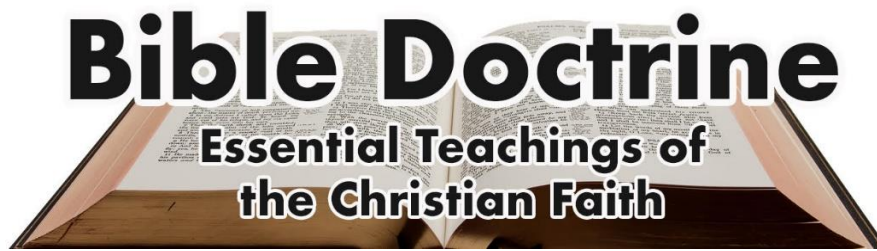


# Bible Doctrine

## Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith



### Lesson 49: The Millennium

#### Chapter 32

December 10, 2023

Revelation 20:1-6 - *Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup>He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; <sup>3</sup>and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. <sup>4</sup>And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup>But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup>Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.*

#### I. Postmillennialism.

Postmillennialism holds to the view that the progress of the gospel and the growth of the church through obedience to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) will gradually increase so that a large proportion of the world's population will be Christians (Isaiah 2:1-4; Isaiah 66:18, 22-23).

As a result, there will be significant Christian influence on society (Luke 13:18-20), society will more and more function according to God's standards and gradually a "millennial age" of peace and prosperity will occur on the earth (Isaiah 11:2-9; Psalm 67:1-7).

This "millennium" will last for a long time (not necessarily 1,000 years), and finally, at the end of this period, Christ will return to the earth, believers and unbelievers will be raised (Revelation 20:12), the final judgment will occur (Revelation 20:11-14), and there will be a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1). Believers will then enter the eternal state.

#### II. Dispensational Premillennialism.

Dispensational premillennialism holds to the view that the church age will continue until Christ calls believers to meet Him in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).

Christ will then return to heaven with the believers who have been removed from the earth. When that happens there will be a seven-year period of great tribulation (Daniel 9:24-27). At the end of the tribulation Christ will return (Matthew 24:27-31), judge the world (Matthew 25:31), bind Satan for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1-3), raise the Old Testament and tribulation saints from the dead (Revelation 20:4), and He will rule over the earthly nations from the throne of David for 1,000 years (Luke 1:32; Revelation 20:4, 6) of peace and harmony (Isaiah 2:4; 11:6-9).

After this millennial period, Satan will be released and instigate a colossal (but futile) rebellion against God (Revelation 20:7-9), this rebellion will result in the final defeat of Satan, and he and the wicked will be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).

This is followed by the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-13) and the beginning of the eternal state, where the righteous will proceed to the realm of the new heaven and the new earth (Revelation 21:1).

### III. Historic / Classic Premillennialism.

Historic premillennialism holds to the view that the present church age will continue until Christ returns to earth to establish a millennial kingdom.

When He comes back, believers who have died will be raised from the dead, their bodies will be reunited with their spirits, and these believers will reign with Christ on the earth for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:4).

During this time, Jesus will reign on earth in perfect righteousness (Isaiah 11:2-9; 65:20) and Satan will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit, where he will have no influence on the earth during the millennium (Revelation 20:1-3).

At the end of the millennium Satan will be loosed from the bottomless pit and will join forces with rebellious people for battle against Christ (Revelation 20:7-9), but they will be decisively defeated (Revelation 20:9-10).

Christ will then raise from the dead all the unbelievers who have died throughout history, and they will stand before Him in the final judgment (Revelation 20:11-15).

After the final judgment has occurred, believers will enter the eternal state of the new heaven and the new earth (Revelation 21:1).

### IV. Amillennialism.

#### A. Interpretation of Revelation.

“Most AMs [amillennials] interpret the book of Revelation according to what is called *progressive parallelism*. ‘According to this view, the book of Revelation consists of seven sections which run parallel to each other, each of which depicts the church and the world from the time of Christ’s first coming to the time of his second,’ ([Hoekema], *The Meaning of the Millennium*, pp. 156-57). This has also been called the **Recapitulation** view, meaning that the structure of Revelation does not relate consecutive events but frequently covers the same ground from different perspectives.

The 7 sections are: (1) chps. 1-3; (2) chps. 4-7; (3) chps. 8-11; (4) chps. 12-14; (5) chps. 15-16; (6) chps. 17-19; (7) chps. 20-22. Therefore, according to this view Revelation 20:1 is *not* to be thought of as following in chronological order chapter 19 (which describes the Second Coming of Christ). Rather, it takes us back once again to the *beginning* of the NT era and *recapitulates* the entire present age. By doing this the AM is able to interpret (a) *the binding of Satan* in Rev. 20:1-3 as having occurred during our Lord’s earthly ministry, and (b) *the 1,000 year reign* (i.e., the millennium) of Rev. 20:4-6 as describing in symbolic language the entire inter-advent age in which we now live. Therefore, the thousand-year period is no literal piece of history; it is a symbolic number coextensive with the history of the church on earth between the resurrection of Christ and his return.” Sam Storms

#### B. A sketch of amillennial “inaugurated eschatology” (points B-D from Anthony Hoekema).

1. Christ has won a decisive victory over sin, death, and Satan.
2. The kingdom of God is both present and future.
3. Though the Last Day is still future, we are in the last days now.
4. As far as the thousand years of Revelation 20 are concerned, we are in the millennium now.

#### C. A sketch of amillennial future eschatology.

1. The “signs of the times” have both present and future relevance.
2. The Second Coming of Christ will be a single event.
3. At the time of Christ’s return, there will be a general resurrection, both of believers and unbelievers.
4. After the resurrection, believers who are then still alive shall suddenly be transformed and glorified.
5. A Day of Judgment will occur at the time of Christ’s return, where all men will appear before the judgment seat of Christ.
6. After the judgment the final state is ushered in.

#### D. Some implications of amillennial eschatology.

1. What binds the Old and New Testaments together is the unity of the covenant of grace.
2. The kingdom of God is central in human history.
3. Jesus Christ is the Lord of history.
4. All of history is moving toward a goal: the total redemption of the universe.

#### Helpful Voddie Baucham sermons on YouTube:

*An Introduction to John’s Revelation* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ux5AB5woSQw>

*When is the Millennium?*, Revelation 20:1-3 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVbsgUzonK4>

*The First and Second Resurrection*, Revelation 20:4-6 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDsXHO4RYQs>