



Review: Approaches in Interpretation to The Book of Revelation

Preterist:

- It is from a Latin word which means “past.”
- A preterist then is a person who interprets the events of the book of Revelation as the past. To him Revelation is history. Prophecy is spiritualized to make it fit events in the church age. Most prophecy (e.g. events of the Tribulation Period) that we consider future was fulfilled in AD 70.
- The preterist SPIRITUALIZES.
- This interpretation does not follow a normal hermeneutic.

Historical or Continuous Historical:

- They view this book as a *symbolic* picture and panorama of the total church history between Christ's first and second comings. Many postmillennial scholars hold this view. Seldom have two people held the same view under this category. Everyone has a different view of the book's correlation to historical events. One of the reasons why this is so is that most who have held to this view through the centuries have seen the events as being fulfilled in their own time.
- Again, this interpretation does not follow a normal hermeneutic. Also, they ignore the imminent return of the Lord.

Idealist:

- They would view the book as not recording actual historical events, but instead the book portrays in symbolic terms the age long conflict between good and evil.
- Notice, yet again, that this interpretation does not follow a normal hermeneutic. Those who hold to this spiritualize most of the book.

Futurist or Plain Interpretation:

- This is the only view based on a normal hermeneutic.
- Most people who hold this view are premillennial...which makes sense, since we are the ones who hold to a “normal hermeneutic.”
- We are futurist in that we believe that the events recorded from chapter four on are yet *future*.



**Approaches to the
Millennium in Revelation 20.**

Premillennialism:

- The coming of Christ to earth occurs before (pre-) the Millennium.
- The binding of Satan is yet future. It will take place when Christ returns.
- The Millennium is a literal period of 1000 years during which Christ will reign on earth from Jerusalem and will literally fulfill His covenants with Israel.
- The loosing of Satan will bring the Millennium to its climax, followed by the resurrection and judgment of the wicked of all ages at the Great White Throne.
- The new heavens and new earth will be created after the 1000 years of the Millennium.
- This is the only position that follows a consistently literal/normal interpretation.

Amillennialism:

- Means “no (a-) millennium.”
- Believe that there will be no Millennium before the end of the world. Until the end there will be a parallel development of both good and evil...God’s kingdom and Satan’s. After the second coming of Christ at the end of the world there will be a general resurrection and general judgment of everyone.
- The binding of Satan represents the victory of Christ over the powers of darkness accomplished at the cross. (If Satan is bound now, he is on a very long chain!)

Amillennialism:

- Two basic views of the Millennium: 1) The millennial passages are fulfilled in the present age by the church on earth. 2) The millennial passages are fulfilled by the saints in heaven now.
- All the kingdom prophecies to Israel are spiritualized. They are either spiritualized to apply to the church today, or they have been done away with entirely and have no fulfillment at all, or they must be spiritualized to apply to the future or eternal state.
- Satan will be loosed briefly to wreak havoc and to persecute the church in the end of the present age.
- The fire coming from heaven and consuming the wicked is symbolic of Christ's Second Coming.

Amillennialism:

- A general resurrection and judgment of the evil and the good will occur at Christ's coming, followed by the creation of new heavens and a new earth.
- The problem here is that they spiritualize the text (allegorical interpretation).

Postmillennialism:

- Boettner describes it this way: “That view of last things which holds that the kingdom of God is now being extended in the world through the preaching of the Gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of individuals, that the world is eventually to be Christianized, and that the return of Christ is to occur at the close of a long period of righteousness and peace commonly called the 'Millennium.'...The second coming of Christ will be followed immediately by the general resurrection, the general judgment, and the introduction of heaven and hell in their fullness.”

Postmillennialism:

- They believe that Satan will be bound in a special way at the beginning of the millennium. Some would say that the binding of Satan represents a future point in time when the successful preaching of the gospel will have effectively reduced Satan's influence to nothing.
- The 1,000 years may or may not be a literal duration (it may be shorter or longer), but speaks of the future glorious age, prior to the Second Coming, in which the influence of the gospel will have universal sway. The church, fulfilling the Great Commission, will be the instrument to bring about and promote the Millennium on earth.

Postmillennialism:

- It will be a time of peace, material prosperity, and spiritual welfare on the earth. Although not all will be saved, nor all sin be wiped out, Christian principles will be the rule, not the exception. Sin will be reduced to almost nothing.
- A final attempt on the part of a loosed Satan at the end of the age will go nowhere.
- A general resurrection and judgment will occur at the coming of Christ.
- Once again, the problem is that the text of the Word of God is spiritualized (allegorical interpretation).