



WORLDVIEW MADE PRACTICAL
Volume 21 Number 25
July 1, 2026

Five Millennial Views of Revelation
Part 3 - Postmillennialism

By Freddy Davis

Introduction

Just because of the nature of the type of literature, the book of Revelation is one of the most difficult books of the Bible to interpret. In fact, over the centuries, different people have interpreted it in quite different ways. And because very few know much about the book, it remains rather confusing for most people. To top it off, it is also not uncommon for individuals to hear teachings of more than one approach, and, not knowing how to distinguish between them, end up having a very mixed up understanding.

This article is part three of a five part series designed to give an explanation of the five major millennial views – Historic Premillennialism (<https://www.marketfaith.org/2026/05/five-millennial-views-of-revelation-historic-premillennialism/>), Dispensational Premillennialism (<http://www.marketfaith.org/2026/05/five-millennial-views-of-revelation-dispensational-premillennialism/>), Postmillennialism, Amillennialism, and Preterism. It is our hope that this explanation will help you become able to clearly distinguish between the various views.

Definition and Explanation

Postmillennialism gets its name from the belief that a millennial period will occur, and following that Christ will return. With Christ's return, He will judge the wicked, then immediately usher the Church into its eternal state. However, it also interprets the millennial period as symbolic rather than as an actual

one thousand years. The Millennium, in this system, consists of the current Church Age humanity is now living in.

Postmillennialism is an extremely optimistic point of view that views the gospel message to be so powerful, that it will eventually take over the entire world. It is actually ridiculed in some circles as not a serious theological approach. However, it should be kept in mind that it actually does base its arguments on Scripture, and is logically plausible if its underlying theological system is true. This should not be considered an endorsement of this viewpoint, but the truth is, every eschatological point of view is a composite construct based on an underlying set of theological presuppositions. While only one point of view can possibly be true, people need to recognize the presuppositions they are using to support the viewpoint they prefer, and not simply dismiss other ones out of hand.

That said, while this point of view was historically rather popular among certain American Protestants, particularly among some Reformed or Calvinist traditions back in the mid 1800s, there are actually very few theologians in modern day evangelical circles who see Postmillennialism to be a viable choice. Due to the increasing popularity of Premillennialism, the increasing number and brutality of world wars, and the increasingly implausible concept of the gospel organically Christianizing the world, Postmillennialism has mostly died out as a major eschatological belief.

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The Place of Revelation in Post-millennialism?

Postmillennialists generally do not read Revelation as a literal chronological roadmap of end-time events. Rather, they view it as a symbolic depiction of the struggle between Christ's kingdom and the forces of evil throughout history. It is typically interpreted based on a Preterist or Idealist viewpoint (not to be confused with Preterism). Preterist Postmillennialists view many of the prophecies (particularly in Revelation 6 - 19) to have been fulfilled in the first century. Idealist Postmillennialists consider that the visions represent timeless truths about God's triumph over evil that have been repeated throughout history.

Underlying Philosophy of Post-millennialism

Postmillennialism interprets the Bible using a covenant-historical methodology. To Postmillennialists, the Church is considered to be the fulfillment of Israel's covenant with God. In the Old Testament, God promised Abraham that he would become "a great nation" and that "all peoples on earth would be blessed" through him (Genesis 12:2-3). This, then, plays out in history as the millennial kingdom fulfilling this covenant promise.

Postmillennialists typically see a continuity between God's promises to Israel and their fulfillment in the Church. That is, in the new covenant, they see the Church as the new Israel. Thus, they reason that the Old Testament promises of worldwide blessing are being realized progressively through the Church Age.

As noted before, Postmillennialism does not see the Millennium as a literal thousand year golden age that occurs prior to Christ's second com-

ing. Rather, it understands it to have begun with the crucifixion of Christ, and continues forward as the gospel gradually accomplishes God's work in the world. It is considered that during this period, Christ will increasingly rule over the whole earth through an unprecedented spread of the gospel. Through this massive, irresistible revival movement, the large majority of people on earth will ultimately become Christians. Thus, the Kingdom of God is not seen as a literal reign of Christ on a physical throne in the physical world, but symbolically represents a spiritual process expressed on earth through the Christianizing affect of the gospel over time.

Postmillennialism Storyline

The postmillennial story begins as God the Son enters history as Jesus the Messiah. In His incarnation, He lives a perfect life that qualifies Him to serve as the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Thus, through His death and resurrection, He defeats sin, death, and Satan to become the Savior of mankind. Following His resurrection, He ascends to heaven and is enthroned at the right hand of the Father. From that position, He rules over all things. (Ps. 110:1; Acts 2:33-36)

That point in history serves as the beginning of the Millennium. In postmillennial theology, the Millennium is not a literal one thousand years, but is understood as an indeterminate period of time during which the Kingdom of God advances through the spread of the gospel (Matthew 13:31-33). During that time, the Church is commissioned to go into the world and spread the gospel message (Matthew 28:18-20). Thus, empowered by the Spirit, the gospel spreads from Jerusalem outward to all nations (Matthew 28:18-20).

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321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312

E-mail:
info@marketfaith.org
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During this millennial period, Satan is bound from deceiving the nations (Matthew 12:29; Revelation 20:1-3). This does not mean he is inactive, but is constrained in a way that doesn't allow him to stop the spread of the gospel. Thus, over time, more people throughout the world are discipled and cultures are reformed. Based on the truth expressed in the Bible, justice, peace, and material flourishing slowly begin to dominate world societies until the whole earth is filled with the knowledge of God (Habakkuk 2:14). Many also believe a mass Jewish conversion will be a part of this growth (Romans 11:25-26).

Near the end of a golden era that emerges because of the gospel's dominance throughout the world (Isaiah 2:2-4; Habakkuk 2:14), Satan is released for a short season and foments a final rebellion against Christ and His people (Revelation 20:7-9). However, God intervenes decisively and crushes the rebellion by sending fire from heaven to destroy his enemies (Revelation 20:9).

Following Satan's defeat, Christ returns to earth visibly and bodily. With His return, the dead are raised (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15) and God initiates the final judgment (Matthew 25:31-32; Revelation 20:11-15). Those who are judged unrighteous

are cast into hell and out of the presence of God (Matthew 25:30, 41, 46; Revelation 20:14-15).

With that, the new heavens and new earth are revealed in their fullness (Revelation 21 - 22). What emerges will be an existence that is free from sin and death, and one that inaugurates Christ's reign in eternal perfection.

Postmillennialism Timeline

1. Christ ushered in the New Covenant with His death and resurrection.
2. Throughout the rest of earthly history, the gospel will increasingly dominate the world. This time frame is considered to be the Millennium.
3. Near the end of history, Satan will be "loosed" for a short time. This will result in a final uprising against Christ and His Church which God will swiftly destroy.

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4. Christ will then return visibly, bodily, and gloriously, and initiate the resurrection of all people. This will be followed by the final judgment where the righteous will enter eternity with God and the unbelieving will be cast into the Lake of Fire.
5. Following the final judgment, the new heavens and new earth will be established in their fullness.

Conclusion

We will next, in part 4, deal with Amillennialism. Once again, it is my hope that this deep dive into the various interpretive approaches to understanding the book of Revelation will be a great help in your personal understanding of Scripture and of a biblical worldview.