Riverwood Bible Church

Eschatology

Week 1 — Foundations: The Lens Determines the Landscape

A study of Biblical prophecy and God's redemptive timeline.



"We also have the word of the prophets as confirmed beyond doubt." — 2 Peter 1:19


Disclaimer

Series Title Options

1. **Towards Eternity**
   (or — Everything that happens for at least the next 1007 years from now)
2. **Don’t Panic: We’re Pre-trib**
3. **The End: The Longest Dispensation of All**

Series Title Options

4 Rapture Ready: No Packing Required

5 **Don’t Stop Thinking About Tomorrow**

If you don’t stop thinking about tomorrow, you’ll never forget today!

The times will be intense: everything will be at the maximum—the greatest advances in science, the greatest destructive power in the hands of wicked people, the greatest war of all time threatening to break out, the greatest activity in the forces of the heavens, especially in the evil spirit world. The most sensational and unexpected changes will come about. Everything will be expressed in extremes. Exaggeration will be almost impossible. And with it all will come the most marvelous and miraculous prophetic fulfillments.

ARTHUR E. BLOOMFIELD


PRAY
STUDY
WAIT
REJOICE
Have you considered just reading the text?
Please don't complicate this.
HOLY BIBLE
GOD'S REDEMPTIVE TIMELINE
A BIBLICAL VIEW OF FUTURE EVENTS
HEAVENLY EVENTS
THE CHURCH
The Body of Christ
(Ephesians 1:22-23)
A heavenly people with a heavenly hope.
BEMA SEAT
(2 Corinthians 5:10)
Believers judged for works, not for salvation
MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB
(Revelation 19:7-9)
The Church celebrates with Christ
ISRAEL
God's Earthly People
(Romans 11:25-29)
God's program for Israel resumes during the Tribulation.
NOW
FIRST 3½ YEARS
MIDPOINT
LAST 3½ YEARS
1 CHURCH AGE (Present)
Acts 2 – Revelation 3
The Church is on earth. The Gospel is preached to all nations.
2 THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH
1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
1 Corinthians 15:51-52
John 14:1-3
Believers are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. (Imminent & Signless)
3 TRIBULATION (7 YEARS)
Daniel's 70th Week
Daniel 9:27
Matthew 24
Revelation 6-18
SEALS (6)
TRUMPETS (7)
BOWLS (7)
God's program for Israel resumes. The world experiences unprecedented judgment.
ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION
(Matthew 24:15)
4 SECOND COMING OF CHRIST
Revelation 19:11-16
Zechariah 14:4
Christ returns visibly and gloriously with His saints to earth.
5 JUDGMENT OF NATIONS / ISRAEL
Matthew 25:31-46
Ezekiel 20:33-38
Christ judges the nations. Israel is regathered, cleansed, and restored.
6 MILLENNIAL KINGDOM (1,000 YEARS)
Revelation 20:1-6
Isaiah 11:1-10
Christ reigns on earth. Satan is bound. Peace and righteousness prevail.
7 FINAL REBELLION
Revelation 20:7-9
Satan is released for a short time and deceives the nations.
8 GREAT WHITE THRONE
Revelation 20:11-15
The unsaved are judged and cast into the lake of fire.
9 ETERNAL STATE
Revelation 21-22
Isaiah 65:17-25
New Heavens and New Earth. God dwells with His people forever.
KEY DISTINCTIONS
RAPTURE
The Church is removed from earth before God's wrath.
THE TRIBULATION (7 YEARS)
God's program for Israel resumes.
A time of unparalleled judgment on the world.
The Church is not appointed to wrath.
1 Thessalonians 5:9
SECOND COMING
Christ returns with His saints to earth in power and glory.
"I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA, THE BEGINNING AND THE END...."
REVELATION 22:13
BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO READS ALOUD THE WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY, AND BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HEAR, AND KEEP THE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN IT; FOR THE TIME IS NEAR. | REVELATION 1:3
Revelation
Daniel
Ezekiel
Prophetic Chronology
End Times
Systematic Theology
PROPHECY
—
Because normal Bible study just isn't complicated enough!
Things to do:
Finish chart
Compare views
Check Greek
Look for more arrows
...or just read it?
More Charts = More Clarity ...Right?
Dispensationalism
Amillennialism
Postmillennialism
Preterism
Historic Premillennialism
CONCORDANCE

GOD'S REDEMPTIVE TIMELINE

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF FUTURE EVENTS

THE CHURCH
The Body of Christ
(Ephesians 1:22-23)
A heavenly people with a heavenly hope.

HEAVENLY EVENTS

BEMA SEAT
(2 Corinthians 5:10)
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(Present)
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BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO READS ALOUD THE WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY, AND BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HEAR, AND KEEP THE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN IT; FOR THE TIME IS NEAR. REVELATION 1:3

Prophecy Is Central to Scripture

1 Corinthians 2:12 God has given His Spirit so that we may understand what He has freely given us.

"We also have the word of the prophets as confirmed beyond doubt. And you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place..."

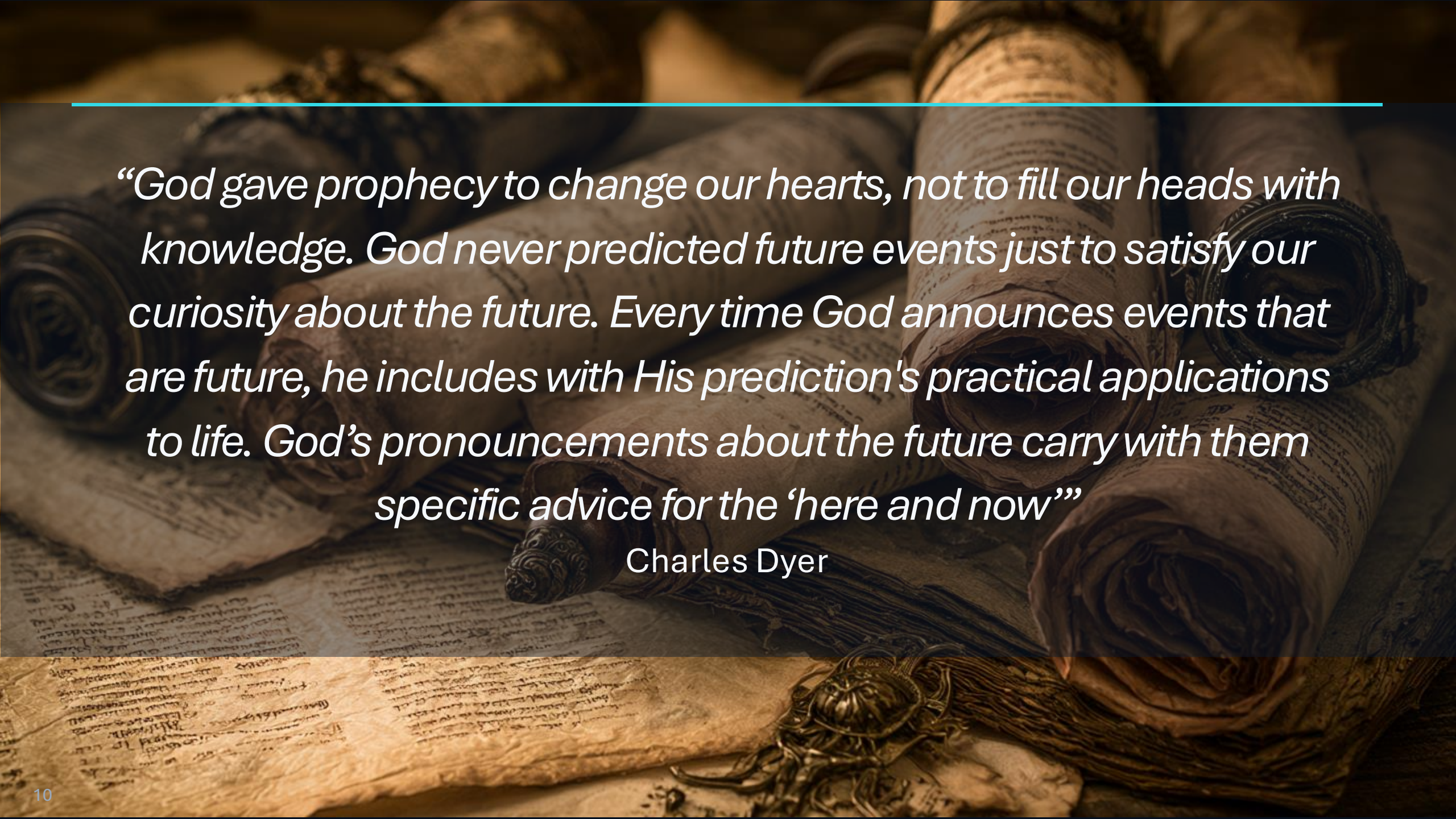
2 Peter 1:19 (BSB)

Prophecy Changes Us

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

1 John 3:2-3





“God gave prophecy to change our hearts, not to fill our heads with knowledge. God never predicted future events just to satisfy our curiosity about the future. Every time God announces events that are future, he includes with His prediction's practical applications to life. God’s pronouncements about the future carry with them specific advice for the ‘here and now’”

Charles Dyer

Prophecy is all about Christ

It begins and ends in the person and work of Jesus Christ



"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

REVELATION 1:8

HIS PURPOSE · HIS PLAN · HIS PEOPLE · HIS GLORY · FOREVER

Why Study Prophecy?

Week 1 begins by framing the Purpose of Prophecy in the Christian life.

1. Jesus Christ is the subject of prophecy



2. Prophecy is a major part of divine revelation



3. Special blessing is promised on those who study prophecy



4. Prophecy gives us a proper perspective in life



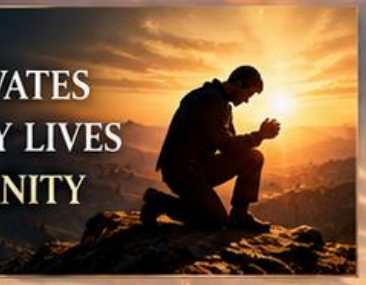
5. Prophecy helps us understand the whole Bible



6. Prophecy is a tool for evangelism



7. Prophecy motivates us to live godly lives in light of eternity



8. Prophecy reveals the sovereignty of God over time and history



9. Prophecy proves the truth of God's Word





Law of Proportion

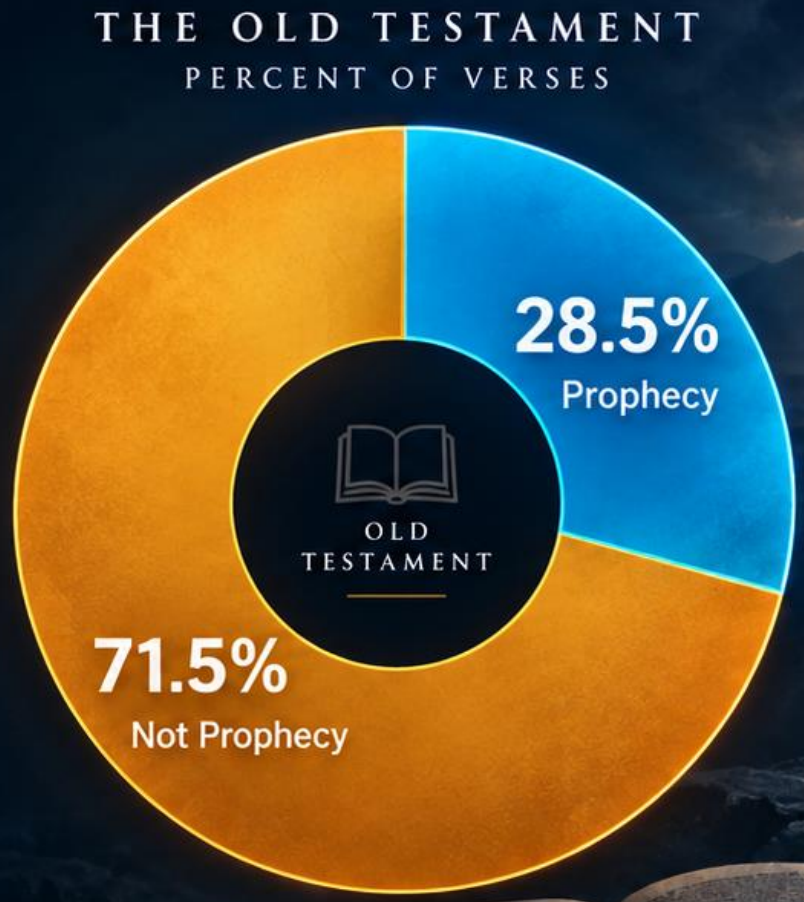
How much attention is devoted to prophecy?

Number of Verses in the Bible:
31,124

Number of Predictions in the Old Testament:
1,239

Number of Old Testament Verses that Contain Predictions:
6,641 out of 23,210

Percent of the Old Testament that is Prophecy:
28.5%



Hitchcock, Mark. The End: A Complete Overview of Bible Prophecy and the End of Days (p. 4). Tyndale House Publishers. Kindle Edition.

"Law of Proportion"

HOW MUCH ATTENTION IS DEVOTED TO PROPHECY?

"From the beginning His end is declared ..."
ISAIAH 46:10

Number of Predictions in the New Testament	578
Number of New Testament Verses that Contain Predictions 1,711 out of 7,914	1,711
Percent of the New Testament that is Prophecy	21.5%
Percent of the Whole Bible that is Prophecy	27%
Number of Separate Prophetic Topics in the Bible	737



PERCENT OF THE WHOLE BIBLE THAT IS PROPHECY



"Surely the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing His plan to His servants the prophets."
AMOS 3:7

Hitchcock, Mark. The End: A Complete Overview of Bible Prophecy and the End of Days (p. 4). Tyndale House Publishers. Kindle Edition.

BOOKS CONTAINING PROPHECY

GOD SPEAKS ABOUT THE FUTURE

Predictive prophecy appears in approximately **63** of the Bible's **66** books.



OLD TESTAMENT (39 BOOKS)

Book	Prophecy
Genesis	14%
Exodus	40%
Leviticus	59%
Numbers	36%
Deutrernomy	36%
Joshua	12%
Judges	7%
Ruth	18%
1 Samuel	15%
2 Samuel	15%
1 Kings	75%
2 Kings	20%
1 Chronicles	14%
2 Chronicles	31%
Ezra	23%
Nehemiah	11%
Esther	1%
Job	2%
Psalms	10%
Proverbs	1%
Ecclesiastes	3%
Song of Songs	0%
Isaiah	59%
Jeremiah	59%
Lamentations	5%
Ezekiel	65%
Daniel	45%
Danea	55%
Joel	68%
Amos	68%
Obadiah	81%
Jonah	10%
Micah	70%
Nahum	74%
Habakkuk	41%
Zephaniah	83%
Haggai	39%
Zechariah	60%
Malachi	56%

NEW TESTAMENT (27 BOOKS)

Book	Prophecy
Matthew	26%
Mark	15%
Luke	22%
John	20%
Acts	13%
Romans	21%
1 Corinthians	19%
2 Corinthians	5%
Galatians	11%
Ephesians	5%
Philippians	10%
Colossians	9%
1 Thessalonians	18%
2 Thessalonians	40%
1 Timothy	4%
2 Timothy	20%
Titus	2%
Philemon	0%
Hebrews	45%
James	6%
1 Peter	20%
2 Peter	41%
1 John	6%
2 John	15%
3 John	0%
Jude	40%
Revelation	95%

TOTAL: 63 of 66 BOOKS

Approximately **95%** of the books of the Bible contain predictive prophecy.



Abomination of Desolation (ab-om-uh-NAY-shun of des-uh-LAY-shun). An act of defilement in the Jerusalem temple foretold by Daniel (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) and referred to by Jesus (Matt. 24:15). A key event in end-time prophecy, often associated with the rise of the Antichrist.

Israel (IZ-ray-el). The nation, people, and land chosen by God, central to His redemptive plan and to end-time events (Gen. 12:1–3; Rom. 11:25–27).

Millennium (mil-EN-ee-um). A literal 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth, following His return (Rev. 20:1–6).

Basic Eschatology Vocabulary

Condensed definitions to remove unfamiliar language before moving into chronology.

Armageddon (ahr-muh-GED-un). The prophesied site of a great final battle between the forces of good and evil (Rev. 16:16).

Day of the Lord (day of the LORD). A future period of divine judgment and intervention (Joel 2:31; Zeph. 1:14).

Gog and Magog (gog and may-GOG). Figures or peoples representing a great confederation against Israel in the last days (Ezek. 38–39; Rev. 20:7–9).

Imminence (IM-in-uhns). The belief that the Rapture of the Church could occur at any time, without prior warning (1 Thess. 4:16–17).

Rapture (RAP-cher). The catching up of the Church to meet Christ in the air (1 Thess. 4:16–17).

Revelation (rev-uh-LAY-shun). The last book of the Bible, given by Jesus Christ to reveal future events (Rev. 1:1).

Second Coming (sek-uhnd KUM-ing). The future return of Jesus Christ to earth in power and glory (Acts 1:11; Rev. 19:11–16).

Tribulation (trib-yuh-LAY-shun). A seven-year period of great suffering on earth, marked by God's judgment and the rise of the Antichrist (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 6–18).

Core Vocabulary

Core Terms

Eschatology — study of last things and future events.

Prophecy — a message from God that may foretell and forth-tell.

Revelation — God making Himself, His will, and His plans known.

Apocalyptic Literature — visionary, symbolic writing used in Daniel and Revelation.

Day of the Lord — a period of divine intervention involving judgment and restoration.

Hermeneutical Terms

Hermeneutics — the method or science of interpreting Scripture.

Literal Interpretation — understanding words by grammar, context, and historical setting.

Allegorical Interpretation — assigning spiritual or symbolic meanings beyond the ordinary sense.

Typology — a real historical pattern foreshadowing a later biblical fulfillment.

Progressive Revelation — later revelation adds clarity without canceling earlier revelation.

Core Vocabulary

Key Events

Rapture — believers are caught up to meet Christ in the air.

Second Coming — Christ visibly returns to earth in power and glory.

Tribulation — a future seven-year period of intense judgment.

Millennium — the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth.

Eternal State — the final condition of the redeemed in the new creation.

Key Figures & Events

Antichrist — a future ruler who opposes Christ and deceives the nations.

False Prophet — a religious leader who promotes the Antichrist's worship.

Beast — the Antichrist and his empire/system in Revelation.

Remnant — a faithful group preserved by God.

Bema Seat / Great White Throne — judgments for believers and unbelievers, respectively.

Core Vocabulary

Kingdom, Israel, and Timing Terms

Kingdom of God — God's rule, present spiritually and future physically.

Davidic Kingdom — the promised reign of Christ on David's throne.

New Covenant — God's covenant of forgiveness, renewal, and restoration.

Regathering of Israel — Israel's future physical and spiritual restoration.

Imminence — Christ could return for the Church at any moment.

Millennial Views

Pre-Tribulation — the Rapture occurs before the Tribulation.

Mid-Tribulation — the Rapture occurs at the midpoint.

Post-Tribulation — the Rapture occurs at the end of the Tribulation.

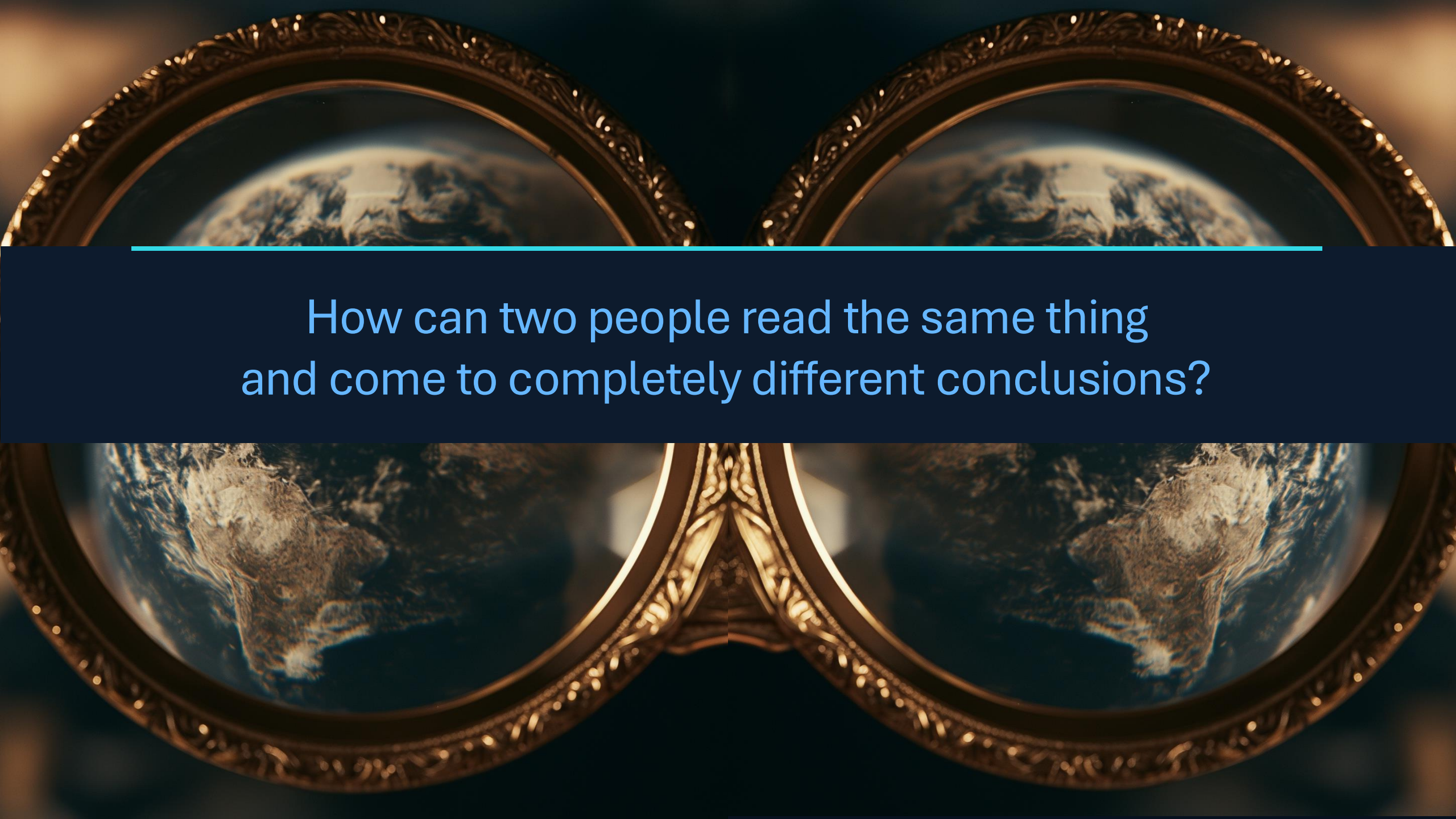
Premillennialism — Christ returns before the thousand-year kingdom.

Postmillennialism / Amillennialism — alternate views of the kingdom's timing and nature.

Future into Focus

The lens determines the landscape




How can two people read the same thing
and come to completely different conclusions?



Hermeneutics — The Interpretive Lens

The lens determines the landscape

Hermeneutics – The Interpretive Lens

Definition:
Hermeneutics is the method we use to interpret Scripture.

Key principle:
Your hermeneutic is your lens. If the lens is off, everything downstream is affected.

Central issue:
Interpretive method often determines whether promises to Israel are taken literally or spiritually.

Two broad approaches:



LITERAL-GRAMMATICAL-HISTORICAL

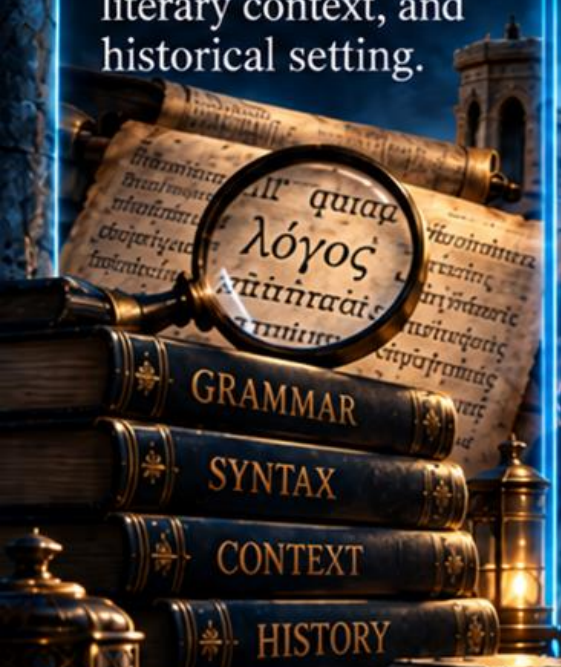


ALLEGORICAL / SPIRITUALIZING

The Literal-Grammatical-Historical Method

1 Interpretation

Interpret words by grammar, syntax, literary context, and historical setting.



2 Key question

What did the words mean to the **original audience?**



3 Figurative language

Poetry, symbolism, and figures of speech are recognized and interpreted according to their **intended meaning.**



4 God's promises

God's promises retain their **original force** unless Scripture itself explicitly modifies them.



5 Practical result

This is the interpretive foundation most closely associated with **dispensational premillennialism.**



The Literal-Grammatical-Historical Method

There are at least six good reasons for adopting a literal interpretation of Scripture (including prophecy).

1



It is the normal way to understand **all languages.**

2



The greater part of the Bible **makes sense** when taken **literally.**

3



This approach will allow for a **secondary (allegorical) meaning** when demanded by the context.

4



All secondary (or allegorical) meanings actually depend on the literal meaning.

We would not know what is not literally true of God unless we first know what is literally true.

5



It is the only **sane and safe check** on our subjective imaginations.

6



It is the only approach in line with the **nature of inspiration** (the idea that the words of Scripture are 'God-breathed').



The Literal-Grammatical-Historical Method

“The literal method of interpretation is that method that gives to each word the same exact basic meaning it would have in normal, ordinary, customary usage, whether employed in writing, speaking or thinking.”

Pentecost, J. Dwight. Things to Come



The Literal-Grammatical-Historical Method

"Nowhere does Scripture indicate that when we come to prophetic portions of Scripture we should ignore the normal sense of the words and overlook the meanings of words and sentences. The norms of grammatical interpretation should be applied to prophetic as well as to nonprophetic literature."

Roy Zuck

LGH

Biblical Support for Plain Meaning

Also see Matthew 5:18 and Luke 24:27.

“So they read from the Book of the Law of God, explaining it and giving insight, so that the people could understand what was being read.”

Nehemiah 8:8 (BSB)

The Allegorical / Spiritualizing Method

1 Approach:

Looks beneath or beyond the ordinary meaning to find a **deeper spiritual, theological, or symbolic sense.**

2 Typical effect:

Land, throne, temple, or kingdom promises may be read as **fulfilled in Christ or the Church** rather than national Israel.

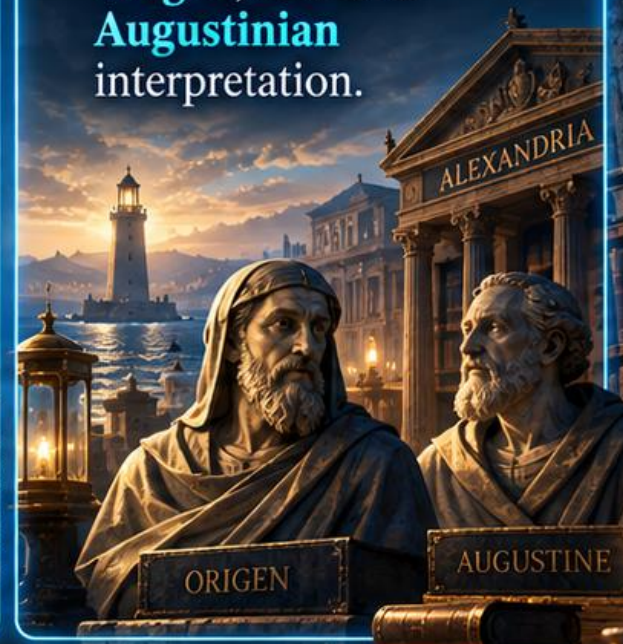
3 Risk:

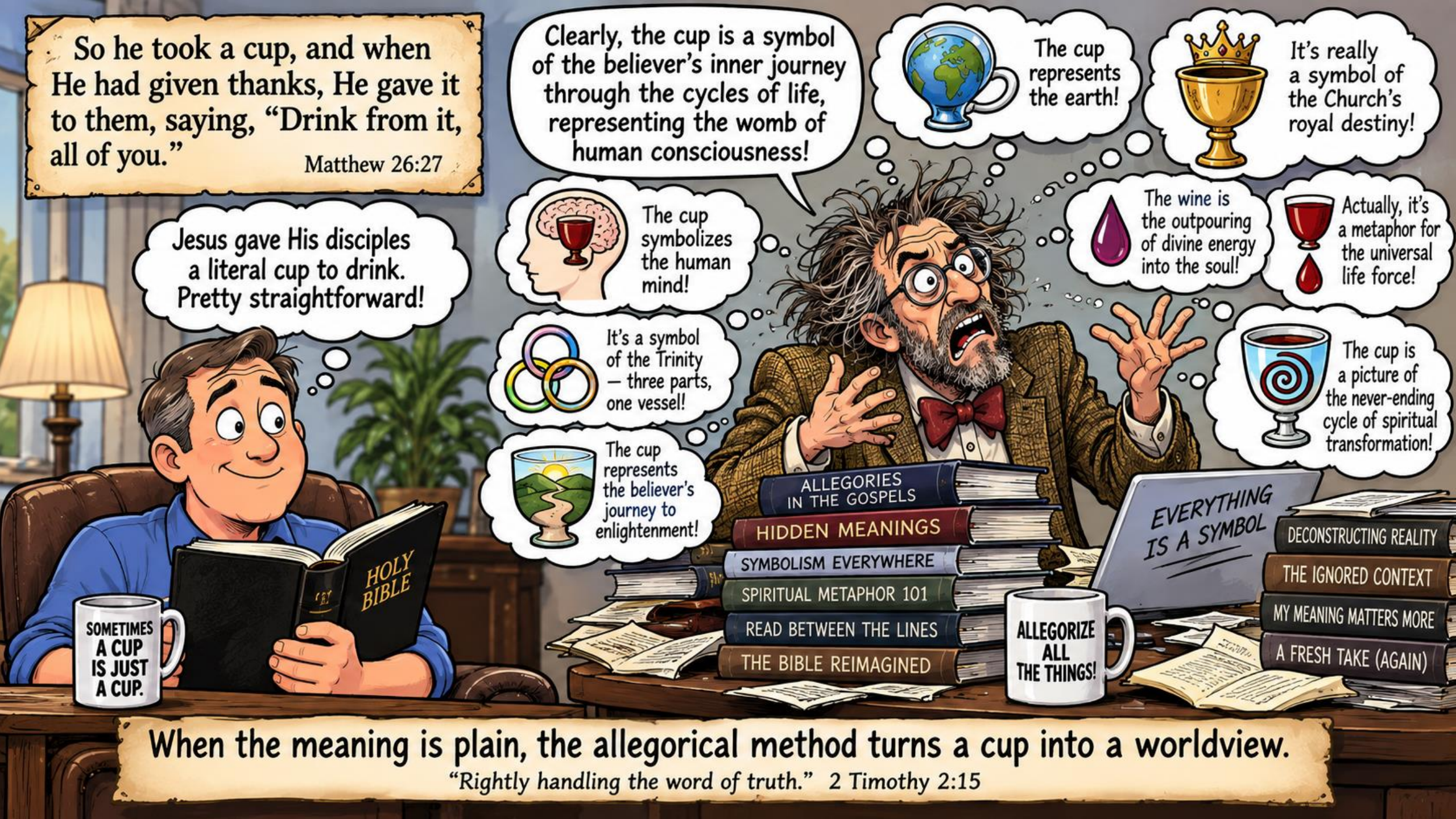
If uncontrolled by the text, **the interpreter's system may determine meaning** rather than the text itself.

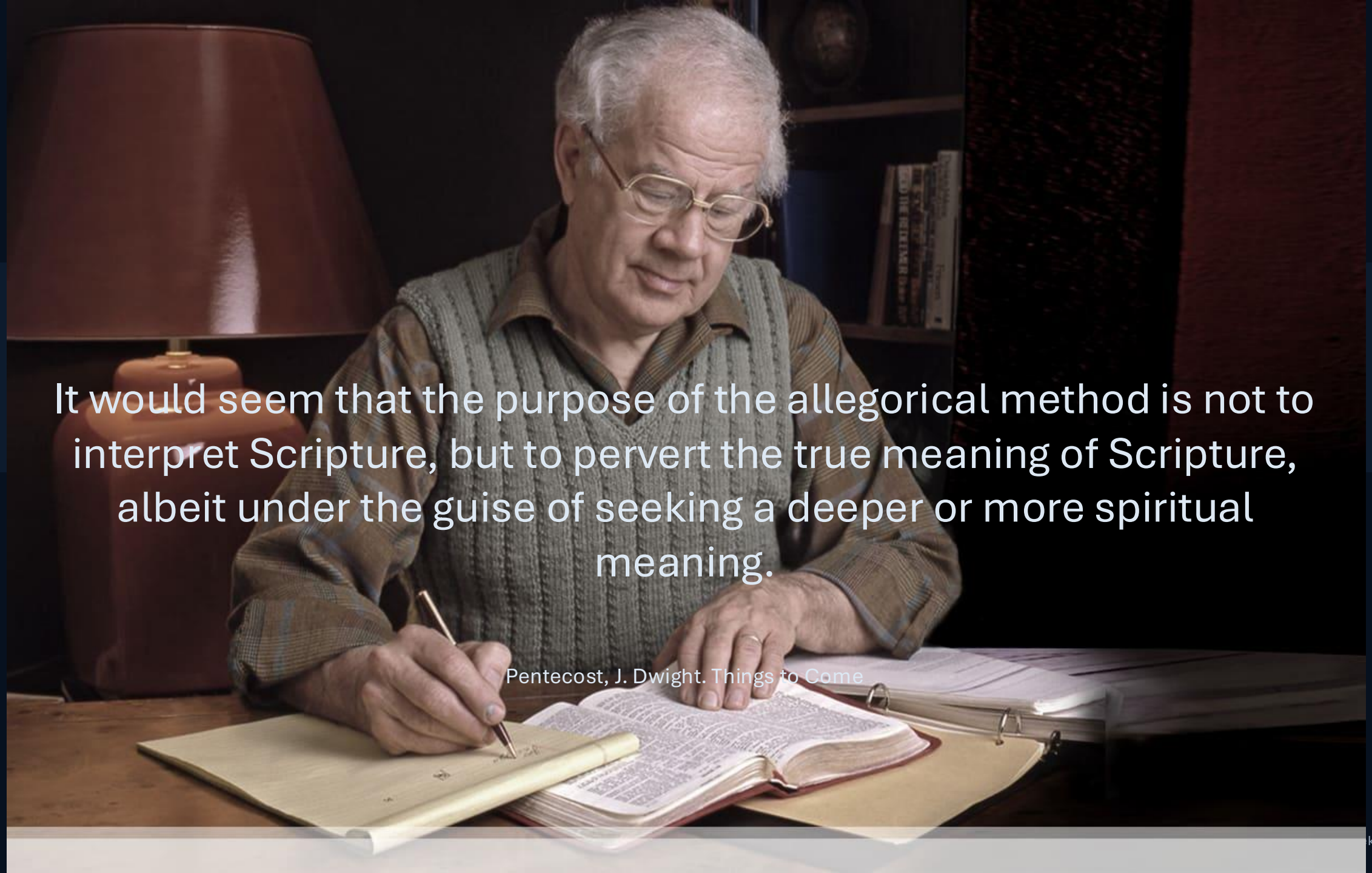


4 Historical note:

Often associated with the **Alexandrian school**, **Origen**, and later **Augustinian** interpretation.




So he took a cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."
Matthew 26:27
Jesus gave His disciples a literal cup to drink. Pretty straightforward!
Clearly, the cup is a symbol of the believer's inner journey through the cycles of life, representing the womb of human consciousness!
The cup represents the earth!
It's really a symbol of the Church's royal destiny!
The cup symbolizes the human mind!
The wine is the outpouring of divine energy into the soul!
Actually, it's a metaphor for the universal life force!
It's a symbol of the Trinity — three parts, one vessel!
The cup is a picture of the never-ending cycle of spiritual transformation!
The cup represents the believer's journey to enlightenment!
HOLY BIBLE
SOMETIMES A CUP IS JUST A CUP.
ALLEGORIES IN THE GOSPELS
HIDDEN MEANINGS
SYMBOLISM EVERYWHERE
SPIRITUAL METAPHOR 101
READ BETWEEN THE LINES
THE BIBLE REIMAGINED
EVERYTHING IS A SYMBOL
ALLEGORIZE ALL THE THINGS!
DECONSTRUCTING REALITY
THE IGNORED CONTEXT
MY MEANING MATTERS MORE
A FRESH TAKE (AGAIN)
When the meaning is plain, the allegorical method turns a cup into a worldview.
"Rightly handling the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15

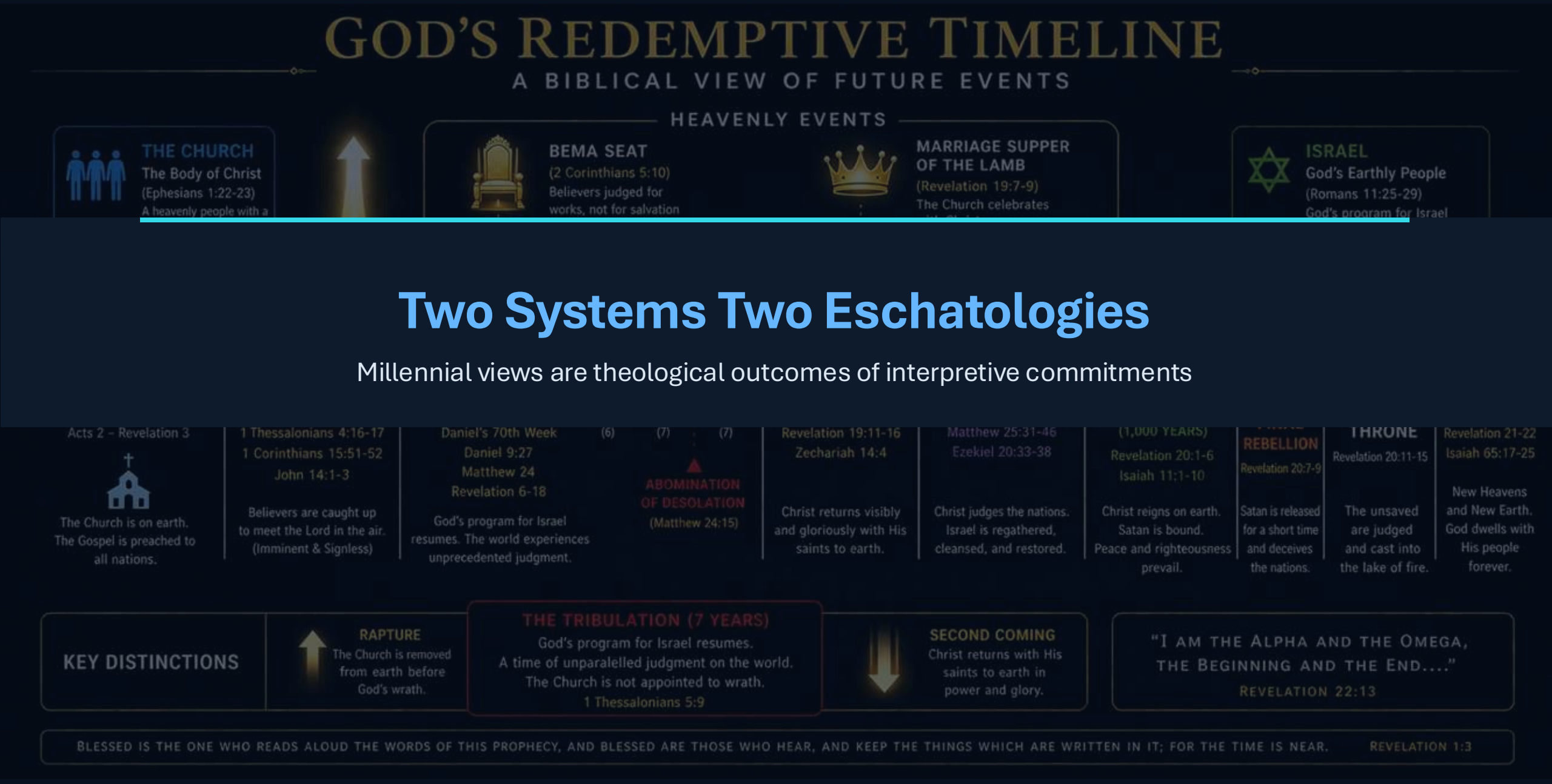

It would seem that the purpose of the allegorical method is not to interpret Scripture, but to pervert the true meaning of Scripture, albeit under the guise of seeking a deeper or more spiritual meaning.
Pentecost, J. Dwight. Things to Come

Dispensational vs. Covenantal

TWO DIFFERENT INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORKS AT A GLANCE

Dispensational (Literal-Consistent)		Covenantal / Reformed
God means what He says in a straightforward, normal sense.	CORE IDEA	Emphasizes covenant unity and one people of God across redemptive history.
Distinct peoples in God's program, though both are saved by grace through faith.	ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH	Commonly views Israel and the Church as one unified people of God.
God's covenants with Israel are unconditional, ongoing, and await full fulfillment.	COVENANTS / PROMISES	Promises are often fulfilled spiritually in Christ and His people.
Land, throne, kingdom, and restoration promises are fulfilled literally.	PROPHECY / FULFILLMENT	Fulfillment is often seen through Christ, the Church, and typological completion.
A future earthly reign of Christ is expected.	KINGDOM	Often framed as already / not yet, emphasizing Christ's present reign.
Israel is hardened in part, not replaced; future national restoration is guaranteed.	ROMANS 11 / FUTURE ISRAEL	Often understood as fulfilled in the salvation of the elect or the people of God broadly considered.

Different systems. Different starting points. Different conclusions.



Two Systems Two Eschatologies

Millennial views are theological outcomes of interpretive commitments

Dispensational View (Premillennial, Pre-Tribulation Rapture)

A future for Israel, a distinct program for the Church, and a literal 1,000-year kingdom.



Past | The Church Removed | God's Judgment on the Earth | Christ Reigns on Earth | Eternity

Reformed / Covenantal View (Amillennial or Postmillennial)

One people of God, one plan of redemption, a symbolic millennium, and the return of Christ at the end of the age.



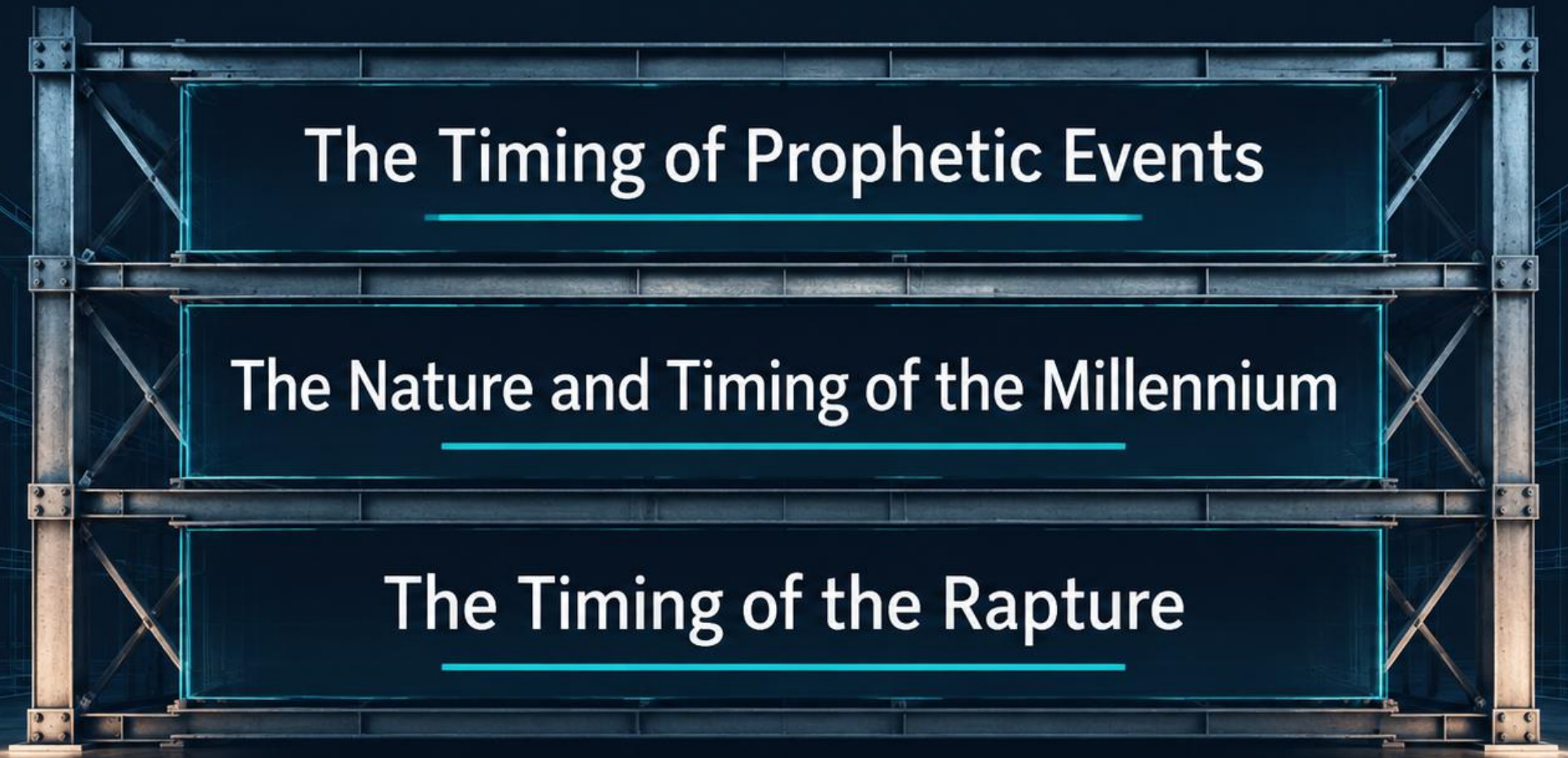
Past | The Church Age, Tribulation, and Millennium (One Continuous Period) | Eternity

Same Bible.
Different Interpretations.
A Greater Appreciation for God's Sovereignty.

"Rightly handling the word of truth."
2 Timothy 2:15

Different Systems.
Same Savior.
Same Mission.
All for His Glory.

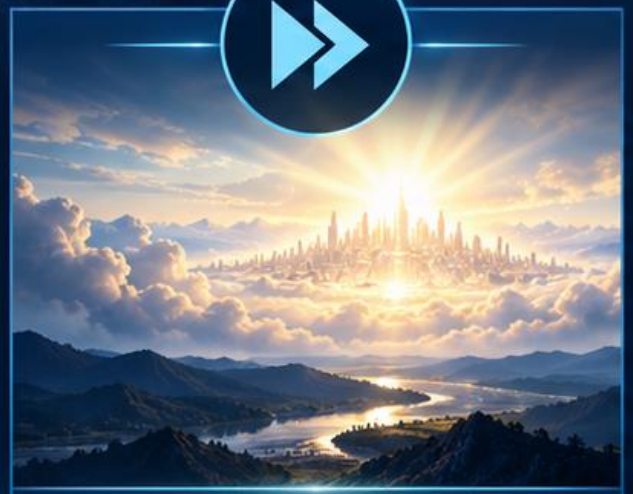
Three Key Framework Issues



THESE QUESTIONS SHAPE ONE'S ESCHATOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK.

Four Approaches to the Timing of Events

When and how are Revelation's visions fulfilled?



Futurist

Primarily future fulfillment



Preterist

Fulfilled mainly in the first century



Historicist

Unfolding across church history



Idealist

Recurring spiritual patterns and principles

Preterist Approach

MOST PROPHETIC FULFILLMENT BELONGS TO THE FIRST-CENTURY SETTING

CORE CLAIM

Revelation primarily addresses events experienced by its earliest readers — centered on Jerusalem's fall in AD 70.

TWO FORMS

1. **PARTIAL PRETERISM**
   Retains a future bodily return, resurrection, and final judgment.

2. **FULL PRETERISM**
   Places even those events in the past and falls outside historic Christian orthodoxy.

CONTRIBUTION



Emphasizes the relevance of Revelation to its original audience and the historical force of words such as "soon" and "near."

INTERPRETIVE QUESTION



Can first-century events account for the scope of the judgments, Christ's visible return, resurrection, and the new creation?

Futurist Approach

Most of Revelation 4–22 awaits future fulfillment

Core claim

The seals, trumpets, bowls, Antichrist, Second Coming, and kingdom describe climactic events still ahead.

Reading pattern

- Reads symbols as references to real people, powers, and events
- Connects Revelation closely with Daniel, Zechariah, Isaiah, and Matthew 24
- Usually follows a forward-moving sequence while recognizing interludes

Contribution

Preserves expectation of Christ's visible return, final judgment, and the completion of promises to Israel.

Interpretive question

How does the view honor Revelation's message to its original seven churches while locating the main fulfillment in the future?

Common association: dispensational premillennialism; futurism also includes other premillemnial positions.

The Position of This Series

FUTURIST • DISPENSATIONAL • PREMILLENNIAL • PRE-TRIBULATION

Futurist

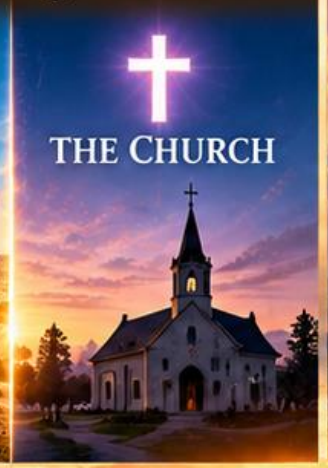
Most of Revelation's climactic visions await future fulfillment.



Dispensational

Israel and the Church remain distinct in God's program; covenant promises retain their original force.





Premillennial

Christ returns before a future thousand-year earthly reign.



Pre-Tribulation

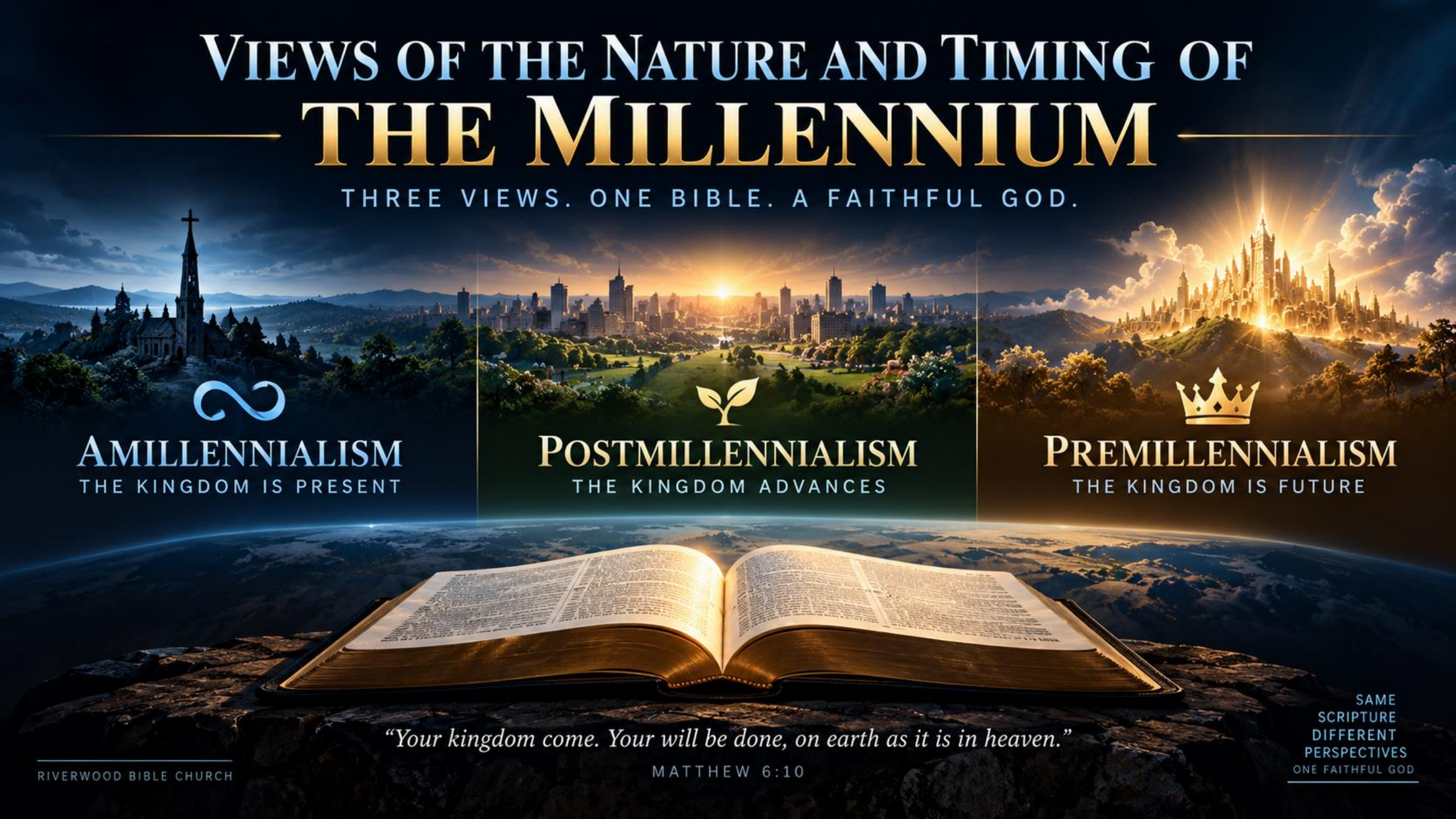
Christ gathers the Church before Daniel's seventieth week.





Views of the Nature and Timing of
THE MILLENNIUM

THREE VIEWS. ONE BIBLE. A FAITHFUL GOD.



AMILLENNIALISM
THE KINGDOM IS PRESENT

POSTMILLENNIALISM
THE KINGDOM ADVANCES

PREMILLENNIALISM
THE KINGDOM IS FUTURE

"Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

MATTHEW 6:10

RIVERWOOD BIBLE CHURCH

SAME SCRIPTURE
DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES
ONE FAITHFUL GOD

ONE KING
ONE PEOPLE
A GREATER KINGDOM

CHRIST
REIGNS
ALWAYS

Amillennialism

The Kingdom as a Present Spiritual Reign

Definition

No future, literal, earthly, 1000-year reign of Christ. The Kingdom is spiritual and presently fulfilled as Christ reigns in Heaven and in the hearts of people. The 1000 years is viewed as symbolic during the present age.

Historical roots

Became dominant in much of church history through Augustine's influence.



Emphasis

Christ reigns now from heaven, and the kingdom is chiefly spiritual in this age.

Modern presence

Widely held in Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, and many covenantal traditions.

CHRIST REIGNS
THROUGH HIS CHURCH

THE CHURCH IN THE PRESENT AGE

UNTIL
HE COMES

VIEWS OF THE MILLENNIUM

POSTMILLENNIALISM

A WORLD TRANSFORMED BEFORE HE RETURNS

"The gospel shall have free course and be glorified until the whole world is reached."

2 THESSALONIANS 3:1



CHURCH AGE

Spread of the Gospel
(Acts – Present)

THE MILLENNIUM
(A GOLDEN AGE OF GOSPEL ADVANCE)

The Church transforms the world through the gospel.

SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Christ returns after the Millennium.

ETERNAL STATE

New Heavens and New Earth
(Revelation 21–22)

DEFINITION

Christ will return after the Millennium, but the Millennium is not a literal 1000 years. It is a golden age that the church will usher in through the gospel and the whole world will be Christianized.

HISTORICAL RISE

Gained momentum in the 17th–19th centuries, especially in periods of cultural optimism and missionary expansion.

EMPHASIS

The gospel gradually transforms the world before Christ's return.

HISTORICAL CHALLENGE

The two World Wars significantly weakened its cultural optimism in many circles.

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

MATTHEW 24:14

...UNTIL
ALL NATIONS
HEAR

VIEWS OF THE MILLENNIUM

PREMILLENNIALISM

A FUTURE KINGDOM. A LITERAL REIGN. A FAITHFUL GOD.

"Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them... They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years."

REVELATION 20:4 (BSB)





The gospel to the nations (Acts 2 – Revelation 3)

The Church is removed (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

God's judgment on a rebellious world (Revelation 6–19)

Christ returns to earth (Revelation 19:11-16)

A literal, earthly reign of Christ (Isaiah 11:1-10; Revelation 20:1-6)

The great white throne (Revelation 20:11-15)

New heavens and new earth (Revelation 21–22)

DEFINITION

Christ will return to earth at His Second Coming and will usher in a literal 1,000-year earthly reign. It is a future time.

SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT

Revelation 20 describes a real, future reign of Christ under Messiah's rule.

"They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years."

Revelation 20:4 (BSB)

EARLY AND MODERN CHURCH

Early forms of premillennialism were common.

- Justin Martyr
- Irenaeus
- Hippolytus
- John Walvoord
- John MacArthur
- Dwight Pentecost
- Charles Ryrie
- David Jeremiah

HISTORICAL SHIFT

The view declined as allegorical interpretation became more influential, particularly through Augustine, and later medieval and Reformation theology.

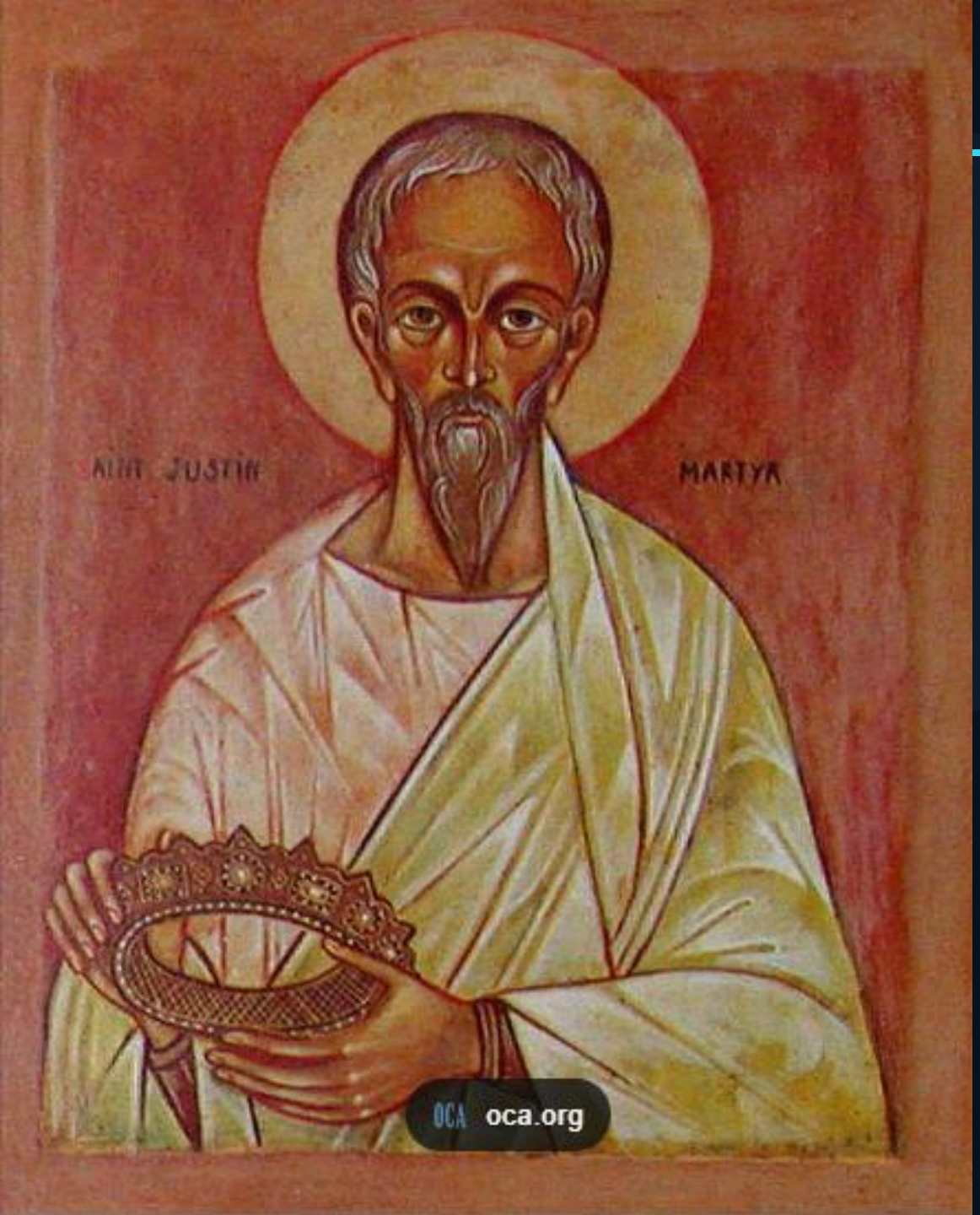
MODERN FORM

Dispensational premillennialism emphasizes:

- Literal interpretation
- Israel / Church distinction
- Pre-tribulation Rapture
- Literal covenant fulfillment
- A future, literal 1,000-year kingdom on earth

"Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and keep the things which are written in it; for the time is near."

REVELATION 1:3 (BSB)



Balanced Attitude

"I admitted to you formerly, that I and many others are of this opinion [premillennialism], and [believe] that such will take place, as you assuredly are aware; but on the other hand, I signified to you that many who belong to the pure and pious faith, and are true Christians, think otherwise."

Justin Martyr

Three Views of the Timing of the Rapture

A timeline comparison

1. Pre-Tribulation

Before the Tribulation



2. Mid-Tribulation

At the 3½-year midpoint



3. Post-Tribulation

At the end, with Christ's return



Interpretive Approaches, Millennial Views, and Rapture Views

Interpretive Approach	Millennial View	Rapture View
Preterist	Amillennial or Postmillennial	Partial preterists are post-Trib (full preterists deny a future coming of Christ).
Historicist	Any of the Three Views	Post-Trib
Idealist	Amillennial or Postmillennial	Post-Trib
Futurist	Premillennial	Any of the Three Views

GOD'S REDEMPTIVE TIMELINE

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF FUTURE EVENTS

HEAVENLY EVENTS

THE CHURCH
The Body of Christ
(Ephesians 1:22-23)
A heavenly people with a heavenly hope.

BEMA SEAT
(2 Corinthians 5:10)
Believers judged for works, not for salvation

MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB
(Revelation 19:7-9)
The Church celebrates with Christ

ISRAEL
God's Earthly People
(Romans 11:25-29)
God's program for Israel resumes during the Tribulation.

NOW

FIRST 3½ YEARS | MIDPOINT | LAST 3½ YEARS

1 CHURCH AGE
(Present)
Acts 2 – Revelation 3

The Church is on earth. The Gospel is preached to all nations.

2 THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH
1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
1 Corinthians 15:51-52
John 14:1-3

Believers are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. (Imminent & Signless)

3 TRIBULATION (7 YEARS)
Daniel's 70th Week
Daniel 9:27
Matthew 24
Revelation 6-18

SEALS (7) | TRUMPETS (7) | BOWLS (7)

ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION (Matthew 24:15)

God's program for Israel resumes. The world experiences unprecedented judgment.

4 SECOND COMING OF CHRIST
Revelation 19:11-16
Zechariah 14:4

Christ returns visibly and gloriously with His saints to earth.

5 JUDGMENT OF NATIONS / ISRAEL
Matthew 25:31-46
Ezekiel 20:33-38

Christ judges the nations. Israel is regathered, cleansed, and restored.

6 MILLENNIAL KINGDOM
(1,000 YEARS)
Revelation 20:1-6
Isaiah 11:1-10

Christ reigns on earth. Satan is bound. Peace and righteousness prevail.

7 FINAL REBELLION
Revelation 20:7-9

Satan is released for a short time and deceives the nations.

8 GREAT WHITE THRONE
Revelation 20:11-15

The unsaved are judged and cast into the lake of fire.

9 ETERNAL STATE
Revelation 21-22
Isaiah 65:17-25

New Heavens and New Earth. God dwells with His people forever.

KEY DISTINCTIONS

RAPTURE
The Church is removed from earth before God's wrath.

THE TRIBULATION (7 YEARS)
God's program for Israel resumes.
A time of unparalelled judgment on the world.
The Church is not appointed to wrath.
1 Thessalonians 5:9

SECOND COMING
Christ returns with His saints to earth in power and glory.

"I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA, THE BEGINNING AND THE END...."
REVELATION 22:13

BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO READS ALOUD THE WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY, AND BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HEAR, AND KEEP THE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN IT; FOR THE TIME IS NEAR. REVELATION 1:3

A Master Dispensational Eschatology Chart

From the Rapture to Eternity

A Comprehensive Timeline of Biblical Prophecy

"He changes times and seasons; He removes kings and sets up kings."
Daniel 2:21

1 — The Church Age (Present Time)



- Gospel to all nations
- Growth of the church
- The Holy Spirit indwells
- Increasing apostasy
- Expectation of Christ's return

Acts 2–28
Ephesians 1:22–23; 3:1–6
2 Timothy 3:1–5
2 Peter 3:1–4

2 — The Rapture of the Church



- Christ comes for His church
- Believers caught up
- Imminent and signless
- Removes the restrainer

1 Thess 4:13–18
1 Cor 15:51–52
John 14:1–3
2 Thess 2:6–7

Post-Rapture Events (Preparatory Period)



1. Removal of the restrainer (2 Thess 2:6–7)
2. Heavenly events (Bema Seat)
3. Preparation of the Bride (Rev 19:7–8)
4. Rise of a revived Roman Empire (10 leaders) (Dan 2:42–44; 7:7, 24)
5. Rise of the Antichrist (Dan 7:8)
6. Peace effrots with Israel (Dan 9:27)
7. Gog and Magog (Ezek 38–39) (optional)
6. Rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra; Dan 9:27)
9. 7-year covenant with Israel (start of Tribulation) (Dan 9:27)

3 — The Tribulation (7 Years)

Daniel's 70th Week (Dan 9:24–27)

First 3½ Years (A Time of Relative Peace)

Seals 1–4 — Rev 6:1–8

Seals 5–7

Covenant confirmed with Israel (Dan 9:27)
Temple sacrifices resume (2 Thess 2:4)

Midpoint — 3½ Years (Dan 9:27)

Abomination of Desolation (Matt 24:15; Dan 9:27)
Satan cast out of heaven (Rev 12:7–12)

Last 3½ Years (The Great Tribulation)

Trumpets 1–7 — Rev 8–11

Bowls 1–7 — Rev 15–16

Great Tribulation (Matt 24:21–22)

4 — Second Coming of Christ



- Christ returns with His saints
- Defeats the armies of the world
- Destroys the Antichrist and False Prophet
- Binds Satan

Rev 19:11–21
Zech 14:1–4, 9
2 Thess 1:7–10

5 — 75 Days After the Second Coming



- Remove abomination (Dan 12:11)
- Regather Israel for judgment (Matt 25:31–46)
- Judgment of the nations (sheep and goats)
- Establish millennial government

Ezek 39:9–16
Zech 14:16–21
Matt 25:31–46
Isa 2:2–4; Mic 4:1–4

6 — The Millennial Kingdom (1,000 Years)



- Christ reigns on earth
- Satan bound
- Israel restored
- Peace and righteousness
- Temple worship

Rev 20:1–6
Isa 11:1–10
Jer 31:31–34
Ezek 40–48
Zech 14:9, 16–21

7 — Final Rebellion



- Satan released
- Gog and Magog (final rebellion)
- Fire from heaven destroys rebels

Rev 20:7–9
Ezek 38–39
Zech 14:12–15

8 — Great White Throne



- Unbelievers judged and cast into lake of fire

Rev 20:11–15

9 — Eternal State



- New heavens and new earth
- God dwells with His people forever

Rev 21–22
Isa 65:17–25
2 Pet 3:13

Heavenly Events (After the Rapture)



Bema Seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10)
Believers judged for works, not for salvation.



Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:7–9)
The church celebrates with Christ.



Preparation of the Bride (Rev 21:2; 19:7)
The bride is made ready for her Husband.

The Church in Heaven During the Tribulation (Rev 4–5)



The Seal Judgments (First 3½ Years)



1	2	3	4	5	6	7
White Horse (Rev 6:1–2)	Red Horse (6:3–4)	Black Horse (6:5–6)	Pale Horse (6:7–8)	Martyrs Cry Out (6:9–11)	Cosmic Upheaval (6:12–17)	Silence in Heaven (8:1)

The Trumpet Judgments (Midpoint to Near End)



1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Hail & Fire (8:7)	Burning Mountian (8:8–9)	Wormwood (8:10–11)	Darkened Heavens (8:12)	Demonic Torment (9:1–11)	Massive Army (9:12–21)	Kingdom Proclaimed (11:15–19)

The Bowl Judgments (End of Tribulation)



1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Painful Sores (16:2)	Sea to Blood (16:3)	Rivers to Blood (16:4)	Scorching Sun (16:8–9)	Darkness (16:10)	Euphrates Dried (16:12–14)	It Is Done (16:17–21)

Key Time Markers (Approximate)

- **Church Age** (Unknown Duration)
- **Rapture**
- **Post-Rapture Events** (? to a few years)
- **Tribulation — 7 Years**
  - First 3½ Years
  - Midpoint (Dan 9:27)
  - Last 3½ Years
- **Second Coming** (Day 0)
- **75 Days** (Dan 12:11–12)
- **Millennium** — 1,000 Years
- **Final Rebellion**
- **Great White Throne**
- **Eternal State**

Major Themes

- God's sovereign control
- Distinct plans for the Church and Israel
- Judgment and mercy
- The return of Christ
- The establishment of His Kingdom

"He changes times and seasons; He removes kings and sets up kings."
Daniel 2:21

"Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."
Titus 2:13

"I saw a new heaven and a new earth … and God will dwell with them."
Revelation 21:1, 3