

Eschatology

Bible Fellowship Church



the church age. Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19: 28). Again, "I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26: 29). After the resurrection, Acts 1:3 tells us that Jesus spent forty days "speaking about the kingdom of God" to His disciples. When they asked Him, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" (Acts 1:6), Jesus did not rebuke them for the expectation of a literal kingdom, but instead directed them to their duty to preach the gospel until God brought about the kingdom in His time.

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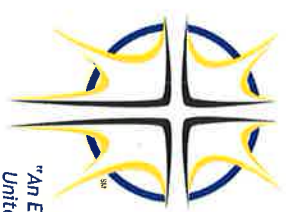
Finally, the book of Revelation is best interpreted consistent with the premillennial position. The other millennial interpretations see the book of Revelation as a series of visions in which chapter 20 begins

a new cycle unrelated to the earlier cycles. But in fact there is a continuous narrative. In 16:12-16, three great enemies of God are gathered at Armageddon—the dragon (12:3), the beast (13:1-10), and the false prophet (13:11-18). At the return of Christ in 19:11-19, the beast and the false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire. The dragon, however, is thrown into the bottomless pit for "a thousand years" (20:3), after which he also is thrown into the Lake of Fire with the beast and false prophet (20:10). Thus the order is clearly seen as the return of Christ prior to the Millennium.

The purpose of prophetic teaching is to prepare us for obedience today. The certain hope of the return of Christ and His reign upon this earth inspires us to perseverance, faithful service and witness until He comes.



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"An Expanding Fellowship of Churches
United to Make Disciples of Jesus Christ"



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Bible Fellowship Church and the Millennium

All Christians look for the return of Jesus Christ. The hope of His Second Coming to earth is found in nearly every New Testament book.

However, the details of this coming are not understood in the same way by all believers. One of the areas of disagreement concerning the return of Christ is the nature of the Millennium.

The word “Millennium” (Latin for a “thousand years”) does not occur in the Bible, but it accurately summarizes the teaching of Revelation 20, in which the phrase “a thousand years” occurs six times. Bible-believing Christians differ on their understanding of this prophetic passage, usually interpreting the thousand years in one of the following ways:

Pre-Millennialism

This interpretation sees the thousand years as a literal period of time in which Jesus Christ will physically rule as King on this earth. The name is derived from the conviction that Christ will return to reign before (pre) the period of one thousand years.

A-Millennialism

This view denies the previous interpretation (“A” means ‘no millennium’). The thousand years

in this perspective is usually understood as a general description of the church age (Pentecost to Second Coming) after which Christ returns to the earth.

Post-Millennialism

The millennium in this perspective is the ever-increasing influence of the gospel in this age, introducing a golden age of gospel glory climaxed by the return of Christ. Jesus is seen as returning after (post) this millennium, or long period of Christian cultural permeation and institutional progress.

The Bible Fellowship Church believes that Premillennialism is the correct understanding of Scripture for at least these three reasons:

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First, because of Old Testament prophecies which look ahead to a literal kingdom of the Messiah. Numerous predictions were made and literally fulfilled with respect to the first coming of Christ for the salvation

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of His people through His birth, death, and resurrection (e.g. Genesis 3: 15, Micah 5:2, Isaiah 53). Many other prophecies foretell a Messianic kingdom not yet fulfilled (e.g. Micah 4: 1-5, Isaiah 11: 1-9, Daniel 2:7). We do not believe that these predictions are adequately interpreted as fulfilled in the Christian Church, but point beyond the church age to the return of the King.

Second, we believe that Premillennialism is taught by Jesus Himself. The kingdom of God (or heaven) is a rich concept including aspects of both this age and the age to come. But it is impossible to limit our understanding of Christ’s words to