

# Different views of the return of Christ.

There are 3 main views concerning events that lead up to the return of Christ and the final judgement day. All of them are based on different interpretations of biblical passages, often they are referred to as "Millennialism."

## A Millennial

AD 70  
Destruction of temple

Tribulation.. Seals, trumpets and bowls are seen in human history since AD 70

Lawless man appears to deceive people

The rapture, the judgement and the new heaven and new earth and new Jerusalem are one event as described in 1 Thessalonians

Church Age

OT prophecy regarding Israel is complete. The Church is the new Israel and prophecy regarding end times refers to the Church.

Satan bound and restricted

## Post Millennial

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Church Age

Golden age of the church. 1000 years

The rapture, the judgement and the new heaven and new earth, and new Jerusalem are one event as described in 1 Thessalonians

Satan bound and restricted

## Pre Millennial

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Church Age

Rapture. Secret return of Christ. Church is taken up

Jews reign with Christ. All OT prophecy is now fulfilled... 1000 years

Jesus returns with the Church in the new Jerusalem, new Heaven and earth.

Tribulation. 7 years. Seals, trumpets and bowls

Some hold the view that the rapture of the Church is AFTER the tribulation.

A more literal view of Revelation

### **Millennium refers to the 1000 year reign of Christ. ( Rev 20:1-6)**

**Amillennialism** is sometimes called **Replacement theology** in that the Church replaces Israel as the chosen people. However, replacement is not the correct term. True spiritual Jews are believers in Jesus. Gentiles are grafted in to the “vine” and become True Israel. Jews who reject Jesus are “broken off.”

This view rejects the physical and literal reign of Christ on earth for exactly 1000 years, but see the references in Revelation as symbolic. His reign is spiritual and has already begun in the church age. The tribulation is the expected suffering of the church. Christ will return, raise the dead in Him first, then call the living Church to him. There will be judgement and then He will bring in the new heaven and earth... this is all one event.

**Post Millennialism** is very similar to Amillennialism in that it sees the imagery in Revelation as figurative rather than literal. It holds that there will come a time when the Church will prosper, the preaching of the Gospel will have much fruit and most of the world will be Christian. The world will get better and better. This is called the Golden Age. It precedes the return of Christ. As with Amillennialism the final return and judgement are all one event. The description of tribulation is happening now.

**Pre Millennialism** takes a more literal approach to the prophecies in both the Old and New Testaments. It sees the role of the Jews as significant in God’s final purposes. Thus the return of the Jews to the land and the reestablishment of Israel in 1947 are significant signs of the end times. Some hold the view that God works in “dispensations” or time periods that are numbered clearly in scripture and represent the unfolding of His purposes. The world will get worse (tribulation) before it gets better. Therefore the 1000 years is a literal time when Christ will rule on Earth and there will be peace before a final judgement and the recreation of a new heaven and earth.

It is not for me to say which is correct, if any! God may have other plans that do not fit these human interpretations of scripture. What we are told is that it will be like a thief in the night and we must be ready. We must live righteous and holy lives, ensuring others hear the good news of Jesus. To become obsessed by trying to interpret how God will draw this world to a close, is to miss the point of our faith. We are called to worship, honour and serve the Lord. The book of Revelation serves to encourage the Church through the ages; that Satan will be defeated, the worldly powers will not succeed and that Christ will reign as king over His creation once again.