

A PRELIMINARY CRITIQUE OF CONTEMPORARY AMILLENNIALISM

Trevor Craigen
Associate Professor of Theology
The Master's Seminary, California

The title, if in the style of old books, would probably have been “A Preliminary Critique of, and a Response to, Contemporary Amillennialists, with Some Questions Posed in Return, and with A Final Syllogism for Consideration.”

Introduction

The term *amillennial*, well-known to anyone minimally conversant with the Bible and prophecy, simply means that the Second Coming of Christ is to be without a millennium. Anthony Hoekema finds it an unhappy choice of terms because it inaccurately suggests that amillennialists do not believe in any millennium or that they simply ignore the millennial reign of the first six verses of Revelation 20.¹ *Realized millennialism*,² *preconsummation*³ or *biblical millennialism*⁴ are proposed replacements. A millennium is not being denied, avers the amillennialist, but is understood differently. A hyperliteralist⁵ approach in dealing with passages on the millennium, such as Revelation 20, is quite unacceptable.⁶ A change of terms might more accurately reflect what an amillennialist really does understand the one thousand year period to be, but it certainly does not resolve the difference by any degree, and perhaps wasn't intended to

¹ Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (reprint Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 199), 173.

² Jay Adams, *The Time is at Hand* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1970), 7-11, as cited by Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*, 173. See also R. Fowler White, “On the Hermeneutics and Interpretation of Rev 20:1-3: A Preconsummationist Perspective,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 42/1 (1999) 53.

³ R. Fowler White, “On the Hermeneutics,” 53.

⁴ William Cox, *Amillennialism Today* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1972) 1.

⁵ Too often this term sounds like a buzz word of disapproval. Premillennialists are hyperliteral, i.e. handle the text improperly, whereas amillennialists are literal, i.e handle the text properly. A literalistic hermeneutic means that the interpretative outcome has been determined in advance. See Kim Riddlebarger, *The Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2003) 142.

⁶ Cox, *Amillennialism*, 64, where he speaks of the reaction to premillennial hermeneutics as a rebelling against hyperliteralism.

do so. The use of a term with a definition unlike that of another's use of the same term is at the least a studied rejection of the other. The differences do remain stark. To the premillennialist, *millennium* signifies a future kingdom on earth in which Christ reigns with His saints over Israel and the nations during the final but also very different era of earth's history before the eternal state is entered. To the amillennialist the term signifies a present kingdom on earth in which Christ reigns with His saints through the Church, or with the saints already with Him in heaven, with the very different era of the new heavens and the new earth immediately succeeding the second coming. Thus, since the term is generally used to speak of a period of time in the future, the amillennialist is in fact expressing a denial of a millennial reign, no matter what he avers.

It's not too early to observe that each view continues to make its case as it did before, re-presenting the same biblical passages, questions, responses, and references to the antiquity of the views. Reference was made by amillennialist writers about premillennialists' understanding of this or that passage or concept. Sometimes a comment on what the other side is doing or not doing with a particular passage occurred as part of a lead-in to the exposition then to be carried out. Basically the debate has not really advanced from where it has been for many years.

One does begin to wonder if something more than a different interpretation is the driving force behind tenaciously and aggressively taking an anti-premillennial and dispensational stance. Robert Saucy's suggestion of a philosophy of history which excludes His chosen people from the future of world history.⁷ Without this their view is truncated, myopically missing the host of references in the prophets on Israel's distinctive role in the coming kingdom, yet without loss to the place and purpose for the church in God's plan.

⁷ Robert Saucy, "The Crucial Issue Between Dispensational and Non-Dispensational Systems," *Criswell Theological Review* 1/1 (1986): 163-65.

Two authors were selected as representative of contemporary amillennialism: Kim Riddlebarger, with his *A Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times*,⁸ and Cornelis Venema with his *The Promise of the Future*.⁹ Three others were recognized as being in concord with these first two, namely Anthony Hoekema,¹⁰ and Robert Strimple,¹¹ and also another writer from about fifteen years earlier, William Cox.¹² Since a very good dispensational response to the open letter by Knox Theological Seminary, has already been given, it has been left aside.¹³

Robert Strimple notes that the designations for the three millennial viewpoints may be of fairly recent origin, but then concurs with Louis Berkhof that amillennialism is as old as Christianity itself—a somewhat audacious observation to make.¹⁴

Tracing the heritage of a millennial view back to one or more church fathers, as though the earlier the church father the more likely he is to be correct, is an interesting exercise but what stock should be placed in it?. The fact that an idea was touted in the early centuries is no guarantee that it is a right idea. Millennial views must stand or fall on the proper employment of the historical-grammatical principle of interpretation. Nevertheless, some mention is usually made of amillennialism having dominated the theological horizon since the fifth century.

History and Hermeneutics

⁸ Kim Riddlebarger, *The Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times*..

⁹ Cornelis P. Venema, *The Promise of the Future* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2000).

¹⁰ Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*.

¹¹ Robert B. Strimple, “Amillennialism,” in *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond*, edited by Darrell L. Bock and Stanley N. Gundry (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999).

¹² Cox, *Amillennialism Today*.

¹³ Knox Theological Seminary, “An Open Letter to Evangelicals and Other Interested Parties.” <http://www.knoxseminary.org/Prospective/Faculty/WittenbergDoor/index.html>, 11/23/2004. For a well crafted response, see Michael Stallard, “A Dispensational Response to the Knox Seminary Open Letter to Evangelicals,” *The Journal of Ministry and Theology* ??? (???) 5-41, and note that in his conclusion he specifically indicates that nothing new has come forth in the letter which has not been discussed before.

¹⁴ Strimple, “Amillennialism,” 84. Refer also to Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993), 708.

Historical lineage and an interpretational paradigm walk somewhat in tandem, with a line drawn back to Augustine of Hippo (354-430), whose writings certainly fueled later understanding since he became so influential way beyond his own time.

From the early days of the Church, the End of the Ages was acknowledged as being the bringer of great changes of benefit to believers and of judgment for unbelievers. Certain events would terminate time and history, if not settle the difficulties, injustices, and suffering in the reader's world. That the world could continue forever with nary a sign of judgment and of matters being put right by the Lord was untenable.

Historical Lineage

Constantine's conversion to Christianity contributed to the demise of the literal interpretation of Daniel and Revelation. A new interpretation of apocalyptic texts gradually asserted itself. The Alexandrian allegorical method dominated and permitted re-interpretation of the prophetic books. Eusebius of Caesarea, the court theologian of Constantine the Great, rejected literal apocalyptic expectations. In fact, it was he who gave the most currency to the conviction that in the Christian empire, "the kingdoms of this world had become the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ."¹⁵ With the Christian kingdom a reality under a Christian emperor, the millennium had arrived! Christianity had triumphed in the Roman Empire! Looking for the setting up of a literal Millennium Kingdom on earth was no longer important. Expectation of its coming gave way to explanation of it having come, being dated either from the conversion of Constantine or the first appearance of Christ.

¹⁵ Walter Klaassen, *Living at the End of the Ages* (Lanham: University of America Press, 1992) 3. Refer also to Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, X, 9, and his *Oration*, XVI, 3-8 for such a proclamation.

Subsequently, Church Councils, although dealing with other vitally important issues, such as Christology, also made reference to eschatological issues. The Council of Nicea did not put down the millennium. The Council of Ephesus in A.D.431, allegedly condemned chiliasm as heretical,¹⁶ but most probably made a passing comment on the fanciful notions in it, but it was not a part of what was being forbidden and endorsed.¹⁷

Tyconius, a Donatist theologian whose commentary on Daniel impacted the thinking of Augustine, believed the End, i.e. the events of John's Apocalypse, was near at hand because of the deteriorating conditions in his own day. Far from inspiring a literal interpretation, it promoted rejection of the literal-historical interpretation and a replacing of it with a symbolic one, as he sought to unlock the riddles of the sacred text. The main meaning of obscure passages was found in terms of its application to the contemporary situation of the Church. Revelation 20:1-6 referred to the time of the church, during which the saints already enthroned with the triumphant Christ reign with Him.¹⁸

Augustine, generally regarded as the father of amillennialism, crystallized its basic teaching, "while at the same time sounding the death knell to chiliasm."¹⁹ "Augustine was fundamental to the 'official' position of the medieval church regarding the apocalyptic texts."²⁰ His eschatological understanding greatly influenced Latin theology. This earthly Kingdom

¹⁶ Michael J. Svelg, "The Phantom Heresy: Did the Council of Ephesus (431) Condemn Chiliasm?" *Trinity Journal* 24/1 (2003):

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 111, where the record reads, "in accord with the delirious and incredible millennial doctrines of the unfavorable Apollinarius." This is an indication that some were unfavorably viewing the idea of a kingdom on earth.

¹⁸ Daley, *The Hope*, 130. Tyconius took the first resurrection to refer to the rebirth of baptism which brought release from sin. Similar fanciful interpretations gave significance to the text for him. He, anticipating Augustine, proposed all of humanity divided into two opposing societies.

¹⁹ Cox, *Amillennialism*, 8.

²⁰ Klaassen, *Living at the End*, 4

symbolically represented all the years of the Christian era”²¹ which he identified easily with the church militant. The present age, beginning with Christ’s first advent, is the millennium, with the number one thousand signifying completeness.²²

Earlier, coming from the pen of Irenaeus (130-202) in his *Against Heresies* was an endorsement of an earthly millennium. He defended the millennial hope of Papias. At the end of this one thousand years of preparation, God’s final judgment, as per Revelation 20-21, would come in, all the dead would be raised, and the unsaved would then be cast into the fires of Gehenna. The saved would enter into the timeless and incorruptible “new heaven and a new earth”.²³ In fact, he specifically mentioned in a negative light any allegorizing of prophecies of this kind.²⁴ Eusebius chimed in with his negative reaction, remarking that Papias’ views on this Kingdom set up on earth after the resurrection of the dead was the strange parables and teachings which he had gotten because of a failure to realize that the apostles spoke in mystical figures—it showed Papias’ limited knowledge.²⁵ The concept of a Kingdom on earth did not totally disappear from the scene in the intervening years leading up to the Reformation. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a variety of authors pitched their writings on to the pile of similar books already in the ring. Walter Klaassen summarizes the time in these words:

²¹ Daley, Brian E. *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 134.

²² Augustine, *City of God*, XX, 7, 9.

²³ Daley, *The Hope*, 31, and refer to Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.33.3-4, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1 (reprint Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 562-64. Peter Toon, *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel: Puritan Eschatology 1600-1660* (Edinburgh: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1970), 17, who notes that such was the Catholic opposition to millennialism that steps were taken successfully to erase these chapters in his writings, and only in 1575 did the authentic teaching come to light with the discovery of a manuscript missed by the authorities from the fifth to the sixteenth centuries—it was a determined effort to suppress millennial thinking. More was done than just tampering with Irenaeus’ writings! Even Jerome got in on the act by replacing Victorinus’ treatment of a future reign of Christ and the saints in Revelation 20 with a section from Tyconius’ commentary! Toon also notes that millenarian thinking prevailed in “the underworld of popular religion,” of the day, 17.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Eusebius, *Church History*, 3.39.12-13.

Among the thousands of *Flugschriften* [pamphlets] published in those years were many on the subject of the endtimes. They were astrological predictions, compilations of the ancient prophecies of Methodius, St. Bridget, Joachim of Fiore, and the Merlin of the King Arthur legends. They were selected oracles of the Sibyls, the pagan female counterparts of the male Hebrew prophets. There were books dealing with contemporary prodigies, eclipses, planetary conjunctions, and comets, all omens of disaster. There were the illustrated books about the ancestry and history of the Antichrist and of the 15 signs that were to usher in the End (*Das Puch von dem Entkrist*). There were publications which identified the Pope as the Antichrist and Luther as Elijah returned or as the great angel of the apocalypse.²⁶

The Reformers and others could not have been unaware of the millennial thinking of the church fathers. Perhaps, weightier issues than eschatology were being dealt with and so the Doctrine of the Last Things would have to wait for another day. Larry Crutchfield, in his two-part article entitled “Rudiments of Dispensationalism in the Anti-Nicene Period,” demonstrated that some concept of a Church to be distinguished from the nation of Israel was already being proposed by the early Church Fathers.²⁷ Instead, the Reformers chose to stay on the path set by Augustine and opted for no kingdom on earth yet to come but on one already realized, i.e. they opted for an on-going millennium.

Hermeneutical Paradigm

The difference between amillennial and premillennial thinking can be seen also at the stance they take in relation to progressive revelation. The former looks back from completed revelation, i.e. looking back through the lens of the NT. The latter follows progressive revelation with no lens bending his hermeneutical eyesight.

²⁶ Walter Klassen, 19-20

²⁷ Larry Crutchfield, “Israel and the Church in the Ante-Nicene Fathers,” *BSac* 144/575 (1987): 254-76 and “Ages and Dispensations in the Ante-Nicene Fathers,” *BSac* 144/576 (1987): 377-401, concisely summarizes: “The Fathers [1] distinguished between the church and national Israel, [2] recognized distinctions among the differing peoples of God throughout biblical history, and [3] believed in the literal fulfillment of covenant promises in the earthly kingdom” (p. 271). Charts of the dispensational systems and of the dispensations of Justin Martyr, appended to the second article, are instructive of the careful study given to the details in the text.

“The NT instructs regarding the proper interpretation of OT prophecy,” is the maxim in operation. Riddlebarger’s “accommodation” evaluation reflects the hermeneutical perspective being brought to bear upon the text of the Old Testament. “The Old Testament prophets and writers spoke of the glories of the coming messianic age in terms of their own pre-messianic age.”²⁸ Thus, they speak of Israel, the temple, and the Davidic throne, but these, then, are re-interpreted by the New Testament showing that the Old Testament realities were but shadows and types of “the glorious realities that are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.”²⁹

Actually, the re-interpretation of the Old Testament takes place because the New Testament is taken as the final arbiter of the Old. This means that the interpreter must interpret all Old Testament prophecies as does the New Testament. All should be put in a redemptive-historical context if it is to be handled properly.³⁰ The major difficulty is that only a few prophecies are supposedly specifically re-interpreted in the NT. Is the exegete now left to figure out just how the historical, geographical, and national information of all the other prophecies are to be “new-testamentized?” to coin a word, or “transcendentalized” which is another word used to describe this procedure.³¹

Dissimilarity between the second coming accounts and the 1 Thessalonians rapture passage (4:13-18) should benoted.. Surface similarities are not sufficient reason to declare passages parallel and treating the same subject-matter.

Robert Thomas correctly cautions that no matter how the NT used the OT passage, it should still be carefully studied in its own context in accord with normal historical-grammatical rules. Two to ten types of the use of the OT by the NT can be categorized, namely literal and

Kim Riddlebarger, *A Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 37.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 38.

³¹ Craig Blaising, “A Premillennial Response to Robert B. Strimple,” 144.

non-literal, with the latter being appropriately labeled, “inspired *sensus plenior*”³² or the ten ways described by Roy Zuck;³³ and indicating that there is clearly no discernible pattern which can be applied uniformly as the method to adopt in interpretation.

Obviously, this matter of NT re-interpretation is most significant for amillennialist hermeneutics—it’s a quick application of *analogia fidei*. Robert Thomas warns that the abuses of “the analogy of faith” have been quite numerous in all phases of biblical interpretation, but especially in eschatological passages.³⁴ This principle of interpretation should be employed only as the final double check on completing the exegesis of a passage.³⁵ “Is there any reason why the meaning of the text reached by objective exegetical principles cannot be accepted?” is the right question to ask.³⁶

Hoekema does accept that two events which seem close together in a prophecy are actually separated by thousands of years.” This *prophetic perspective* he notes,³⁷ occurs frequently in the OT prophets. This *apotelesmatic perspective* appropriately indicated that OT prophecy often lacked the dimension of time.³⁸ Therefore, time gaps in the record are discernible, and, it might be added, even postponements of God’s program, for whatever reason He had to permit it to occur.

In one test case of interpreting a portion of the Apocalypse, it was noted as being a “historical-grammatical, yet non-literal interpretation.”³⁹ Apocalyptic literature, supposedly,

³² Robert L. Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics*, 242.

³³ Roy Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation*, 260-70, as cited by Charles H. Dyer, “Biblical Meaning of ‘Fulfillment,’” in *Issues in Dispensationalism*, edited by Wesley Willis and John R. Masters (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 61.

³⁴ Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics*, 65.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 75, who indicates that this principle should be relegated either to the very end of the process, or preferably outside the process where it would act as this double check.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*, 9, 12, 148-49.

³⁸ Alva J. McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1974) 136.

³⁹ White, “On the Hermeneutics,” 54.

needs a hermeneutic in which epic ideology and themes can be brought to bear on the text before it can be properly understood in its context of the world of the writer..⁴⁰ Applying this to the text brings forth the attention-grabbing conclusion that “Satan was not captured and imprisoned in history [emphasis added].”⁴¹ That sounds very much like an outright denial of the text, and must be placed under guard, so to speak. Another writer differs from his amillennial colleagues by accepting that it makes good sense for the millennium to be inaugurated at the Second Coming. Then the reality of the Parousia wrapping up all things overrode so that in the end, he has a “visionary mosaic of events” all happening right then and there.⁴²

Historical roots and hermeneutical paradigm may be set aside, although not forgotten, as attention is turned to the problem of the outcome of amillennial thinking and interpreting.

A Singular Consummation

A re-occurring emphasis surfaced, namely, that when Christ returns this present age will come to an abrupt end. That’s it! History is over! Eternity begins! “The most significant event yet ahead in redemptive history is the second advent of Jesus Christ.”⁴³ Paul informed Titus (2:12-15) about only one climactic future event, the return of Christ, the blessed hope, for which believers look and by which they are enabled to live godly lives.⁴⁴

“The event of Christ’s return, then, is the great centerpiece of biblical expectation for the future. All lines of history converge in the event of Christ’s triumphant return from heaven to conclude his mediatorial reign (1 Cor. 15:28) and demonstrate his kingly rule over all the things for the sake of the church.”⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Ibid., who proposes this use of battles with monsters, since he assumes that John was aware of the cosmogonic myths from Canaan.

⁴¹ Ibid., 62-3.

⁴² Dave Matthewson, “A Re-Examination of the Millennium in Rev 20:1-6: Consummation and Recapitulation,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44/2 (2001): 237.

⁴³ Riddlebarger, *A Case*, 130.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Venema, *The Promise*, 87. See Hoekema, *The Bible*, 31, directs attention towards the goal of history, i.e. the new heavens and the new earth. Christ has ushered in the new age, the final consummation is still to come.

Several arguments are put forward to support the conclusion of one concluding event:

[1] the Second Coming of Christ in bringing history to a close,⁴⁶ inaugurates God's eternal kingdom and the full redemption of all his people -- Matt.24:33; Luke 21:27-28, 31, and 2 Pet 3:3-13; Rom 8:17-25; 1 Cor 15:22-28,

[2] the Second Advent will be immediately and simultaneously a general judgment of all, with very different consequences for the just and the unjust -- 2 Thess 1:6-10,

[3] the Return terminates the believers' hope for the future and is that which is linked to the believers' rewards – 1 Cor 1:7-8 and Phil 1:6, 10, and

[4] the Second Coming brings in for all believers an everlasting communion with the Lord -- 1 Thess 4:13-18.⁴⁷

What Paul did not say in Titus 2, could probably stand as additional evidence for treating Christ's return as just such a singular consummating event, as the final chapter in the drama of redemption. It was noted that Paul

[1] did not point to a golden age when the gospel had progressed enough so that ungodliness had ceased, [2] did not advise that the Second Coming would entail two distinct events, Christ's appearance and then only after His reign the final judgment, and [3] did not inform of a secret rapture rescuing some from the divine wrath poured out on the earth.⁴⁸ In short,

when believers today expectantly look to the future, anticipating the return of Christ, they should do so as those who are convinced this will mark the end of the present period of history and inaugurate the final state. All that believers hope for in respect to the future finds its focus in this consummating event, an event that will fulfil [sic] all the promises of God that have their 'yes' and 'amen' in Christ.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Cox, *Amillennialism*, 93, who adds that although men divide time into periods divided by the birth of Christ, the NT knows of but two ages, namely, the present age and the age to come.

⁴⁷ Venema, *the Promise*, 87-94 who proposes these in terms of five arguments.

⁴⁸ Riddlebarger, *The Case*, 130.

⁴⁹ Venema, *The Promise*, 95.

These words suggest that anticipating His Return without the eternal state coming online immediately is to have the focus of one's hope brought into question or some how lessened. It appears, then, that any idea of a complex of events accompanying His Return is somehow harmful to the believer's hope. Why so?

That the Christ will come again in power and glory, and that He will be ultimately glorified and that all will indeed laud Him as Lord is readily acknowledged, the biblical testimony being too clear to gainsay. That this second advent is just one grand finale, one single consummative event is another matter altogether. Is it a climactic end or a complex end? It's no small disagreement, as Venema's enquiry confirms: "Why do some Christians maintain that the return of Christ is not the consummating event at the end of the age?"⁵⁰ The question boomerangs back: "Why do some Christians maintain that the return of Christ could not possibly involve more than an abrupt end?" This may very well prove to be the lasting question, calling for an answer after all else has been said and done.⁵¹

Amillennialism wishes to have Christ Jesus honored because He will be the central figure altogether at His return. Christ is not only the promised Messiah, but He is also [1] the true Israel, [2] the true Temple, and [3] the one in whom all the prophecies find their ideal fulfillment. More than these names and categories apply, because the Christ is also presented as Isaiah's Suffering Servant, who is also the Lord Himself. For Isaiah, the nation of Israel is called the Servant of God. With the birth of Christ the puzzlement caused by this double-barreled identification is solved. Unfaithful to her calling and failing to fulfill the purposes of her divine

⁵⁰ Venema, *The Promise*, 89, who points to the Apostles' Creed as though it were the authoritative pronouncement on the subject. At best the creeds should not be taken as anything more than an expression of someone's or some group's belief at some certain period of history, but definitely not the determinant of what a passage may or may not mean.

⁵¹ Part of the answer would undoubtedly be the strong influence exerted by one's discipleship heritage, accepting a certain frame of reference from conversion on.

election, the Lord brought forth His Elect One, His Servant, His True Israel, and the One in whom Israel's history is recapitulated and the divine purpose for Israel fulfilled.⁵² The identities of the suffering servant of Isaiah, the Messiah, and the national servant, Israel are merged. Is that what the prophet intended?

Believers, by virtue of being united with Christ Jesus by faith, are not only the Israel of God, but also Abraham's seed and the heirs of the promises made to Israel only. These are extended to those who are so united to Christ. More, such a union makes believers members of the house of Israel and Judah with whom the new covenant was made. How could there be, then, the entertaining of the concept of a future national Israel and a future temple and sacrifices? It is asked. Given this framework there probably couldn't be, but for one small thing: it is only possible to sustain this conclusion if the exegesis continues to undergird it.

The proposal that there are events taking place on earth after Christ's return, with Christ on the throne of David in Jerusalem, and with the Temple re-built and functioning, is not tolerable. Amillennialists rebel against such an earthly kingdom with Christ as its head. Since He had refused opportunities to head up just such a kingdom during His life on earth, advising also that His kingdom was not of this world, then a kingdom of this kind after His triumphant return could not be.⁵³ Further, since Christ could not fail at any level, His offering of the kingdom, seeing it refused and then postponed constitutes a demeaning failure for the Son of God. Furthermore, entry into the eternal state has been postponed while the material continues on, but had not the eternal age come in at Christ's return? Any association of the kingdom of God with earthbound dimensions is considered to be crass materialism and the result of

⁵² Strimple, 88. Believers are the Israel of faith and not of natural descent.

⁵³ Cox, *Amillennialism*, 67, who, in the immediately preceding sentence, had remarked, "One cannot help but see the great similarity between these teachings and the beliefs of those unbelieving Jews who put Jesus on the cross for not satisfying their material misconceptions of just such a kingdom."

hyperliteralism,⁵⁴ the bringing back into reality and practice the *beggarly elements* of the pre-Cross era, of things belonging to the Old Covenant.

A different understanding of honoring and exalting the Christ occurs, with amillennialism presenting one schema for this, and premillennialism another. For the former, Christ being honored or exalted is hard joined to that one consummative event which cuts off all history. For the latter understanding, Christ is being honored and exalted when He is seen sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem during the millennial kingdom, as the One who will come in fulfillment of all the prophecies, promises, and covenants.. He is the enthroned sovereign of Psalm 2, who rules with a rod of iron. He is the coming defender of Jerusalem, and the pierced one of Zechariah 11-12, the returning Son of Man of the Gospels, and the returning Lord Jesus Christ of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Colossians 3, 2 Peter 3, *et.al.*

Amillennialists appear to have decided that there can only be this one grand finale. Their emphasis on it curtails any understanding that if a complex of events is recorded in Scripture then those events are definitely part of God's future for this world. What the Lord God has designed to be will not interfere with nor redefine, nor alter the strength of the hope of the believer, who will be with Christ in whatever setting the Lord has determined for him to be in the ages to come. Nor does holding to more than a single climactic event somehow remove Christ from the central focus of the prophetic picture of the future, whether on earth or in the new heavens and the new earth. Herman Hoyt put it so well in his "Introduction to Biblical Eschatology" when he explained that Christ is the central personality of predictive prophecy, and that although prophecy may deal with many things, it is essentially about Christ.⁵⁵ At best,

⁵⁴ Cox, *Amillennialism*, 67.

⁵⁵ Herman Hoyt, "Biblical Eschatology," unpublished course syllabus, Grace Theological Seminary, n.d., iv., in which, based upon predictive prophecy, he outlined Christ as the "Living One" (Rev 1:12-18), the "Lion over

amillennialism can be said to have a focus that blurs the background. The emphasis on the triumphant returning Christ is so strong—and that focus is certainly not being questioned nor rejected—that it overlooks, lost in the blur, the details of what is yet to be and which certainly contributes to an actual worldwide honoring of the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the One to whom the scepter belongs. Why should there not be an age in which He reigns?

Generally, premillennialism proposes that Christ in His return sets up His kingdom, victoriously confronts the Antichrist, causes the resurrection and translation of the saints, takes up the throne of David in Jerusalem, judges the church-age saints at the Bema seat, rules over the nations, is worshipped by Israel and the Gentile nations, . This is a far cry, it is submitted, from evaluating this period after His return as being merely another stage in history as if the millennial kingdom was on the same level as all the ages before it. More, it really is a misunderstanding of the full scope of the Kingdom of God.

Once only one event has been allowed for and set in place, then it follows that any thought of activity on earth taking place after such a dramatic consummation has occurred is questionable. Questionable because it is assumed that post-consummation earth-bound activity and reign would constitute a dishonoring of the person of Christ. Only the spiritual realm applies after consummation, not the material.

The millennial kingdom on earth is a very different period of time in comparison to the ages which have gone before it. This kingdom, which will be basically spiritual, will also have ethical, social, political, and ecclesiastical effects.⁵⁶ The greatness of this final period of earth's history is thoroughly spelled out by McClain. It will be only time since the beginning that [1]

the Nations” (Rev 4:20), the “Lord of the Churches” (Rev 2-3), and the “Lamb of God among the Redeemed” (Rev 21-22).

⁵⁶ McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, 218-253.

Jesus Christ will actually be on the throne of His father David, [2] the nation of Israel will be regenerated and restored to her divinely deeded Land, [3] the Gentile nations will be right with God and consequently right with Israel—anti-Semitism will be an unknown phenomenon—and will go up to Jerusalem to worship the Christ, [4] immortal saints, in their resurrected and glorified state, will reign with Christ on the earth, [5] the total absence of Satan from national affairs on earth, and [6] the animal kingdom will display a remarkable restraining of their post-fall predatory instincts, [7] all the prophecies and promises and covenants will come to final and total fulfillment, and [8] a knowledge of the Lord is extensive, like the waters cover the sea, [9] and .surprisingly, but not so surprising after all , evil is seen to be present in that Kingdom. The golden age will dawn because to set God’s ultimate triumph and bringing to fulfillment what He has planned for His Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords only in eternity means that He is defeated in time. This will entail His plans for the Body of Christ, and the nation of Israel, and the Gentile nations. That argument is lost on the amillennialist because he thinks in terms of the spiritual and eternal and has carved out of his vision, as it were, the victory and fulfillment in history. Must there be such a “fulfillment jump” from time out into the eternal state?

Selected Enquiries and Challenges

Riddlebarger’s examination of certain important passages crucial in determining one’s millennial views represents what is being said and asked of the premillennialist.⁵⁷ It must be noted that much seems to be motivated by a reaction to premillennialism—is it the one setting the agenda for the other? These are as follows:

⁵⁷ Riddlebarger, *A Case*, chapters 12-14 which comprise Part 3, “Exposition of the Critical Texts,” but note also that he had first established in Part 2, “Biblical and Theological Concerns,” a framework for interpreting millennial passages.

[1] Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks (9:24-27) – takes umbrage at the finding of a gap before the seventieth week, at the confusing of the Christ with the Antichrist in this passage, and at failing to see Christ's active and passive obedience prophetically presented therein as well.

[2] Christ's Olivet Discourse as recorded in the synoptic Gospels (Matt 24; Mk 13, and Luke 21) – takes the disciples into the near and distant future, their questions which sparked the discourse containing both historical and eschatological elements.

[3] Paul's answer to the question of Israel's future (Rom 9-11) -- takes the nation's future as having no connection to a millennium but to the end of the age and the resurrection.

[4] John's specific mention of a thousand years and related events (Rev 20) – takes the relationship with the previous chapter to be after the pattern of recapitulation discerned in this literature of apocalyptic genre. Why must it be considered apocalyptic instead of prophecy? Will the new category of genre permit a flexible interpretative approach?

Marching line by line through the exposition given for these passages would only serve to repeat the responses already given by premillennial scholars and commentators.⁵⁸

Re Daniel 9

Reference may be made to Kenneth Barker's concise presentation of evidence from Daniel for premillennialism.⁵⁹ By considering Daniel 2 and 7 as part of the preceding context, the reality in the future of a fifth kingdom with both earthly and heavenly provenance was substantiated (2:35, 44; 7:15-28). Daniel's future kingdom begins on earth and continues into the eternal state, being, therefore, the one which will never be destroyed.⁶⁰ The Israel of the

⁵⁸ Some concern should be voiced about the impression left by Riddlebarger that no real answers have been given. Perhaps even leaving behind the suggestion that premillennialism is still in a state of flux.⁵⁸

⁵⁹ Kenneth Barker, "Evidence from Daniel," 135-46, in which he deals also with Daniel 2 and 7.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 146.

future will find itself with a temple, as indicated by the anointing of the Holy of Holies (9:24), which is the normal understanding of this phrase used in the OT. The prophecy with its six goal deals with Daniel's people, the earthly nation of Israel, and with his holy city Jerusalem.

Further, in the immediate context, the prayer of the prophet (1 9:3-19) links his prophecy (9:24-27) with that of Jeremiah 30-33. Those familiar with the message of Jeremiah would recall not only the New Covenant and its promises but also the graphic depictions of the permanency of that covenant (31:35-36; 33:19-25) even as God assures the nation through the prophet the victory of Babylon, and the reversal of that captivity (30:1-3;33:12-18). The *after* and *then* do indicate that their events are subsequent to the sixty nine weeks.

Re the Olivet Discourse

The words of Jesus in answer to the significant question of the disciples on the sign of His coming and of the end of the age, has occasioned much debate. Israel's obduracy is uncovered by Matthew's Gospel as is God's faithfulness to His Word which promised Israel being there in the regeneration (19:28, cf. 23:39).⁶¹ The promise of God restoring Israel was well known from the OT. Regardless of whether verses 4-14 apply to the present age or not,⁶² the verses following are futuristic, as indicated by the temporal marker "and then the end will come." The use of "gospel preached to all nations" [Matt 24:14] and "this generation" [Matt 24:34] taken in context are fully understandable, with other phrases and temporal indicators adding to the specificity of His pronouncement. "In all the world" and "to all the nations" [v. 14] remove all doubt on the unrestricted nature of the spread of the gospel, which by the time Matthew's Gospel was written had not spread that far beyond the borders of the Roman Empire.

⁶¹ David K. Lowery, "Evidence from Matthew," 180.

⁶² David Turner, "The Structure and Sequence of Matthew 24:1-14: Interaction with Evangelical Treatments," *Grace Theological Journal* 10/1 (1989) 5.

It belongs to the time of the abomination of desolation, the great tribulation unlike anything beforehand in history, and then the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (24:30). All the activity of Matthew 24:15-29 occur before the sign of His coming.

The parable of the fig tree (vv. 32-35) underscores the reality of the signs of the times indicating that the End is ready to come in. “This generation” is that of the period of time about which the listeners are being informed, and whose nearness should ever be before them. Other uses of “this generation” may very well indicate Jesus’ contemporaries, but that does not compel it to be so interpreted in the Olivet Discourse? An illegitimate swift use of *analogia fidei* overrides the difference in context as having no import. The generation of that time, the end times, the time leading up to Messiah’s second advent, will see “all these things” (vv.33-34) which are unquestionably future, eschatological signs. Thomas Ice succinctly asked: “Therefore, if Matthew 24 is talking about a future time, then the timing of the phrase “this generation” is related to whatever time frame Christ is speaking of, right? Right!

The judgment scene in Matthew 25:31-32 occurs upon the coming of the Son of Man, which seems to be describing the events of 24:30 after the tribulation. Thus it is not a parallel identifiable with the judgment throne setting of Revelation 20, which is at the end of the thousands years. The dissimilarity has to be noted and taken seriously into account.

Dumping the specificity of this account into a non-literal hermeneutical basket appears to be an attempt to make it fit some other scenario of the end.

Re Romans 9-11

The future of Israel, already set in OT prophecies, making it undeniable, receives a boost from the words of Paul, who well underscores and highlights the sure future of Israel under the aegis of the sovereign Lord God.⁶³ Refer here to the presentation made by Robert Dean at this conference of his paper, “The Future of Israel in Romans 9-11.” The place of Israel in the plan of God for the ages stands as the dividing element. Most of the papers being presented are directing attention to this nation, whom God sovereignly chose out from among the nations. Israel’s place in the Promised Land during final years of world history because of divinely inspired prophecy goes with the inviolability of God’s Word. If Israel is not there, then what affect does it have on the veracity of the Lord’s Word?

Re Revelation 20

Reference should be made in response to the very different amillennial interpretation of Revelation 20 put forward by non-premillennial writers to the concise but most instructive presentation of evidence for a premillennialism by Harold Hoehner,⁶⁴ who argues for progression, i.e. chapter 20 following on from chapter 19. “And I saw” (v. 1) and “any longer” or “no more” (v. 3) point to sequence, as does the flow of chapters 12-20. Plus, the impossibility of placing the binding of Satan in the present age beginning with the first coming of Christ.⁶⁵ The incarceration of Satan so that he could not function at all—he will be in total seclusion and exclusion—cannot be correlated with the expansive nature of his activity mentioned in the NT record nor squared with the warnings about his schemes, methods and his

⁶³ S. Lewis Johnson, “Evidence from Romans 9-11,” 219, for his conclusion to the chapter, in which he makes the point: “Israel still has ‘favored nation’ status; it is ‘their own olive tree’ (v. 24).”

⁶⁴ Harold W. Hoehner, “Evidence from Revelation 20,” 235-62.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 248-50.

hostility against believers. His binding takes place only in the future!⁶⁶ Not deceiving the nations any longer does not equate with him now being prevented only from hindering the evangelization of the world. The dissimilarity between the two records is obvious.

John's Apocalypse is categorized as apocalyptic literature, which means that assigning any degree of literality to the vocabulary in this chapter is to deny the genre and to take the symbols in a way John did not intend them to be taken.⁶⁷ Interpreting a book of this nature in chronological sequence is not the correct approach to take, it is concluded.. Sequential treatment for narrative is fine, but not for apocalyptic literature, whose repetitive or parallel format rules out consecutive events or scenes. So, chapters 19-20 are synchronous not consecutive.

Premillennialism has a kingdom in the future; which kingdom is the consummation of history prior to the inauguration of the eternal state. Amillennialists can only look forward to The Consummation because the millennium is already present, whereas the premillennialist looks for coming and kingdom—although this will depend upon when he lives.

Five questions are posed, all of which point to what would be a regression and not progression such as would be expected of a time after Christ's return. These questions all arise from an amillennial standpoint and reveal that which is difficult for an amillennialist to accept:

[1] Why was the millennium characterized by a return to types and shadows?

[2] If Jesus is the true temple, why would the temple be rebuilt during the millennium?

⁶⁶ Cox, *Amillennialism Today*, 139, who seriously remarked that Satan is presently bound with a long chain allowing much freedom of movement. Since the Gospels speak of the binding of the strong man and the defeat of Satan, then the Apocalypse passage must be describing the time of the Gospel accounts [Matt 12:29; Luke 10:17-18 cf. Rev 12:9]. Ignoring the stark difference between the Gospels and Revelation 20 means that the explanations given become a denial of what John clearly did say. The accusation really cannot be lightened and be made less severe. In regards to the binding of Satan, Berkouwer, *The Return of Christ*, 305, well remarked: "Those who interpret the millennium as already realized in the history of the church try to locate this binding in history. Naturally, such an effort is forced to relativize the dimensions of this binding, for it is impossible to find evidence for a radical elimination of Satan's power in that "realized millennium." So the notion of brakes on the devil's power—limitations of it—substituted for the more radical image of "binding.""

⁶⁷ Riddlebarger, *A Case*, 199-200, where the four levels of communication are identified as "linguistic," "visionary," "referential," and "symbolic," and where note is made that dispensationalists deny the symbolic level of communication, end up with a wrong interpretation.

[3] Why would animals be sacrificed during the millennial age, when Christ's death upon the cross did away with them?

[4] How can there be people on earth in un-resurrected bodies after Christ comes back and raises the dead?

[5] Why are those who claim to take prophetic passages literally forced to insert gaps in Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks and in Jesus' teaching about judgment occurring at his second coming?

Two more questions, deduced from statements made, may be added to this list:

[6] How could there be evil in the millennial kingdom of the risen Christ?

[7] If the NT knows only of two ages, the present and the eternal state, and if the present is called the last days which ends with the resurrection, then where does the Kingdom fit it? The assertion here is that there is no convincing *purpose* for such a period of time. Once the church-age has ended and Christ has returned, then what is the reason for delaying the start of the eternal state?

Re return types and millennial sacrifices:

John Whitcomb answered the question of sacrifices in the millennium.⁶⁸ Amillennialists appear to have missed the many details in the OT prophets on the temple in the future for Israel, given, for example, by Joel, Micah, Daniel, Haggai, and Ezekiel, who devoted nine chapters to it.

Zechariah foresaw the Gentile nations coming to the Feast of Tabernacles. The Lord would not

⁶⁸ John C. Whitcomb, "Christ's Atonement and Animal Sacrifices in Israel," *Grace Theological Journal* 6/2 (1985) 208. Whitcomb's three questions are instructive on handling a theologically problematic subject." What was the true function of animal sacrifices in the Old Covenant? What is the significance of the fundamental differences between Ezekiel's picture of the New covenant system of worship and the Old Covenant system of worship? Would a worship system involving animal sacrifices necessarily represent a great step backward for New Covenant Israel during the Kingdom Age?" See also John S. Feinberg, "Salvation in the Old Testament," in *Tradition and Testament: Essays in Honor of Charles Lee Feinberg*, edited by John S. and Paul D. Feinberg (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981) 59-75 for an extensive discussion of animal sacrifices and their soteriological significance.

institute a system for the future on earth which would be a regression to the Old Covenant. In other words, “millennial animal sacrifices will be used in a God-honoring way [e.g. Ps 51:15-19; Heb 11:4) by a regenerated, chosen nation before the inauguration of the eternal state” and they would have a function within the theocracy.⁶⁹

Clear text compared with clear texts is a mature response rather than a quick rush to judgment that Christ’s sacrifice is being dishonored. Dispensationalists have wrongly been put on the defensive regarding this passage. Non-dispensationalists have as much difficulty harmonizing this passage with their theological schemes, for if they reject a literal interpretation of these chapters, they are unable to offer any real exegesis of the texts. So, the New Covenant sacrifices will not be obtaining eternal salvation, but these sacrifices brought by the contrite individual worshipper will show genuine repentance for sin, as well as love and dedication to God.. Thus, a New Covenant base to the sacrifices exists, and not a revived Old Covenant system.

Re unresurrected bodies

The redeemed who have endured to the end of the Tribulation will enter the kingdom as mortal human beings. Locked into a concept of general resurrection and general judgment means that amillennialism cannot conceive of an end to the present age without these end point events.

Re evil in the millennial kingdom

The rebellion against God at the end of the millennium (Rev 20:7-10) arises from those born during this period but who are unregenerate. Only the redeemed on earth at the revelation

⁶⁹Ibid., 217.

of Christ will enter the kingdom, that's the answer to the questions on the spiritual nature and values of the coming kingdom. They are redeemed but mortal and their offspring will be sinners until redeemed. People will live normal lives within a highly different world than had been known beforehand.⁷⁰ Obviously, some of those faithful to the Messiah survive and enter millennium (11:13; 1:13-17). Nations will develop quickly in the good material environment of those years. Indeed, nations will go to Jerusalem to worship God (Isa 2).

The wicked do not enter the kingdom at its beginning as indicated by [1] the rebels rooted out beforehand --Ezek20:37-38, [2] the sheep only told to enter – Matt 25:34, and [3] the saved alone enter—Isa 56, 60, 61; Jer 3, 16, 31; Amos 9; Zech 13.

Re gaps in prophetic passages

No premillennial interpreter feels coerced into having or not having gaps in certain texts. The gaps are there because they are there, and at that because a careful study to understand the text confirms that to be so. In Daniel 9, for example, identifying the *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem* of the prophecy and comparing it with Jesus' words in Matthew 24, is crucial in pulling all the data together. Note, "if the seventy weeks were intended to progress sequentially without interruption, why does Jesus place this intervening period before the fulfillment of the events of the seventieth week?"⁷¹ Further, 1Corinthians 15:23-28 does provide for gaps in the resurrection and kingdom timetables.⁷²

A Final Syllogism

⁷⁰ cf. Isa 65:20-22—sickness and death, houses built and vineyards planted,.

⁷¹ J. Randall Price, "Prophetic Postponement in Daniel 9 and Other Texts," in *Issues in Dispensationalism*, edited by Wesley R. Willis and John R. Masters (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994) 145.

⁷² Eddmod Hiebert, "Evidence fro, 1 Cor 151,

- A. IF logically (from an understanding of the progression of revelation and a complete philosophy of history),

And theologically (from a confidence in God's faithfulness to be literally fulfilling His promises),

And historically (from a survey of the early church fathers),
and hermeneutically (from a consistent comprehension of language in its normal usage)
premillennialism is the best millennial view...

[AND]

- B. IF the New Testament does not provide a consistent pattern for interpreting the Old Testament, nor does it command believers today to understand the Old Testament in a spiritual sense...
- C. THEN there must be other, outside influences which lead intelligent Bible scholars to reject premillennialism in favor of a different (in this case amillennial) persuasion.⁷³

Should premillennialists always be on the defensive, with the agenda for further refinement in the exegesis of various passages to be sparked by amillennialis? Probably a fact of theological life. The strength of premillennialism, however, is its willingness to keep examining the text and not be slavishly tied to the past through creedal or hermeneutical lineage. At the same time, one definitely should not dispense with the hard work done by committed, biblical scholars.

The biblical data is undoubtedly extensive on all that concerns the future of the Church, Israel, and the Kingdom and how they fit together. That kingdom, though, which was proclaimed near at hand at Christ first coming is then proclaimed as near at hand when the Son of Man comes again. The postponement (Luke 19:11-26) was not a failure but a means to show the magnificence of God's grace; first to raise up a body of believers for the Body, the Church, and then to activate the regeneration and restoration program for Israel to the glory of the Lord God.

⁷³ Nathan A. Busenitz, "The Presuppositions of Amillennialism" unpublished paper for the Seminar in Eschatology, The Master's Seminary, 2002, 9.

His will be done on earth as it is in heaven!

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Berkhof, Hendrikus. *Christ The Meaning of History*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1966.
- Berkouwer, G.C. *The Return of Christ*. In *Studies in Dogmatics*. Translated by James Van Oosterom. Edited by Marlin J. Van Elderen. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972.
- Blaising, Craig A., and Darrell L. Bock, eds. *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: The Search for Definition*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992..
- _____. "Premillennialism." In *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond*. In Counterpoints. Darrell L. Bock, General Editor. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999.
- Bock, Darrell L. "The Kingdom of God in New Testament Theology." In *Looking Into the Future: Evangelical Studies in Eschatology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.
- Borland, James A. "The Meaning and Identification of God's Eschatological Trumpets." In *Looking Into the Future: Evangelical Studies in Eschatology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.
- Busenitz, Nathan. "The Presuppositions of Amillennialism." Unpublished Seminar in Eschatology paper, The Master's Seminary,
- Caird G.B. *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1980.
- Campbell, Donald K. and Jeffrey L. Townsend. eds. *A Case for Premillennialism: A New Consensus*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1992.
- Cox, William E. *Amillennialism Today*. Philadelphia, Pa. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1972.
- Daley, Brian E. *The Hope of the Early Church :A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Dumbrell, William J. *The End of the Beginning: Revelation 21-22 and the Old Testament*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.
- _____. *The Search for Order: Biblical Eschatology in Focus*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994...
- Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*. Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1996.
- Grenz, Stanley. *The Millennial Maze: Sorting Out Evangelical Options*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992.
- Hoekema, Anthony A. *The Bible and the Future*. Reprint Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991.
- Klaassen, Walter. *Living at the End of the Ages*. Lanham: University of America Press, 1992.
- LaHaye, Tim, and Thomas Ice. *The End Times Controversy: The Second Coming Under Attack*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2003.
- Marshall, I. Howard. *Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.
- Masselink, William. *Why Thousand Years?* Grand Rapids: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1930.

- Matthewson, Dave. "A Re-Examination of the Millennium in Rev 20:1-6: Consummation and Recapitulation." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44/2 (June 2001): 237.
- McClain, Alva J. *The Greatness of the Kingdom*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1974.
- Price, J. Randall. "Prophetic Postponement in Daniel 9 and Other Texts," in *Issues in Dispensationalism*, edited by Wesley Willis and John Martin (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994),
- Riddlebarger, Kim. *A Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003.
- Ryrie, Charles Caldwell. *Dispensationalism Today*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1965..
- Saucy, Robert. *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993.
- _____. "The Crucial Issue Between Dispensational and Non-Dispensational Systems." *Criswell Theological Review* 1/1 (1986): 149-66.
- Showers, Renald E. *There Really is a Difference: A Comparison of Covenant and Dispensational Theology*. Bellmawr, NJ: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc., 1990..
- Strimple, Robert B. "Amillennialism." In *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond*. In Counterpoints. Darrell L. Block, General Editor. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.
- Thomas, Robert L. "The Place of Imminence in Recent Eschatological Systems." In *Looking into the Future: Evangelical Studies in Eschatology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.
- Toon, Peter. ed. *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel: Puritan Eschatology 1600-1660*. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1970.
- Turner, David I. "The Continuity of Scripture and Eschatology: Key Hermeneutical Issues." *Grace Theological Journal* 6/2 (1985): 275-87.
- _____. "The Structure and Sequence of Matthew 24:1-41: Interaction with Evangelical Treatments." *Grace Theological Journal*. 10/1 (1989):3-27.
- Venema, Cornelis P. *The Promise of the Future*. Edinburgh, Scotland: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2000.
- Vos, Geerhardus. *The Pauline Eschatology*. Published by author, 1930.
- Vriezen, Th.C. *An Outline of Old Testament Theology*. 2nd edition, revised and enlarged. Newton, Mass.: Charles T. Branford Company, 1970.
- Wainwright, Arthur W. *Mysterious Apocalypse: Interpreting the Book of Revelation*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993.
- Waymeyer, Matthew. *Revelation 20 and the Millennial Debate*. The Woodlands, TX: Kress Christian Publications, 2004.
- White, R. Fowler. "On the Hermeneutics and Interpretation of Revelation 20:1-3: A Preconsummationist Perspective." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 42/1 (1999): 53-66.
- Whitcomb, John C. "Christ's Atonement and Animal Sacrifices in Israel." *Grace Theological Journal* 6/2 (1985):201-217.