

## Millennium <sup>1</sup>

The period of 1,000 years referred to in Revelation chapter 20, during which Satan is bound and believers reign with Jesus Christ. This Millennium is understood in different ways: as a period of unparalleled peace and prosperity for the church and the gospel at the end of this age, after which Christ will return (postmillennialism); as the time following Christ's return when he will reign on earth (premillennialism); as a symbolic reference to the period between Christ's first and second comings (amillennialism).

### → Characteristics of the Millennium

**Satan is bound** Rev 20:1-3 "The Abyss" is the subterranean place of confinement for Satan and evil spirits. See *also* Lk 8:31 *pp* Mt 8:29 *pp* Mk 5:7

**Martyred believers are raised to reign with Jesus Christ** Rev 20:4-6 Those who have suffered for the gospel receive their promised reward. See *also* Ro 8:17; 2Ti 2:11-12; Rev 2:10

### **Satan's release and final overthrow**

Rev 20:7-10 See *also* Eze 38:1-4,15-16,18-22; 39:2-5; Zec 14:2; Ro 16:20

- **The Millennium will be a golden age on earth** Isa 2:2-4 *pp* Mic 4:1-3 The OT looks forward to a period of universal peace and prosperity on earth. Both pre- and postmillennialists see this as a reference to Jesus Christ's future earthly reign. See *also* Isa 11:6-9; 51:4-5; 65:25

### → The premillennial interpretation

#### **The premillennial order of events**

Rev 19:11-13 Jesus Christ's return. Premillennialists understand the events of Revelation chapter 19 to precede those of Revelation chapter 20; Rev 20:2-3 Satan bound for 1,000 years; Rev 20:4-6 A "first resurrection" of believers to share Jesus Christ's reign over the earth; Rev 20:7-10 Satan's release and final overthrow; Rev 20:11-15 the general resurrection of all people to face God's judgment

**A first resurrection of believers** 1 Co 15:22-25 This passage allows the idea of a gap between the resurrection of believers and the eternal age. See *also* 1 Th 4:16-17

**God's future earthly reign** Zec 14:9 See *also* Da 2:44; Zep 3:11; Zec 14:16-21

**Believers will reign with Jesus Christ** Mt 19:28 Premillennialists take this to refer to an earthly reign. See *also* Lk 22:29-30; 1Co 6:2; Rev 5:9-10

### **Difficulties with premillennialism**

Scriptures that depict a single resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked: Da 12:2; Jn 5:28-29 Jesus Christ's parables of the kingdom depict a single occasion of separation and judgment: Mt 13:40-43,49-50; 25:31-32

### → The postmillennial interpretation

**The rapid spread of the gospel** Mt 24:14 *pp* Mk 13:10 See *also* Mt 13:31-33 *pp* Mk 4:31-32 *pp* Lk 13:18-21

**A future turning to God** Ps 22:27-28; Isa 19:19-24; Zec 2:11

### **Difficulties with postmillennialism**

The fortunes of the gospel and the church appear to be at a low ebb before Jesus Christ returns: Mt 24:9-12 *pp* Lk 21:12-17; 2Ti 3:1-5,12-13 Jesus Christ's reign is not postponed to some future era; it has begun already: Mt 28:18; Ac 2:33-36; 7:55-56

### → The amillennial interpretation

**Satan was defeated at Jesus Christ's first coming** Jn 12:31 See *also* Mt 12:29 *pp* Mk 3:27 *pp* Lk 11:21-22; Lk 10:18-20; Col 2:14-15

### **Interpreting the "first resurrection"**

As a reference to the soul entering heaven after death: Lk 23:43; 2Ti 4:7-8 As spiritual resurrection to new life in Christ: Ro 6:5; Eph 2:6; Col 3:1

### **Dangers of the amillennialist view**

The future hope of believers is not only a spiritual reality: Ro 8:19-21; Rev 21:1 Though defeated, Satan should not be underestimated: 1Pe 5:8; 1 Jn 5:19; Rev 12:17

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<sup>1</sup> Bron: the NIV Thematic Reference Bible