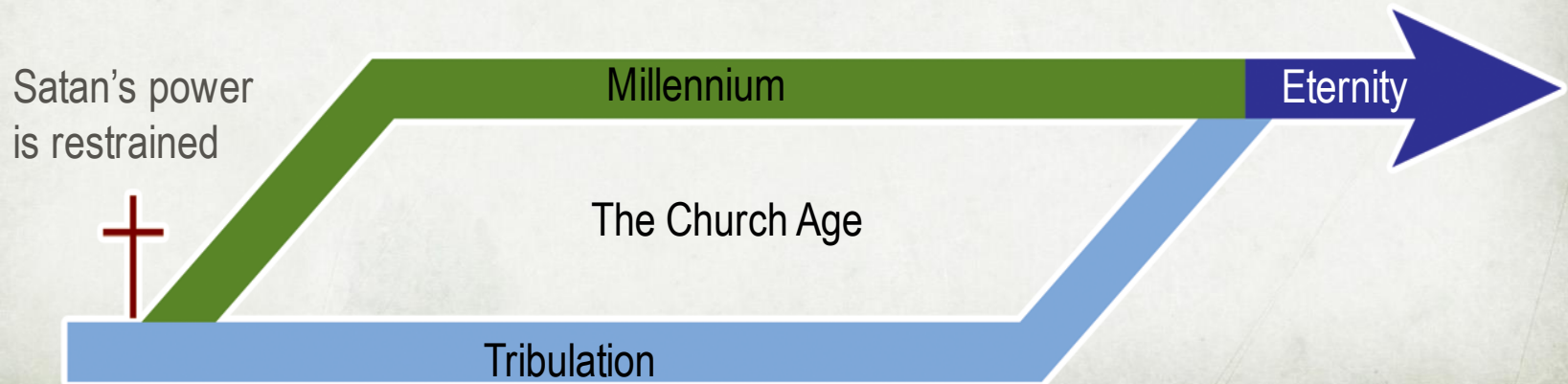
- The “first resurrection” in Rev. 20:5 is not a physical restoration from the dead, but the spiritual resurrection known as regeneration.



[Amillennialism]

What is Amillennialism?

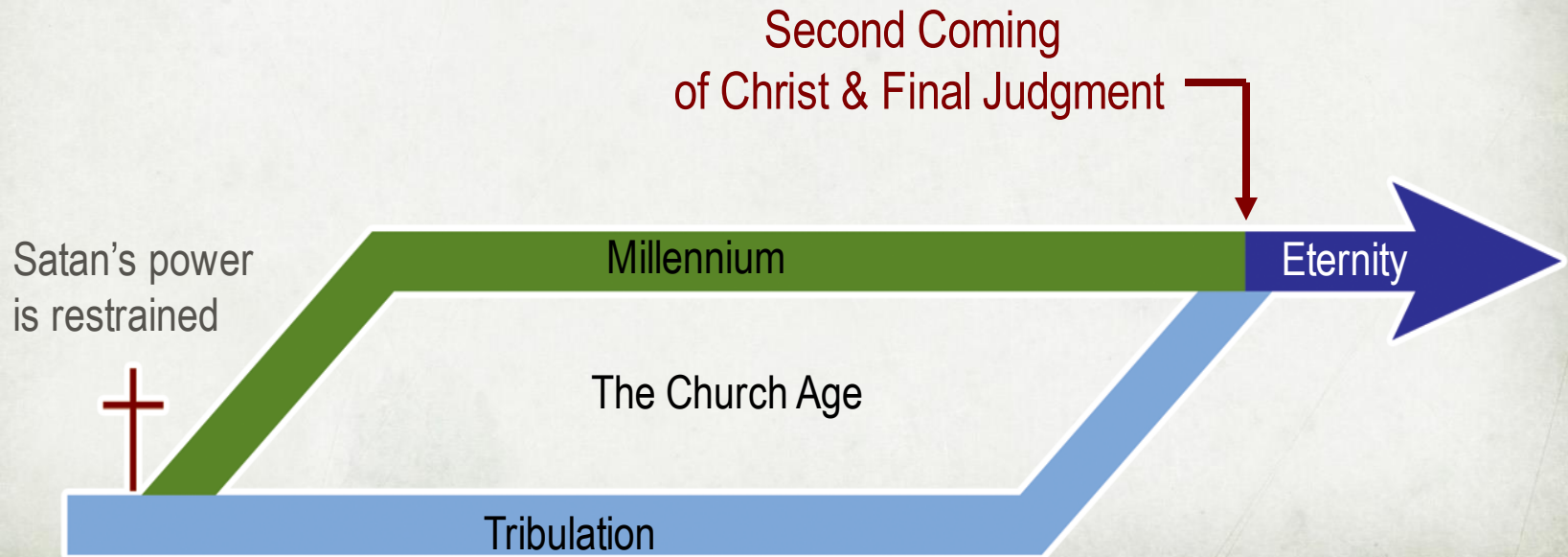
- Christ's triumph over Satan through his death and resurrection in AD 30 restrained the power of Satan on the earth.



[Amillennialism]

What is Amillennialism?

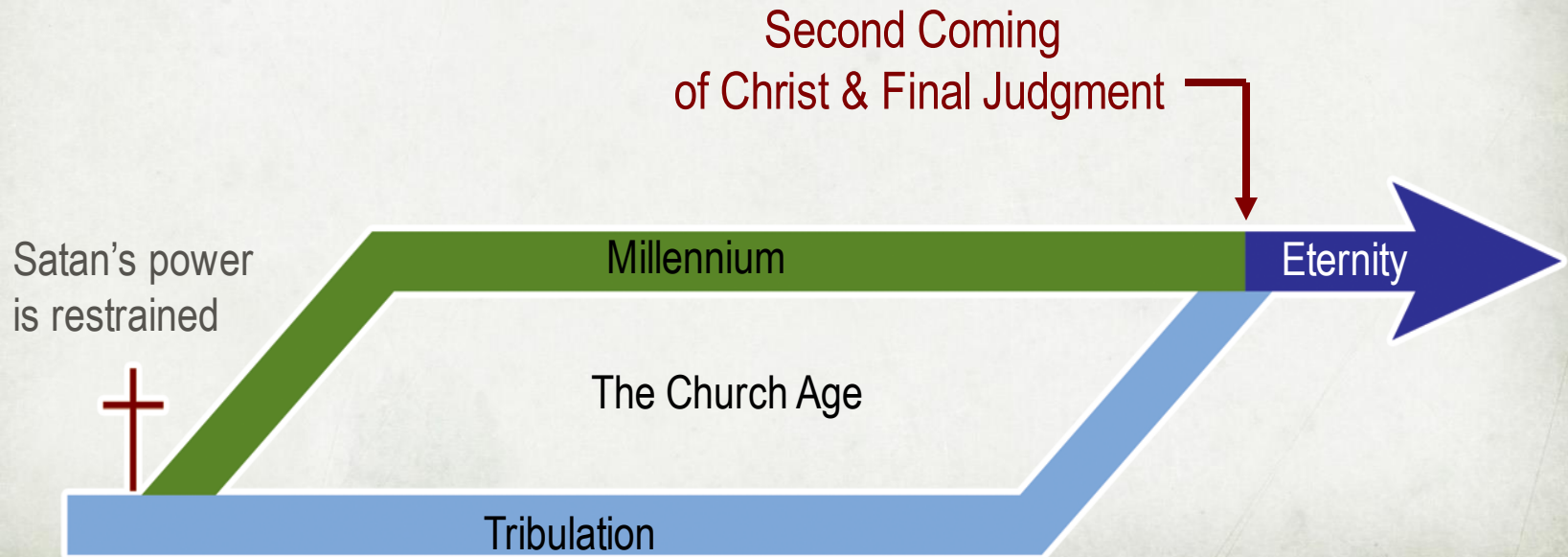
- Persecution of Christians (tribulation) will occur until Jesus comes again, as will the expansion of God's kingdom (the millennium).



[Amillennialism]

What is Amillennialism?

- When Christ returns, he will immediately defeat the powers of evil, resurrect the saved and the unsaved, judge them, and deliver them to their eternal destinies.



[Amillennialism]

What does this view emphasize?

- Many amillennialists believe that the book of Revelation consists of seven sections.
- These seven sections are *not* interpreted as successive time periods.
- Rather, the seven sections describe the time from Jesus' first coming until his second coming in seven different ways.



[Amillennialism]

What does this view emphasize?

- Amillennialists tend to emphasize the historical context of Revelation and what the book meant to first-century readers.



[Amillennialism]

According to this view ...

- The great tribulation represents disasters, wars, and persecutions that have occurred throughout church history.

[Amillennialism]

According to this view ...

- In apocalyptic literature, numbers represent concepts, not literal statistics. For example:
 - Six symbolizes incompleteness.
 - Seven represents completeness.
 - Ten indicates something that is extreme but limited.

6
7
10

[Amillennialism]

According to this view ...

- Twelve represents the perfection of God's people.
- One thousand symbolizes a great amount or long period of time.

12

1,000

[Amillennialism]

What Scriptures seem to support this view?

- The Bible frequently uses the number 1,000 figuratively (2 Peter 3:8).
- The first resurrection could refer to the spiritual resurrection (the regeneration or new birth) of persons who trust Christ (Romans 11:13–15).

[Amillennialism]

What Scriptures seem to support this view?

- The saints are on earth during the tribulation (Revelation 13:7).
- The second coming of Christ and the resurrection of the saved and the unsaved will occur at the same time (John 5:28–29).



[Amillennialism]

When has this view been popular?

- Amillennialism became popular in the 5th century.
- Amillennialism has remained widespread throughout church history.

Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430)
was possibly the first amillennialist



Postmillennialism

Christ returns *after*
the millennium.

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[Postmillennialism]

What is Postmillennialism?

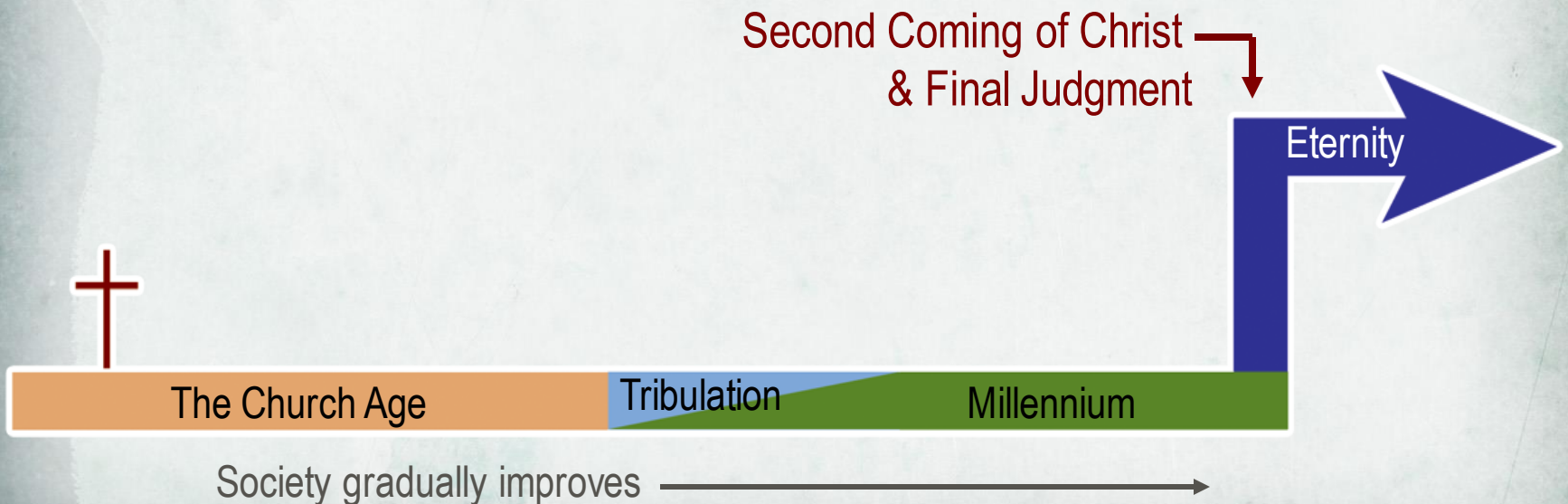
- Postmillennialism is the belief that the second coming of Christ will occur *after* the millennium.
- A period of great tribulation may precede the millennium.



[Postmillennialism]

What is Postmillennialism?

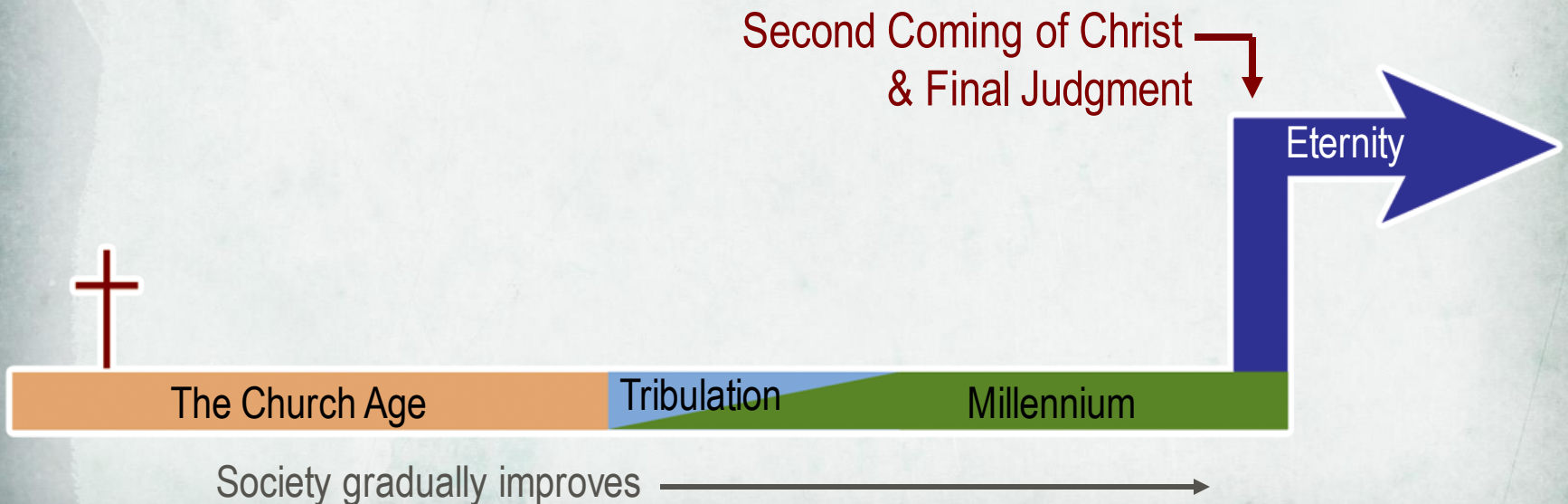
- The millennial reign described in Revelation 20:1–6 represents a long time period when, through the preaching of the gospel, most of the world will submit to Christ.



[Postmillennialism]

What is Postmillennialism?

- During this time, Satan will have no power over the earth, and evil regimes will collapse.



[Postmillennialism]

What is Postmillennialism?

- When the church recognizes the fullness of its power through the Holy Spirit, the church will establish God's kingdom on earth and usher in the millennium, a golden age.

[Postmillennialism]

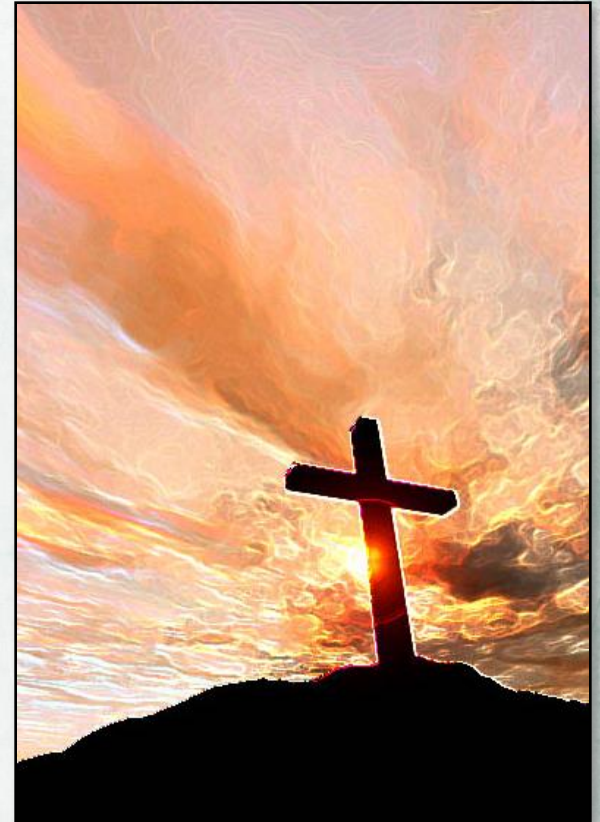
What is Postmillennialism?

- Some view the tribulation as a brief time of persecution that occurs immediately before the millennium.
- Others believe that “great tribulation” describes the seven years of the First Jewish-Roman War which culminated in AD 70 with the destruction of the Jewish temple.

[Postmillennialism]

What does this view emphasize?

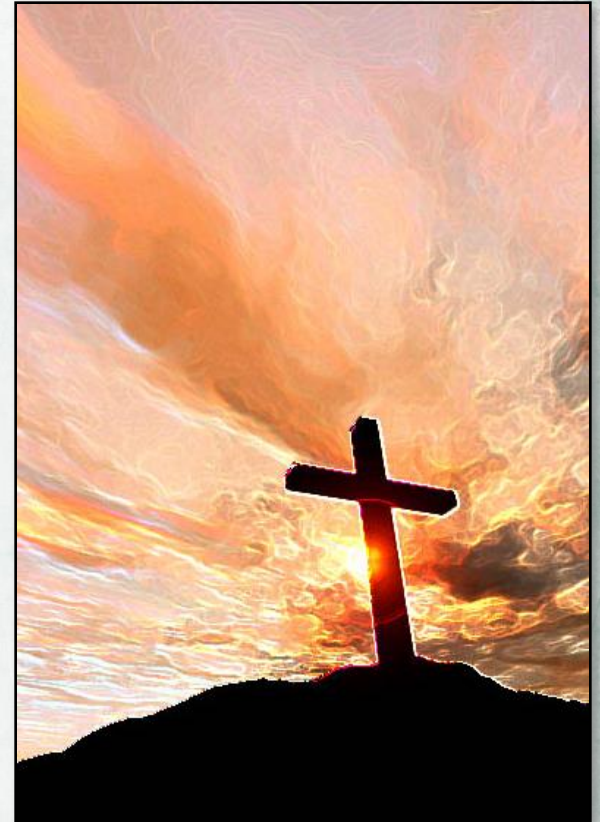
- Postmillennialists place great confidence in the preaching of the gospel.
- They contend that the gospel will eventually spread in such a way that nearly everyone in the world will turn to Jesus Christ.



[Postmillennialism]

What does this view emphasize?

- One scripture cited in favor of this view is Mark 3:23–27.
- Augustine understood these verses to mean that before Jesus can claim his kingdom, those that are lost (the “possessions” of Satan, “the strong man”) must come under the control of Jesus.



[Postmillennialism]

What does this view emphasize?

- Postmillennialists believe that this golden age is described in Bible passages such as Micah 4:3.
- Postmillennialists tend to emphasize the power of the gospel to transform societies and individual lives.

[Postmillennialism]

According to this view ...

- During the millennium, Christ will rule the earth through his Spirit and through his Church.
- He will not, however, be physically present on the earth.
- The resurrection depicted in Revelation 20:4 represents the spiritual regeneration of people who trust Jesus Christ.



[Postmillennialism]

According to this view ...

- These events will occur together immediately *after* the millennium:
 - The second coming of Christ
 - The final conflict between good and evil
 - The defeat of Satan
 - The physical resurrection of all people
 - The final judgment



[Postmillennialism]

Which Scriptures seem to support this view?

- Every ethnic group will receive the gospel before the second coming (Matthew 24:14).
- The first resurrection could refer to the spiritual resurrection (the regeneration or new birth) of persons who trust Christ (Romans 11:13–15).
- The second coming of Christ and the resurrection of all people, saved and unsaved, will occur at the same time (John 5:28–29).

[Postmillennialism]

When has this view been popular?

- The earliest writer who was clearly postmillennialist was Joachim of Fiore (1135–1202).
- But many historians believe that earlier church leaders such as Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius of Alexandria, and Augustine of Hippo were also postmillennialists.



Joachim of Fiore

[Postmillennialism]

When has this view been popular?

- During the 1800s, postmillennialism increased in popularity.
- Some Christians believed that the increased work of missionaries throughout the world represented the beginning of the millennium.
- During the early 1900s, a world war and an economic depression raised questions about whether the world was actually becoming a better place.
- Postmillennialism then began to diminish in popularity.



Four Views Side by Side

Menu

Four Views Side by Side

1. Will Jesus return physically?

Dispensational Premillennialism	Yes
Historical Premillennialism	Yes
Amillennialism	Yes
Postmillennialism	Yes

Four Views Side by Side

2. When will Jesus return?

Dispensational Premillennialism	After a 7-year tribulation; before the millennium.
Historical Premillennialism	After a tribulation; before the millennium.
Amillennialism	Anytime; a detailed time frame is not important.
Postmillennialism	After the millennium.

Four Views Side by Side

3. Will the rapture and second coming of Christ occur at the same time?

Dispensational Premillennialism	No, they are separated by either 7 years or 3½ years.
Historical Premillennialism	Yes
Amillennialism	Yes
Postmillennialism	Yes

Four Views Side by Side

4. Will there be a great tribulation?

Dispensational Premillennialism	Yes
Historical Premillennialism	Yes
Amillennialism	It occurs any time there are wars, disasters, or Christian persecution.
Postmillennialism	It is either first-century Jewish War, or ongoing conflict between good and evil prior to the millennium.

Four Views Side by Side

5. Will Christians suffer during the tribulation?

Dispensational Premillennialism	Christians are raptured before the tribulation or 3½ years into it.
Historical Premillennialism	Yes, Christians will go through the tribulation.
Amillennialism	Yes, Christians will endure persecution until Christ returns.
Postmillennialism	Yes, tribulation occurs when the gospel is opposed.

Four Views Side by Side

6. Will there be a literal 1,000-year millennium?

Dispensational Premillennialism	Yes, after the tribulation, Christ will return; reign for 1,000 years.
Historical Premillennialism	Yes, after the tribulation, Christ will return; reign for 1,000 years.
Amillennialism	No, the millennium is the reign of Christ in the hearts of believers.
Postmillennialism	No, it is a period of peace when the gospel reaches all people.

Four Views Side by Side

7. Who is saved?

Dispensational Premillennialism	Christians only
Historical Premillennialism	Christians only
Amillennialism	Christians only
Postmillennialism	Christians only

Four Views Side by Side

8. Is the modern state of Israel relevant to the prophecies in Revelation?

Dispensational Premillennialism	Yes
Historical Premillennialism	No
Amillennialism	No
Postmillennialism	No

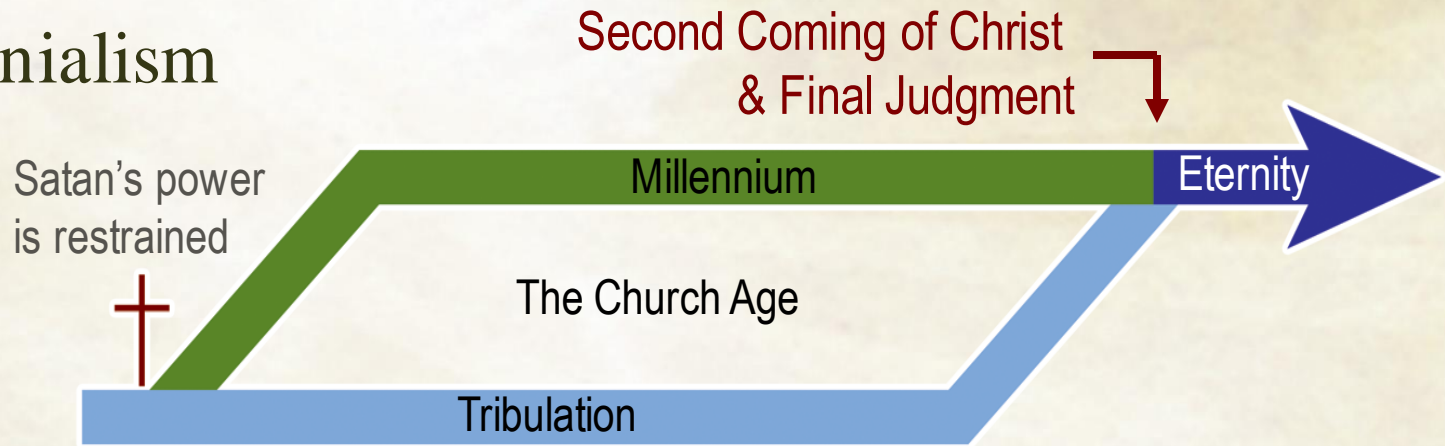
Four Views Side by Side

9. When was this view most held?

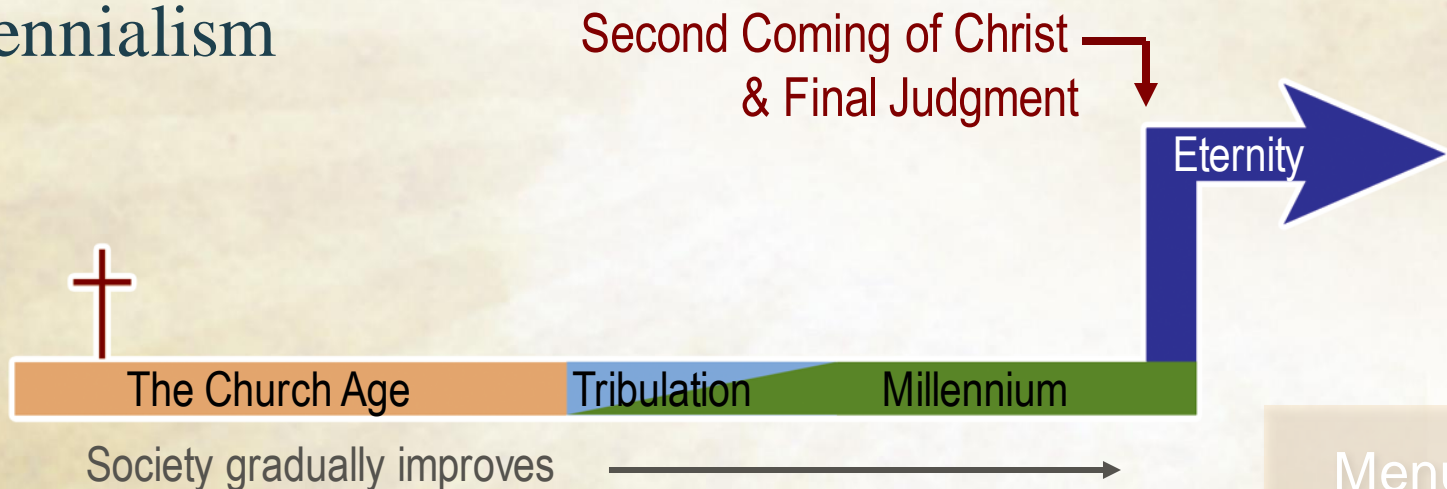
Postmillennialism	May have been popular as early as AD 300. Less popular today.
Amillennialism	Popularized in AD 400 and continues to be accepted today.
Historic Premillennialism	The earliest view of the end times, emerging in the late 1 st century.
Dispensational Premillennialism	Became popular around 1860 and has increased in popularity.

Four Views Side by Side

Amillennialism



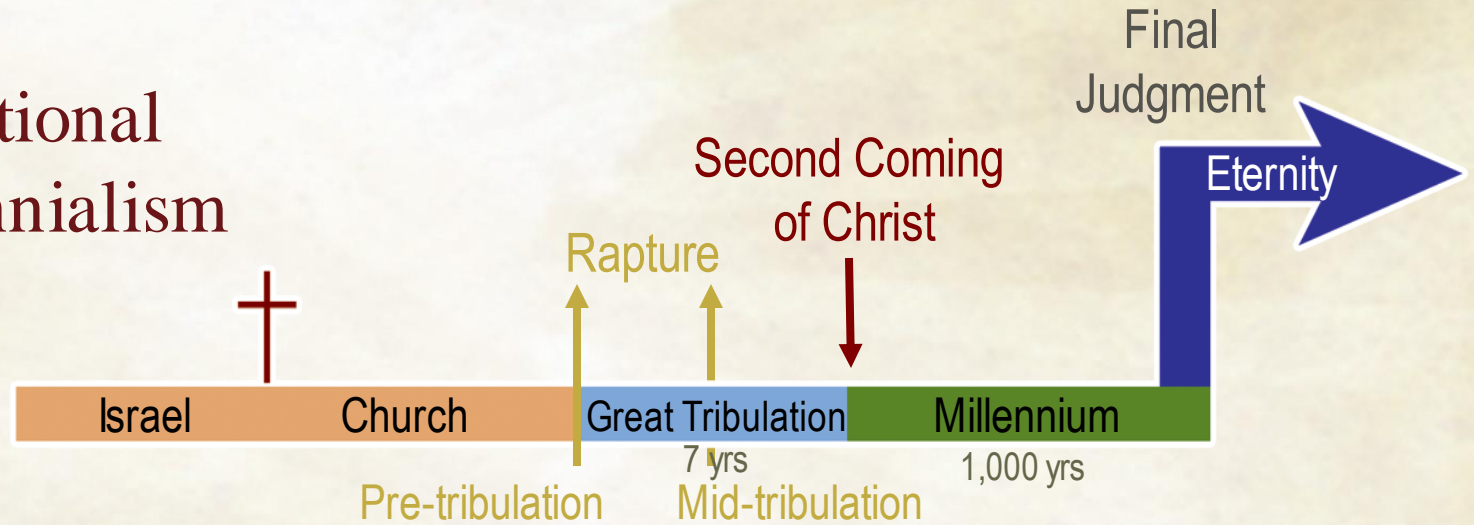
Postmillennialism



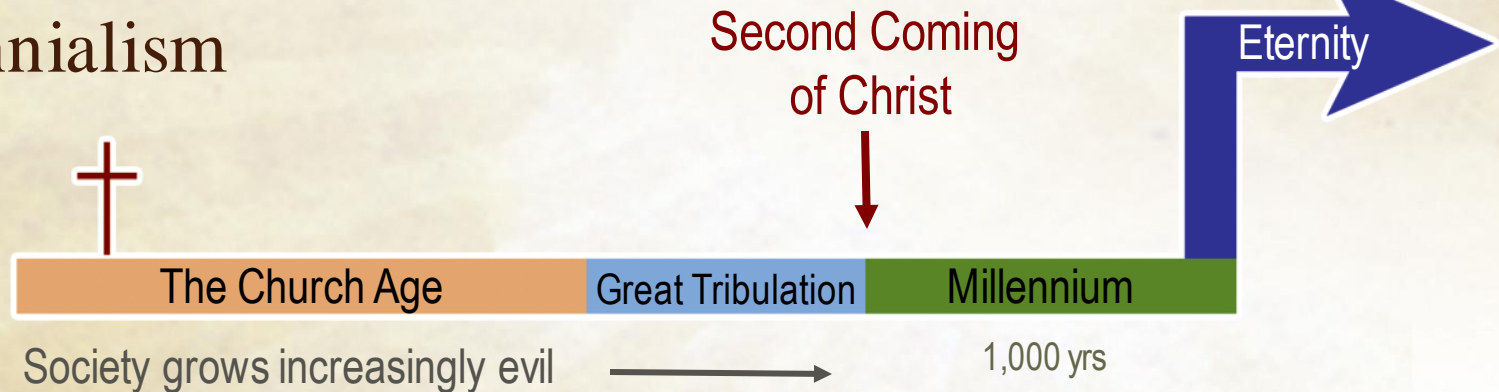
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Four Views Side by Side

Dispensational Premillennialism



Historical Premillennialism



Four Views of the Millennium

The "millennium" is the reign of Jesus Christ on earth, described in Revelation 20:4-6

Terms to Know:

Church Age

The time period from the beginning of the church (about AD 30) until Jesus Christ returns for everyone who has trusted in Him, as promised in John 14.

Final Judgment

The event described in Revelation 20:11-15, when God resurrects all people, judges them, and delivers them to their eternal destinies.

First Coming of Christ

The earthly life and ministry of Jesus Christ, about 4 BC-AD 30.

Great Tribulation

A time period when severe calamities strike the earth and people who remain faithful to Christ endure harsh persecution.

Millennium

(from Latin, *mille*, thousand) The reign of Jesus Christ on earth, specifically mentioned only once in Scripture, in Revelation 20:4-6.

Rapture

(from Latin, *raptus*, carry away) The event described in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, when Christ returns for His people. Dispensational premillennialism separates the rapture from the Second Coming of Christ. The other views of the millennium treat the rapture and the Second Coming as one event.

Second Coming of Christ

The physical return of Jesus Christ to the earth at some point in the future.

HISTORIC PREMILLENNIALISM



What is historic premillennialism?

Historic premillennialism is the belief that the Second Coming of Christ will precede the millennium and that the church has replaced the nation of Israel as God's covenant people. Also known as "covenant premillennialism," historic premillennialism treats the millennium as a literal future event. Most historic premillennialists believe that Christians will remain on the earth during the great tribulation. The tribulation will purify the churches by rooting out false believers. According to historic premillennialists . . .

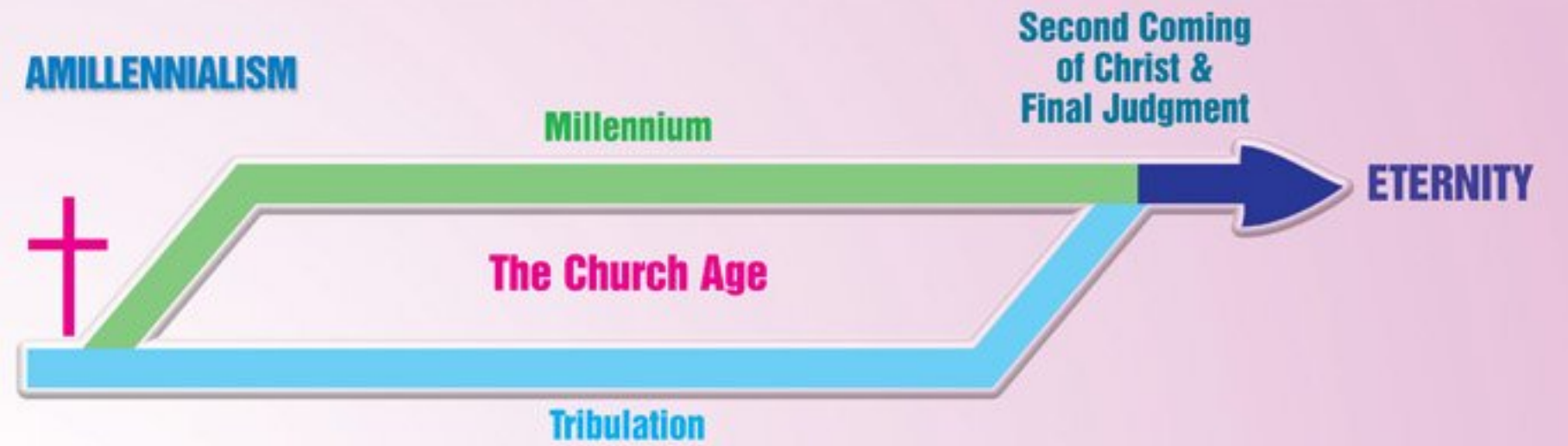
- God's promises of land and blessings to Abraham and his offspring were conditional promises, based on obedience. Israel's persistent disobedience negated God's covenant with them.
- God has maintained a covenant of grace throughout the Old and New Testaments with all who trusted in Him. These believers—embodied today in the church—are the true Israel (see Rom. 9:6-8; Gal. 6:16).
- Most references to "Israel" in Revelation refer symbolically to the church.

What Scriptures seem to support historic premillennialism?

- The revealing of the Antichrist precedes Christ's return—2 Thess. 2:3-4.
- The tribulation will root out false members from the churches—Rev. 2:22-23;
- The saints are on earth during the tribulation—Rev. 13:7
- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were conditional—Gen. 22:18; II Chron. 33:8; Is. 1:19-20; Jer. 7:6-7.
- The New Testament frequently uses "Israel" and "the twelve tribes" to refer to Christians—Rom. 9:6-8; James 1:1.

When has historic premillennialism been popular? Historic premillennialism seems to have been the earliest view of the end-times among post-apostolic Christians. Many early church fathers—including Lactantius (240-320), Irenaeus (130-200), Justin Martyr (100-165), and probably Papias (60-130), a disciple of the apostle John—embraced historic premillennialism. Modern supporters include scholars such as John Warwick Montgomery, George R. Beasley-Murray, David Dockery, Robert Gundry, and George E. Ladd.

AMILLENNIALISM



What is amillennialism?

Amillennialism is the belief that the millennium symbolizes Christ's reign in the lives of His people from the beginning of the church until His second coming. Rev. 19:11-21 portrays Christ's triumph over Satan through His death and resurrection. This triumph restrained the power of Satan on the earth (Rev. 20:1-3). The "first resurrection" (Rev. 20:4-6) symbolizes either the eternal life experienced by persons who die in Christ or the spiritual resurrection experienced by persons when they become Christians. When Christ returns, He will immediately defeat the powers of evil, resurrect the saved and the unsaved, judge them, and deliver them to their eternal destinies. According to amillennialists . . .

- The great tribulation represents calamities and persecutions that have occurred throughout church history.
- Most references to "Israel" in Revelation are symbolic references to the people of God on earth (compare Rom. 9:6-8; Gal. 6:16).
- In apocalyptic literature, numbers represent concepts, not literal statistics. For example, six symbolizes incompleteness, seven represents completeness, ten indicates

something that is extreme but limited, twelve represents the perfection of God's people, and one thousand symbolizes a great amount or long period of time.

What Scriptures seem to support amillennialism?

- The Bible frequently uses the number 1,000 figuratively—Ps. 50:10; 90:4; 105:8; 2 Peter 3:8.
- The first resurrection (Rev. 20:4) could refer to the spiritual resurrection (the regeneration or new birth) of persons who trust Christ—Rom. 11:13-15; Eph. 2:1-4.
- The Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection of the saved and the unsaved will occur at the same time—Dan. 12:2-3; John 5:28-29.
- The saints are on earth during the tribulation—Rev. 13:7.

When has amillennialism been popular? Amillennialism became popular in the fifth century. Amillennialism has remained widespread throughout church history. Prominent amillennialists include the Protestant reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin, as well as evangelical theologians such as E.Y. Mullins, Abraham Kuypers, G.C. Berkouwer, Herschel Hobbs, Stanley Grenz, and J. I. Packer. Many students of church history believe that the church father Augustine of Hippo was the first amillennialist.

DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIALISM



What is dispensational premillennialism?

Dispensational premillennialism is the belief that the Second Coming of Christ will precede the millennium and that God will still give the nation of Israel the land described in Gen. 15:18.

Dispensational premillennialism treats the millennium as a literal, future event. Most dispensational premillennialists are pre-tribulationists; they understand Rev. 4:1-2 to refer to "the rapture," when Christ removes Christians from the earth before the great tribulation begins. Some dispensational premillennialists, known as mid-tribulationists, believe the rapture will occur during the great tribulation. According to the dispensational premillennialists, . . .

- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were unconditional; therefore, the Jews will still receive the land described in Gen. 15:18.
- During the great tribulation, many Jews will turn to Jesus Christ.
- All references to Israel in Revelation refer to the nation of Israel.

What Scriptures seem to support dispensational premillennialism?

- God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were unconditional—Gen. 15:7-21.
- God will keep Christians from the outpouring of His wrath during the tribulation—I Thess. 5:9; Rev. 3:10.
- The church is not specifically mentioned between Rev. 4 and 19.

When has dispensational premillennialism been popular? This view emerged in the 1800's among the Plymouth Brethren. Dispensational premillennialism increased in popularity in the late 1800's and has remained widespread throughout the 20th century. Proponents have included J. Nelson Darby, C.I. Scofield, Harry A. Ironside, Gleason Archer, Donald G. Barnhouse, Hal Lindsey, Chuck Smith, John MacArthur, Charles Ryrie, Charles Stanley, Norman L. Geisler, and Tim LaHaye.

POSTMILLENNIALISM



What is postmillennialism?

Postmillennialism is the belief that the Second Coming of Christ will occur after the millennium. The millennial reign described in Rev. 20:1-6 represents a long time period when, through the preaching of the gospel, most of the world will submit to Jesus Christ. During this time, Satan will have no power over the earth, and evil regimes will collapse (see Rev. 19:19-20:3). A period of great tribulation may precede the millennium. According to postmillennialists . . .

- During the millennium, Christ will rule the earth through His Spirit and through His church; He will not, however, be physically present on the earth.
- The resurrection depicted in Rev. 20:4 represents the spiritual regeneration of people who trust Jesus Christ.
- The Second Coming of Christ, the final conflict between good and evil, the defeat of Satan, the physical resurrection of all people, and the final judgment will occur together, immediately after the millennium (Rev. 20:7-15).

What Scriptures seem to support postmillennialism?

- Every ethnic group will receive the gospel before the Second Coming—Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10.
- The first resurrection (Rev. 20:4) could refer to the spiritual resurrection (the regeneration or new birth) of persons who trust Christ—Rom. 11:13-15; Eph. 2:1-4.
- The Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection of all people, saved and unsaved, will occur at the same time—Dan. 12:2-3; John 5:28-29.

When has postmillennialism been popular? The earliest postmillennialist writer was Joachim of Fiore (1135-1202). Postmillennialism became popular in the 19th century, partly because of that era's optimism about the future. Prominent postmillennialists include early church leaders such as Eusebius and Athanasius; preachers such as Jonathan Edwards and Charles Haddon Spurgeon; and theologians such as B. B. Warfield, Augustus H. Strong, Charles Hodge, R.L. Dabney, Loraine Boettner, and R.C. Sproul.