

Introduction

- These views are smaller tents and focused on how to interpret Revelation 20.
- People typically refer to their view of Revelation as one of these, even if that is not the most accurate or precise way to interpret the book.
- Premillennialism believes Christ returns before a literal 1,000 year reign on the earth.
- Amillennialism believes there is no literal 1,000 year reign and Christ returns soon.
- Postmillennialism believes Christ will return after a symbolic 1,000 year reign.

Dispensational Premillennialism

- Primary difference is a sharp distinction between Israel and the church.
- The promises made to Israel are for Israel alone and not the church.
- It sees a Pretribulational rapture, tribulation, and then the return of Christ to inaugurate the 1,000 year kingdom on the earth.

Historic Premillennialism

- Usually referred to as the patristic premillennial view, which is only partially true.
- The earliest patristic view could fit in either a historic or dispensational view.
- Sees the rapture as occurring after the tribulation but before the millennium reign.
- Typically, sees the promises made to Israel as fulfilled by the church.

Amillennialism

- The millennium is the reign of deceased believers with Christ right now.
- Satan was bound during Christ's ministry or at the cross.
- All of the promises made to Israel are fulfilled spiritually by the church.
- There is no future literal promise waiting to be fulfilled.
- They also believe Christ could return at any moment.
- Christ's return will bring resurrection, judgment, the end of suffering, and the eternal state in short succession instead of spread out over many years.

Postmillennialism

- Generally agrees with Amillennial interpretation of the millennium.
- They see the blessings of the eternal state slowly invading the world.
- The gospel is advancing into the world and the church expanding until the entire world submits to Christ, we enter into a golden age of peace, and then Christ returns.
- Key passage is Matthew 24:14, "The gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

History

- The earliest Christian writers were some version of premileenial.
- They expected a literal 1,000 kingdom of Christ on the earth.
- This view gradually fell out of favor and was completely rejected by the 4th century once Christianity gained power in the Roman Empire.
- Amillennialism was the dominate view until the 16th century when Postmillennialism takes a firmer hold.
- Postmillennialism became extremely popular in America until the 19th century with WWI, Jonathan Edwards being the most well known supporter.
- Dispensational premillennialism made a comeback with the Scofield Bible and Darby in the 19th century, but is still primarily an American position.
- Today, Postmillennialism is rare while Amillennialism and Premillennialism dominate.

Big Picture Views

- Typically, historic and dispensational premillennialism are futurist.
- Postmillennialism and amillennialism are idealist.
- There can be a mix depending on how one interprets the rest of Revelation.
- These specific views are primarily focused on Revelation 20.

Commonality

- Every view places their hope in the return of Christ and the blessing He will bring.
- All good orthodox positions that are valid interpretations of the Bible.
- Non-negotiable is the physical return of Christ, which is our hope.
- The difference is what are we hoping the return will look like.
- Our hope should not just be vague, but specific.

My View

- I am both futurist and idealist.
- I believe much of Revelation will be fulfilled literally, but that it also has deep spiritual meaning in every age that applies to every believer.
- Israel cannot and will not be saved apart from embrace of the gospel.
- I do believe Christ will return after the tribulation.