

Study on Eschatology

April 17, 2024

1. Intro

- a. So, in my studies for this lesson, I heard it said multiple times that, “The millennium is the thousand years of peace that Christians love to fight over.”
 - i. My hope and prayer for this study is that, by the end of it, we realize that the fighting is NOT necessary
 1. And, in fact, each group that represents each view has a lot to offer each of the other groups!
 - a. Now, what we won’t accomplish through this study, or any other study on the end times, is that we get it all figured out
 - b. This is a discussion that has been going on since the very early decades of the church, and there are SOLID believers on ALL sides of the argument
 - i. That right there should help us to approach our discussion of the end times with a LOT of humility, and a LOT of grace
 1. There’s nothing wrong with having a strong personal conviction on these issues
 - a. But when we choose to disfellowship with other Christians who don’t see things the way we do, then you should know without a doubt that that is a SINFUL response
 - c. Our views on the end times are NOT the Gospel
 - i. We stand united on the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ
 - ii. And we stand united in our belief that he IS coming back, and all believers will reign with him for all eternity in the new heavens and the new earth
 1. But history has proven that until that end comes, we aren’t going to all be on the same page on all things, especially when it comes to the Millennial Age of the Scriptures
 - a. Fair enough?
 - b. OK, so before we get into the four main views that we are going to talk about tonight, let’s look at the main passage of Scripture that most of this discussion revolves around
 - i. Revelation 20:1-10
 1. *¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. ²And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for **a thousand years**, ³and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until **the thousand years** were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. ⁴Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for **a thousand years**. ⁵The rest of the dead did not come to life until*

*the **thousand years** were ended. This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for **a thousand years**. ⁷And when the **thousand years** are ended, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. ⁹And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, ¹⁰and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

- ii. OK, so, we see in just these 10 verses the phrase “a thousand years” mentioned six times
 1. Satan will be bound for a thousand years
 2. His ability to deceive the nations will be withdrawn for a thousand years
 3. The saints who had been martyred and who had not worshiped the beast will come to life, and they will reign with Christ for a thousand years
 4. The rest of the dead will be resurrected at the end of the thousand years
 5. Those in that first resurrection will be priests of God and of Christ for a thousand years
 6. And when the thousand years are over, Satan will be released, he’ll once again deceive the nations
 - a. He’ll entice them to make war against the saints
 - b. But fire will come down from heaven and consume him and all his followers
 - i. And then we read in the following verses about the great white throne judgment, the lake of fire...
 1. And then in chapter 21 and 22, we have the NEW heaven and earth, where all the saints will worship the Lord for all eternity
 - ii. So it’s important to note in all of this discussion... the Millennial Reign, whatever that thousand years actually is... is NOT the end of the story!!
 1. The end of the story is the bride of Jesus Christ, the church made up of Jews and Gentiles whom Christ has purchased, being wedded to him for all eternity
 - a. All sin is gone
 - b. All death is gone
 - c. Satan is gone... as is all who have followed him
 - i. And we will dwell with God FOREVER!
 - c. This is why we don’t need to get all hung up on the differing views of the thousand years – it is NOT our final destination!!
- iii. OK, so let’s start looking at the four main views regarding this Millennial Age
 1. Just know that we are taking a really high-level look at each view
 - a. Within each view, there tend to be different camps as well, each with their own unique positions
 - i. But we just do not have the time to walk through every little group that is out there

2. However, in the first main group, premillennialism, we will split that into two main subgroups, since the distinctions are pretty important

2. Premillennialism

a. So Premillennialism is by far the most popular view in the American church today

i. I think we're all fairly familiar with its main arguments

1. Those that hold to the Premillennial view would say that we ought to take the words of the Scripture as literally as we can, in almost every circumstance

a. They would say that "the plane thing is the main thing"

i. So, when they get to Revelation 20, they would see the thousand years mentioned here six times, and they would say, "Well, of course we should expect a literal thousand year period then... a period when Satan is literally bound in the pit, and Jesus is literally reigning on earth with his saints."

2. The reason why they are called PREmillennialists is because, if we flip over to Revelation 19, we see the familiar passage of Scripture where Christ returns on a white horse to judge and make war, with all the armies of heaven behind him

3. And THEN, the Millennial Age begins

a. So Christ returns BEFORE the Millennium, or PREmillennium

b. So in other words, they take the book of Revelation, and they see it as a sequential order of how things are going to unfold in time

i. We'll see that how a person approaches Revelation plays a MAJOR role in which camp they end up in

ii. But for the Premillennialists, they get their interpretive "key" from Revelation 1:19, which has Jesus telling John,

1. ¹⁹Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this.

iii. The Premillennialist says, "Ah, there is our outline for the whole book of Revelation!"

1. The "things that you have seen" is chapter 1, where John sees the risen Christ

2. The things "that are" are the seven churches that existed in John's present day, which Jesus refers to in chapters 2 & 3

3. And the things "that are to take place after this" is the whole rest of the book of Revelation, which is all future events

a. And again, they would say that chapters 4-22 are all unfolding sequentially

ii. So this is actually the view that the church WIDELY held from very early on in her history

1. Papias was a well-respected leader in the church in the early 100's who taught the premillennialist view

2. Polycarp, a disciple of the Apostle John taught this view as well

3. As did Irenaeus and Tertullian, who were more in the third generation of church fathers after the Apostles

a. They believed that the premillennialist view was not only the plainest, and most straight-forward interpretations of Revelation

b. But they also believed that the 1000-year reign of Christ on earth would also provide for the best fulfillment of many of the Old Testament prophecies regarding Israel

- i. Prophecies such as Isaiah 65, which talks about the wolf and the lamb grazing together, and the people of God having babies that will never be sick or die young
 - ii. But, more significantly, they saw the Millennial Age as the time when the Abrahamic Covenant would be fulfilled, when the people of God would finally be a blessing to ALL the nations of the earth
 - iii. As well as the Davidic Covenant fulfilled, when Christ would be seated on the throne of David, here on earth
 - c. For the premillennialist, this is the most logical and simple reading of the prophetic portions of the Scriptures, and it has been that way for MANY in the church ever since the early 100's
 - b. But here we must make our first distinction
 - i. The view that I just described is known as HISTORICAL Premillennialism
 - 1. Obviously, it has that label because those who hold this view would say that this is THE historical view of the church... period
 - 2. But, while they would argue that Christ is coming back BEFORE the 1000-year reign, they would also say that the Church remains ON THE EARTH until he returns
 - a. In other words, they believe that the Church WILL NOT be raptured out of the earth prior to all the tribulation events that we read in Revelation
 - i. Instead, they are Premillennial, but they are POST-Tribulational when it comes to the rapture
 - ii. So, we need to make a stop here and talk about the rapture, don't we?
 - 1. Let's go to the main text for the rapture...
- c. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
 - i. *¹³But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸Therefore encourage one another with these words.*
 - 1. So, just in case you didn't know this, the word "rapture" is NOT in the Bible
 - a. What we have instead in verse 17 is Paul telling us that at the coming of the Lord, the dead in Christ will rise first, and then those who are alive will be CAUGHT UP together with Christ in the clouds to meet him in the air
 - i. In the Latin translation of this passage, the word for "caught up" is the Latin word "rapturo"
 - 1. So that's where that word comes from
 - 2. And this leads to a pretty big question, right?
 - a. WHEN will this happen, that those who are alive will be caught up with the Lord and meet him in the air?
 - b. We are taught today as a pretty common-place view that this will happen BEFORE all the awful events of Revelation, right?

- i. The majority of us have been taught that it is just a given that this “rapture” is PRE-tribulational, or BEFORE the Great Tribulation
 - 2. But the historical reality is, this is not what the early church taught
 - a. In the writings of the early church fathers, you just will not find the idea that the church is caught up before things get really bad here in the world
 - i. Instead, it is a constant call to endure to the end, until the Day that Christ returns and establishes his 1000-year reign
 - b. In the historical view, Christ does not secretly come and take away his church like a thief in the night, and then we wait safely in heaven while the earth falls into mass chaos
 - i. Instead, they would argue that what Paul is saying in 1 Thess. 4 is that, when Christ returns, all who are still alive will rise to meet him in the air, we will be transformed in the twinkling of an eye, and then we will fall in ranks behind him as he comes down to the earth to end the Great Tribulation, and establish his Millennial Kingdom
 - 1. They would support this scripturally by pointing to the fact that when Paul says we will “meet Christ in the air” he uses the same word Jesus uses in Matthew 25 in the Parable of the 10 virgins
 - a. These virgins GO OUT to meet the Bridegroom, but then they usher him BACK for the wedding feast
 - 2. Also, in the only other time this word is used, in Acts 28, it is used for when the brothers in Rome GO OUT to meet Paul at the harbor, and then bring him BACK into Rome
 - ii. So the historical premillennialist would say that the Christians will go THROUGH the Great Tribulation, during which many will die
 - 1. But those who are still alive at the end will rise up in the air, meet Christ and the resurrected dead, and then usher him back down to his Kingdom
 - a. They have a post-tribulation view of the rapture, but a premillennial view of Christ’s return
 - iii. Some modern-day teachers on this view are John Piper, Wayne Grudem, and Jim Hamilton
 - ii. So what about the PRE-tribulational rapture, then?
 - 1. This view comes more into play within the group who are typically called DISPENSATIONAL Premillennialists
 - a. So, what does THAT mean?
3. Dispensational Premillennialism
 - a. This view comes out of a Systematic Theology that was popularized in the 1800’s by John Darby, but then spread rapidly in the early 1900’s through the publication of the Scofield Reference Bible
 - i. In this view, the main idea is that God has interacted with humanity in different ways throughout history, according to which time period, or dispensation, they lived in
 - 1. It’s generally held that there are 7 main dispensations
 - a. The Age of Innocence (Genesis 1:1-3:7): Creation to the fall
 - b. The Age of Conscience (Genesis 3:8-8:22): the fall to the flood
 - c. The Age of Human Government (Genesis 9:1-11:32) the flood to Abraham
 - d. The Age of Promise (Genesis 12:1-Exodus 19:25): Abraham to Sinai

- e. The Age of Law (Exodus 20:1-Acts 2:4): Sinai to Pentecost
- f. The Age of Grace (Acts 2:4-Revelation 20:3): Pentecost to the millennial kingdom
- g. The Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 20:4-6): Eternal state
- ii. We won't go into the whole discussion on the various dispensations
 - 1. But what we do need to point out is that, in this view, the dispensation of the Age of Grace that exists from Pentecost to the millennial kingdom is also referred to as the CHURCH AGE
 - a. From the Age of Promise through the Age of the Law, God dealt exclusively with Israel as His chosen people
 - i. But then, with the Age of Grace beginning at Pentecost, a parenthesis was inserted into history
 - ii. God is still dealing with Israel, but they are NOT the Church
 - 1. Today, in our Age today, God is building His church, made up of mostly Gentiles and a relatively few Jews
 - 2. But at the onset of the Millennial Reign, God will once again deal exclusively with the Jewish people, and all of those Old Testament prophecies of the future restoration of Zion will come to pass
 - a. But in order for that to happen, the Church must exit the picture
 - b. How does this happen?
 - 3. It happens by Christ rapturing the church out of the earth, before the Great Tribulation!
 - 2. One of the biggest arguments for this pre-tribulation rapture of the church is the fact that, in the book of Revelation, the church is no longer mentioned after chapter 3
 - a. The Dispensational Premillennialist would say that that is because they have been "caught up" with Christ in a secret rapture, and they are now in heaven with the Father
 - i. And now that the Church is in heaven with the Father, He can now begin to pour out His judgements on the earth
 - ii. And THROUGH these judgements, and through the work of the Antichrist and the false prophet, the Jewish people will turn back to God
 - iii. And at the end of the Great Tribulation, Christ will return, and he will establish his 1000-year reign with the Jews, and they will rule the nations – as was promised to them throughout the Old Testament
 - 1. Can you see how the Pre-Trib rapture is necessary for this to work?
- iii. So the key distinctions of Dispensational Premillennialism is the separation of the Church and Israel in the Millennial Kingdom, with the Church in heaven and Israel on earth, and the pre-tribulational rapture that gets the church out of the picture
 - 1. Some modern-day, notable Dispensational Premillennialists are John MacArthur, D.L Moody, and Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founder of Dallas Theological Seminary
- iv. A quick word on what we gain from the pre-millennial views...

1. The pre-millennial views, both historic and dispensational, should be applauded for their desire to take a literal approach to the Scriptures
 - a. It is VERY easy to get off in the woods when we depart from the plain meaning of the text
 - i. So they do a great job of guarding against that
 2. I also think the premillennial views do a great job of keeping our hearts turned toward the Jewish people
 - a. While I do think this can be taken to an extreme, I also think it's pretty clear from the Scriptures that they have a special role in God's plan
 - b. Yes, the ultimate Kingdom of the New Jerusalem will be made up of both Jew and Gentile, but there are still many deep roots within God's original chosen people that I do not think should be discarded
 - i. Both of these premillennial views help us to think in that direction
4. So the third view we'll look at tonight is COMPLETELY different than both of the views we have been discussing so far, and that is the Postmillennial view
- a. In this view, Christ does not come BEFORE the establishment of the millennial kingdom, but AFTER that kingdom is established
 - i. And in this view, the 1000-year reign may or may not be a literal thousand years – most I think would say it is NOT a literal thousand years
 1. So, how does this work???
 - b. Well, one of the great commendations of the post-tribulational view is that it is EXTREMELY optimistic about the power of the Gospel!
 - i. It could be said that the premillennial views are pretty pessimistic regarding the fate of this world
 1. Premillennialists are ALWAYS focused on how the world is getting bad, and its only going to get worse... because that's what THE BIBLE says will happen, right?
 - ii. But POSTmillennialists would argue differently
 1. They would say that, if the church would just do what she has been called to do, we could affect real, lasting change in the nations of this world
 - a. If we would just "let out the clutch," as one postmillennialist says, we could begin transforming our government, as we begin to see politicians at every level TRANSFORMED by the Gospel
 - i. And if we could see politicians transformed, as the Scriptures say is entirely possible, then maybe our schools would begin to teach the tenets of Christianity again
 1. And if our schools began to teach Christianity, then the next generation would be far more likely to be Christians, and we'd have more Christian doctors, more Christian businessmen and women, more Christian artists, and so on
 - b. The postmillennialist would ask us all the question, "Don't you believe the Gospel is powerful enough to change the world?"
 - iii. And so, in this view, they argue that, as the Church gets back on mission, the world will begin to shift
 1. We'll still see suffering and persecution as the world balks against our efforts
 - a. But over time, things WILL begin to shift
 - i. And at some point, we will enter into a golden age, where people are coming to Christ all over the world, and the millennial kingdom will become established

1. And at THAT point, Christ will return, all things will be made new, and we will enter into eternity with him
- b. Like I said, the postmillennial view is HIGHLY optimistic, isn't it?
- iv. But we immediately have a LOT of questions, don't we?
 1. What about all the language of tribulation in Revelation?
 2. What about Jesus' Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24, when he talks about the second coming?
 3. What about Paul telling Timothy that "in the last days," things are going to get downright awful?
 - a. What does the postmillennialist do with all of those passages in the Scriptures that make the premillennialist so pessimistic about the future of this earth
- v. Well, they have a very simple answer to all of those questions...
 1. They would argue that ALL of the books of the New Testament were written prior to 70 AD
 - a. What happened in 70 AD?
 - i. The destruction of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem, right?
 - b. So the postmillennialist would say that all of these apocalyptic, end-time prophecies were all very real prophecies
 - i. Its just that they have all ALREADY been fulfilled with the fall of Jerusalem!
- vi. They would look at the beast, or the Antichrist, as Nero
 1. The "Babylon" that is referred to in Revelation is actually Jerusalem, due to their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah
 2. We know from history, as well as from the book of acts, that there were major famines and earthquakes during this time period as well, and that the people of Israel were increasingly at war with Rome
 3. And as far as all the cosmic signs like the sun and moon being darkened, and stars falling out of the sky, they would point to the very same kind of language used in Isaiah to describe the destruction of Babylon and the destruction of Edom
 - a. So they would say this is FIGURATIVE language that God has ALWAYS used in the past when he is getting ready to judge a specific nation
 - i. In this case, the nation is Israel
 - ii. And so, in Revelation 19, when Jesus comes back on the white horse, this is FIGURATIVE picture of him judging Jerusalem in 70 AD
 1. And this would mark the end of God's dealings with the specific nation of Israel
 - b. Now, the power and authority of Christ has been given to us to go and make disciples of ALL nations
 - i. In other words, we are to Christianize the world!
 1. Satan has been bound in the pit
 2. He no longer has the ability to deceive the nations, as he did in the Old Testament
 - a. He can still blind individuals, but he has no more NATIONAL power (like the demonic princes of Persia and Greece in the book of Daniel)

- c. We have the power and authority of Christ... the strongman has been bound...
 - i. If we would just get serious about the Gospel, we could change the world for good, and then Christ will return!
 - 1. When you get into studying the implications of this view, it's really hard NOT to like it!
 - vii. In fact, historically speaking, this was the view of MANY of the Puritans, whom I love dearly
 - 1. This kind of makes sense when you think about your history...
 - a. There were multiple times in English history in the 1500s and 1600s when the Puritans had control of the English Parliament
 - i. So they saw very real potential of what might be able to happen
 - b. And then when they lost control, and were kicked out of their pulpits, many of them traveled to the Brave New World of America, where they believed ANYTHING was possible
 - i. And then in the 1700's you see the Great Awakening, of which Jonathan Edwards was one of the main instruments
 - 1. And Edwards was a VERY strong postmillennialist
 - 2. Today, postmillennialism is definitely a minority view in the church, largely due to the realities of WW1, the Great Depression, and WW2
 - a. But it is making a resurgence
 - i. RC Sproul was a postmillennialist
 - ii. Doug Wilson is one of the loudest modern-day proponents of postmillennialism, as well as James White and Jeff Durbin, two of the great apologists of the church today
5. Alright, our last view we'll talk about tonight is the view called Amillennialism
 - a. The first thing that amillennialists would say is that they don't like the name amillennialist!
 - i. The "a" in front of millennium is a term of negation
 - 1. So technically, the word means "NO millennium"
 - ii. But amillennialists would be very quick to say that they ABSOLUTELY believe in a millennium... they just believe it is the millennial reign of Christ IN HEAVEN
 - b. If you remember, at the beginning of the study I mentioned that how someone approaches the book of Revelation will end up dictating which view they end up in
 - i. The premillennialist wants to approach the book of Revelation as literally as possible
 - 1. AND they want to read it sequentially, as it is written
 - 2. AND they would want to view most of it as things that have not yet happened
 - ii. The postmillennialist would also have a fairly literal view of much of the things in Revelation...
 - 1. But again, they would say that it has all been fulfilled (up to chapter 20) in the destruction of Jerusalem
 - c. The amillennialist would take a different track and say, first of all, that much of the book of Revelation is apocalyptic literature, and therefore should be read more as poetic language
 - i. They're not saying that it is science fiction, and that it is all just make believe
 - 1. But what they do argue is that everything we see in this type of literature is more spiritual than literal
 - a. So the beast, and the false prophet are not necessarily meant to be seen as real, actual people we can nail down in history and say, "THAT'S HIM!", but instead these represent evil world leaders and false teachers that the church encounters all throughout her history

- b. The judgements that God pours out through His angels aren't necessarily specific plagues and natural disasters that we pinpoint on a timeline, but instead they represent the general "groanings" of the earth that we've experienced all throughout history
 - 2. So there is a much more fluid approach when it comes to their interpretation of these things
 - d. Second, the amillennialist would say that the book of Revelation is NOT to be read as if it is one, continuous, sequential story
 - i. But instead, it should be read as one shorter story, retold multiple times from different perspectives
 - 1. So, for example, you have the scroll judgements, the bowl judgments, and the trumpet judgements happening in different places in Revelation
 - a. The premillennialist would say that these are all separate events, showing the increasing nature of God's judgement, as the tribulation gets worse and worse
 - b. The amillennialist would say, no, these are just retelling of the same story, just in different cycles
 - i. And in each of these cycles, you have:
 1. Christ entering heaven to reign
 2. Chaos happening on the earth
 3. Saints dying and entering into heaven
 4. Judgements being poured out upon the earth
 5. And then a great battle with a final destruction
 - ii. According to the amillennialist, this cycle repeats multiple times throughout Revelation
 1. And what happens when you look at Revelation this way, is that Revelation 19 and 20 are NOT seen as a chronological progression, but instead as the end of one cycle and the beginning of the final cycle
 - 2. So Revelation 19 ends with Christ returning, the great battle against Satan and his followers, and a decisive end, with "all the rest" being slain by the Lord
 - 3. And then, Revelation 20 begins a NEW cycle, now from the perspective of a FIGURATIVE thousand-year reign
 - a. And so, the amillennialist would say that, when Christ died on the cross, and was raised to life, and ascended to the throne, Satan was now bound
 - i. He could no longer deceive the nations, and so the Gospel is now able to advance
 - ii. But the Gospel advances through the blood of the martyrs, doesn't it?
 1. So as the Gospel is spreading, saints all over the world, from the time of Pentecost until today, have been martyred for their faith, or have refused to submit to Satan
 - a. And all of these who are IN CHRIST, are currently reigning with Christ NOW in his millennial kingdom IN HEAVEN
 - b. The 1000 years is clearly not a literal thousand years, but is meant to be a figurative number, like "the Lord owns the cattle on a thousand hills"

- ii. So amillennialists would much rather prefer the term “REALIZED millennialists,” because they believe the millennium is already happening
 - 1. And while the millennial reign of Christ and his resurrected saints IS being experienced in heaven, the church still advances on earth, through much suffering and persecution
 - a. But as the church is persecuted here on earth, the kingdom is being populated in heaven!
- iii. One of the great benefits of the amillennial position is that it immediately simplifies all the Scriptures that speak of the return of Christ
 - 1. With the amillennial view, you don’t have to figure out how to fit the various throne judgements, the rapture, and a millennial reign into a passage like 2 Peter 3:10, which says,
 - a. *¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*
 - 2. Or 2 Thessalonians 4:16, which says,
 - a. *¹⁶For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God.*
 - 3. Or 1 Corinthians 15:51-52
 - a. *⁵¹Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*
- iv. If the millennial kingdom is already realized in heaven...
 - 1. And if the judgements of God are already being poured out upon this earth...
 - 2. Then we can say with great simplicity, when Christ comes back, he will come back with a roar and a trumpet, like lightning in the sky, the dead will be “raised” with their new bodies, we who are alive will be raised to meet the Lord in the air, we will fall in behind him, and he will come to the earth and destroy all of his enemies
 - a. The heavens and the earth will dissolve, and we shall ALL reign, Jew and Gentile, together with Christ in the New Jerusalem!
- v. As far as the historical background for the amillennial position, Augustine is credited with first formulating this perspective in the late 300’s
 - 1. Many of the Reformers held this position, including Martin Luther and John Calvin
 - 2. Some more modern-day amillennialists are J.I. Packer, Voddie Baucham, and Tom Schreiner, who wrote the book on the Covenants that we are studying in Sunday School