

⋮ The Return of the
King

The Second
Coming of
Yeshua (Jesus)
Part 7

The Great
Tribulation

***“End time
Theologies”***

The Great Tribulation

Matthew 24:21-22



Matthew 24:21-22

“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.”

End Day Terminology

- **Eschatology**
 - The study of the Bible's teachings about the events leading up to the second coming of Jesus
 - From the Greek, *eschatos* (final) + *logos* (word) = "a word about the final things."
- **First Coming of Christ**
 - The earthly life and ministry of Jesus Christ, about 4 BC–AD 30.
- **Second Coming of Christ**
 - The bodily return of Jesus to earth to reign as king.
- **Church Age**
 - The time period from the beginning of the church (about AD 30) until Jesus Christ returns for everyone who has trusted in him.
- **Millennium**
 - The thousand-year reign of Jesus on earth, described in Revelation 20:4–6. From the Latin, *mille*, meaning "thousand."
- **Premillennial**
 - The belief that the millennium is a future event and Jesus will return before (pre-) the millennium.
- **Amillennial**
 - The millennium is a symbol of Christ's present reign among his people.
- **Postmillennial**
 - Jesus will return after (post-) the millennium. The millennium is the time in which most of the world submits to Jesus, and peace and justice reign.
- **Preterism**
 - The eschatological viewpoint that suggests some, if not all, biblical prophecies about the end times refer to specific events that happened in the first century. From the Latin, *praeter*, meaning "beyond" or "after."

End Day Terminology

- **Preterism**

- From a preterist view, the antichrist may refer to Emperor Nero.
- The tribulation may refer to the Jewish War (AD 66–73).
- The destruction of the temple in prophecy may have been fulfilled in AD 70.

- **Rapture**

- Event described in 1 Thess. 4:16–17 when Jesus Christ returns for his people.
- From Latin, raptus, meaning “carry away.”
- **Historical premillennialists, amillennialists, and postmillennialists** understand the second coming of Jesus and the event described in 1 Thess. 4:16–17 as the same event.
- **Dispensational premillennialists** believe that the rapture and the second coming of Jesus are two separate events.
 - They place the rapture before the great tribulation and the second coming after the tribulation.

End Day Terminology

- **Tribulation (Great)**

- The time when disasters happen on the earth and people who are faithful to Jesus suffer intense persecution, possibly lasting seven years.
- **Premillennialists** place the great tribulation near the end.
- **Dispensational premillennialists** typically believe that the tribulation will last exactly seven years.
- Many **historical premillennialists** view the reference to “seven years” as a symbol of the completeness of God’s dealings with the world as the end of time approaches.
- Most **amillennialists and postmillennialists** treat the tribulation as a symbol of calamities and persecutions that have occurred throughout church history.
- Some **amillennialists and postmillennialists are preterists**—they believe that the great tribulation occurred AD 63–70, during the Jewish-Roman War.

Historical Premillennialism

- Christians will remain on the earth during the great tribulation
- Tribulation will purify the churches by rooting out false believers
- The second coming of Christ will precede the millennium
- The church has replaced the nation of Israel as God's covenant people
- The 1000 yr millennium is a literal future event
- All creation would be restored to its original goodness in a millennial kingdom
- Earliest view of the end times among the early church



Historical Premillennialism Scriptures

- **Genesis 22:17-18** God's promises to Abraham and his offspring were conditional
- **Romans 9:6-8** The New Testament frequently uses "Israel" and the "the twelve tribes" to refer to Christians



Historical Premillennialists

- **Early Church Fathers:** Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Lactantius
- **Modern day:** David Dockery, John Warwick Montgomery, George R. Beasley-Murray, Robert Gundry, George E. Ladd

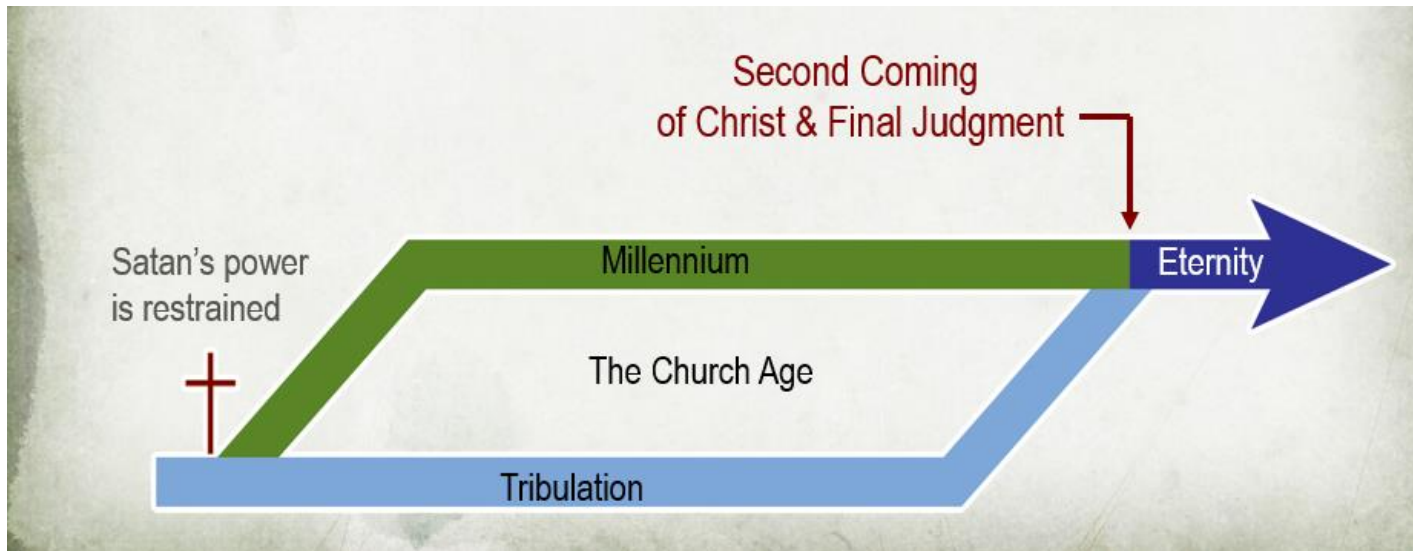


Amillennialism

- No literal thousand-year rule
- The millennium is the spiritual reign of Jesus in the hearts of his followers
- 1st resurrection in Rev. 20:5 is not a physical restoration from the dead, but the spiritual resurrection known as regeneration.
- Christ's triumph over Satan through his death and resurrection restrained the power of satan on the earth
- Persecution of Christians (tribulation) will occur until Jesus comes again, as will the expansion of God's kingdom (the millennium)
- When Christ returns, He will defeat evil, resurrect the saved and unsaved, judge them, and deliver them to their eternal destinies.

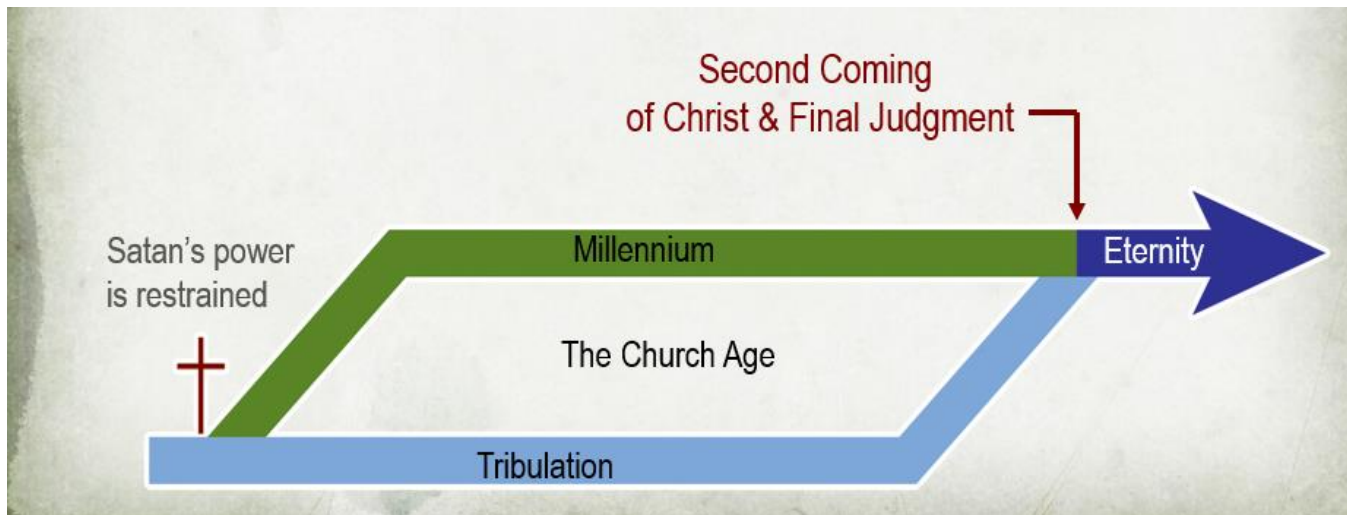
Amillennialism

- The great tribulation represents disasters, wars, and persecution that have occurred throughout church history
- References to Israel in Revelation are symbolic references to the people of God on earth
- Amillennialism became popular in the 5th century and remains popular to today



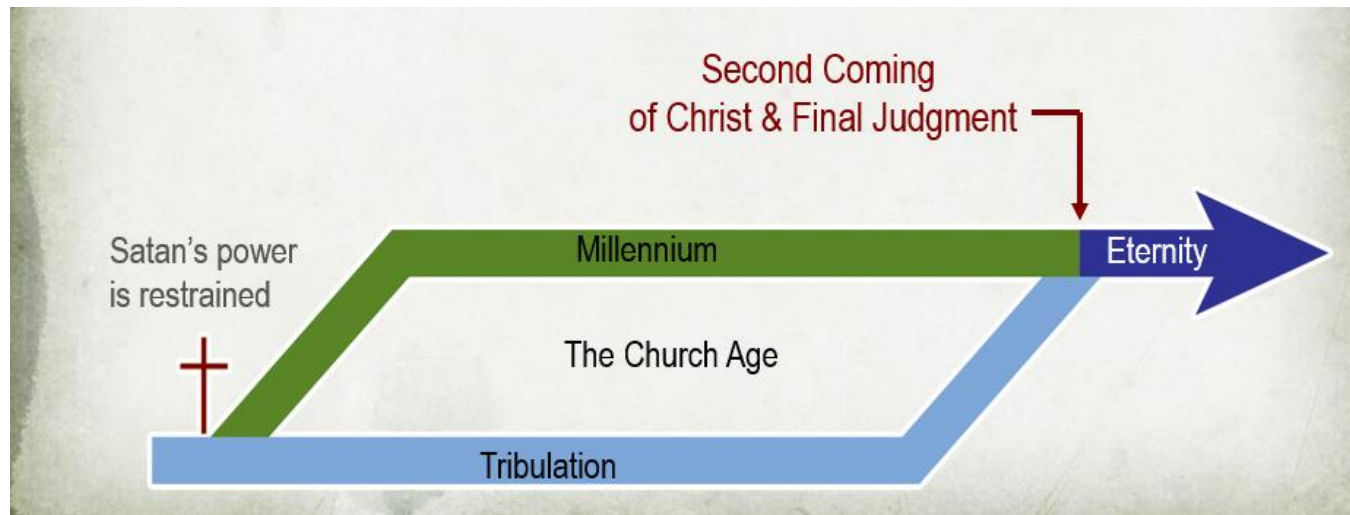
Amillennialism Scriptures

- **2 Peter 3:8** - Bible frequently uses the number 1,000 figuratively
- **Romans 11:13-15** - First resurrection could refer to the spiritual resurrection (the regeneration or new birth) of persons who trust Christ
- **Revelation 13:7** – The saints are on earth during the tribulation
- **John 5:28-29** – The 2nd coming of Christ and the resurrection of the saved and the unsaved will occur at the same time



Amillennialists

- **Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, E.Y. Mullins**
- **Abraham Kuyper, G.C. Berkouwer, Herschel Hobbs, Stanley Grenz, J.I. Packer**

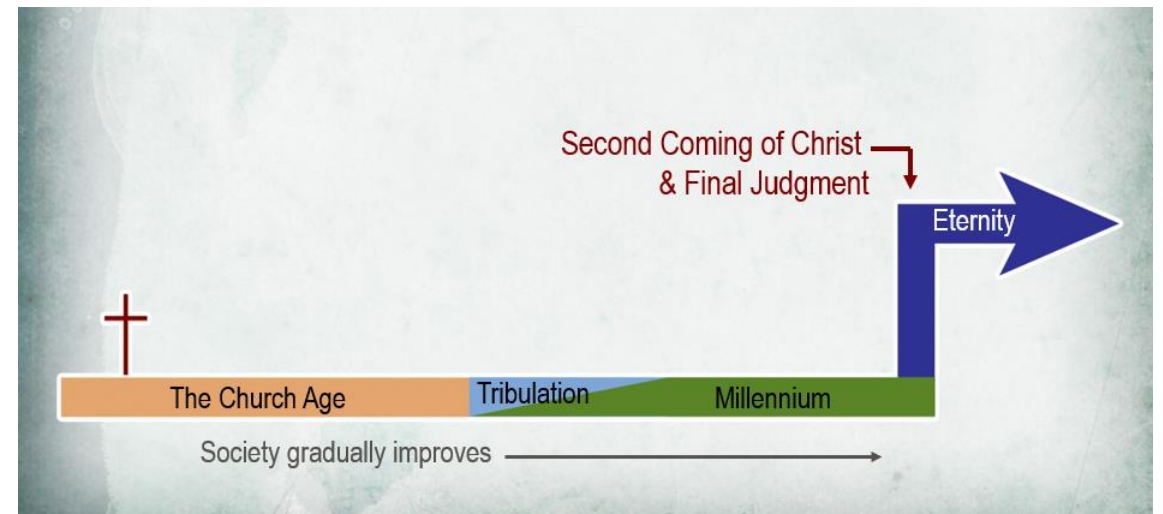


Postmillennialism

- Second coming of Christ will occur after the millennium
- A period of tribulation may precede the millennium
- Millennial reign (Rev 20:1-6) represents a long time period when, through the preaching of the gospel, most of the world will submit to Christ
- Satan will have no power over the earth, and evil regimes will collapse
- Some Charismatic churches embrace dominion postmillennialism – God is using the contemporary charismatic movement to bind Satan
- When the church recognizes the fullness of its power through the Holy Spirit, the church will establish God's kingdom on earth and usher in the millennium, a golden age.

Postmillennialism

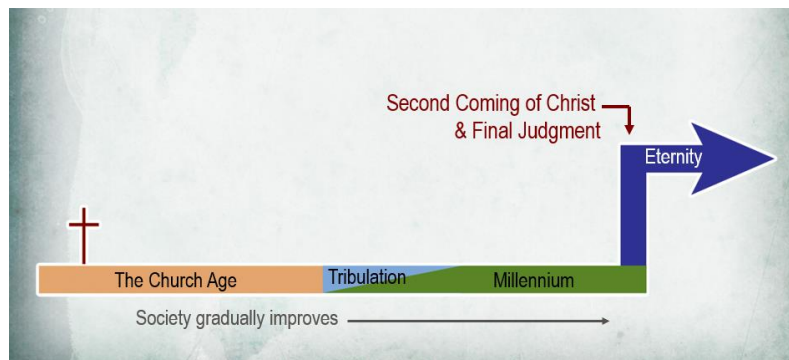
- 2 views on tribulation:
 - Brief time of persecution that occurs immediately before the millennium
 - 7 years of the First Jewish-Roman War which culminated in AD 70 with the destruction of the 2nd Temple
- Emphasize the preaching of the Gospel
- Gospel will spread to everyone in the world
- Emphasize the power of the Gospel to transform societies and individual lives
- During the millennium, Christ will rule the earth through his Spirit and through his Church but He will be physically present on the earth
- Resurrection in Rev 20:4 represents the spiritual regeneration of people who trust in Jesus Christ
- Events occurring immediately after the millennium:
 - Second coming of Christ
 - Final conflict between good and evil
 - Defeat of Satan
 - Physical resurrection of all people
 - Final judgement
- Became popular around 1100's



Source: Rose's Four Views of the End Times

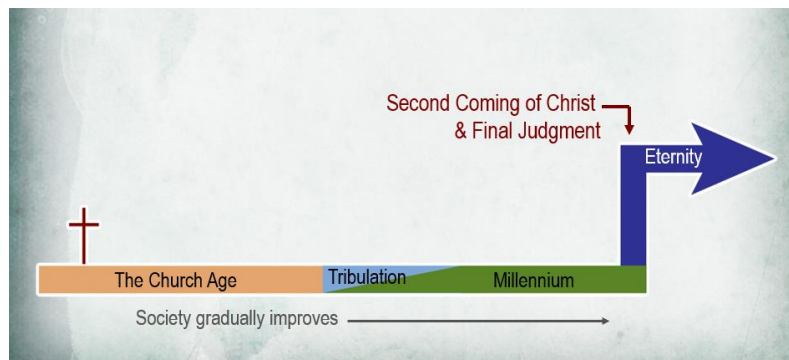
Postmillennialism Scripture

- **Mark 3:23-27** – Augustine understood these verses to mean that before Jesus can claim his kingdom, those that are lost (the “possessions” of Satan, “the strong man”) must come under control of Jesus
- **Micah 4:3** – Golden age described in Micah and other similar passages
- **Revelation 20:4** – The resurrection depicted represents the spiritual regeneration of people who trust in Jesus Christ



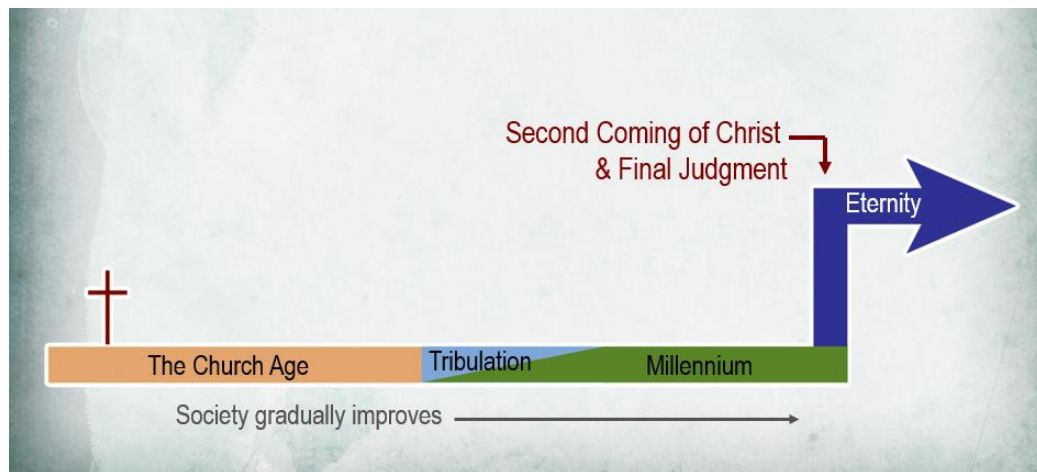
Postmillennialism Scripture

- **Matthew 24:14**– Every ethnic group will receive the gospel before the second coming
- **Romans 11:13-15** – 1st resurrection could refer to the spiritual resurrection (the regeneration or new birth) of persons who trust in Christ
- **John 5:28-29**– 2nd coming of Christ and the resurrection of all people, saved and unsaved, will occur at the same time



Postmillennialists

- Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius of Alexandria, Augustine of Hippo, Joachim of Fiore (1135-1202)
- Jonathan Edwards, B.B. Warfield, Augustus H. Strong, Charles Hodge, R.L. Dabney, Loraine Boettner, R.C. Sproul



Dispensational Premillennialism

- Christ's return and rapture are separate events
- Jesus will return to earth after a 7-year tribulation
- Jesus will rule during a 1000-year millennium of peace on earth
- God will restore the nation of Israel the land described in Genesis 15:18
- Rapture comes before the great tribulation
 - Pre-tribulationists: Christ removes Christians from the earth before the great tribulation begins
 - Mid-tribulationists: Rapture occurs during the great tribulation
- Second coming after the great tribulation

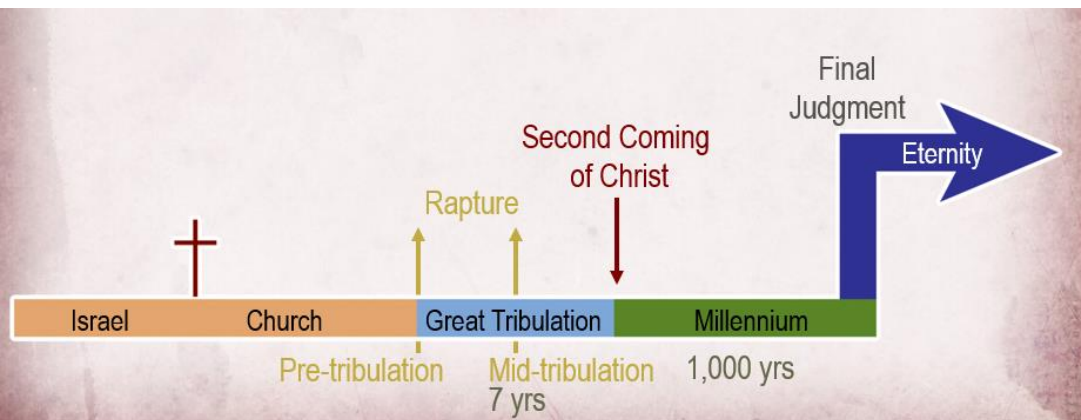
Dispensational Premillennialism

- 7-yrs tribulation:
 - People who are faithful to Jesus will suffer intense persecution
 - Natural disaster and wars will occur
 - Many Jews will turn to Jesus Christ
- Emphasizes literal interpretations of Revelation
- **Establishment of modern state of Israel in 1948 fulfilled a key end-times prophecy**
- **References to Israel in Revelation refer to the nation of Israel**
- **Emerged in the 1800s among the Plymouth Brethren (J. Nelson Darby) and remains popular today**



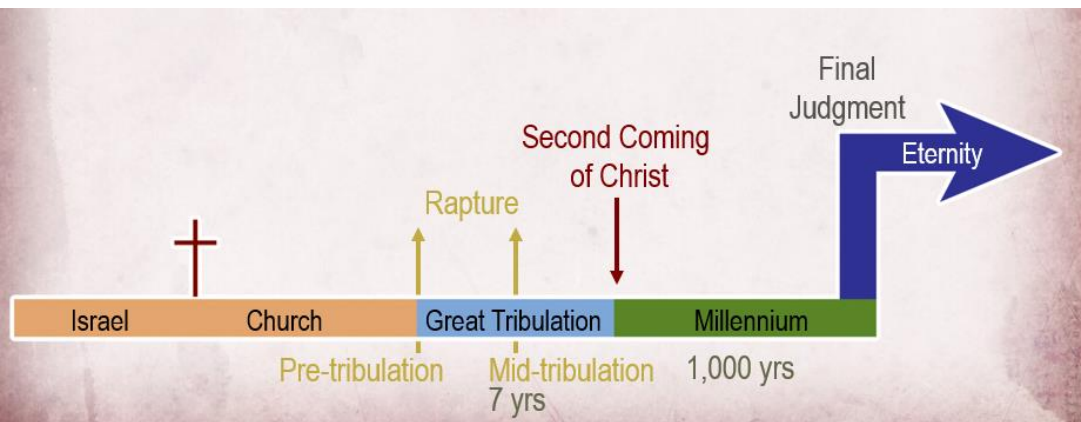
Dispensational Premillennialism Scripture

- **Revelation 3:10** – God will remove Christians before the outpouring of his wrath during the tribulation
- **Genesis 15:7-21** – God’s promises to Abraham and his offspring were unconditional
- **The church is not specifically mentioned between Revelation 4 and 19**



Dispensational Premillennialists

- **J. Nelson Darby, C.I. Scofield, Harry A. Ironside, Gleason Archer, Donald G. Barnhouse, Charles Ryrie, Hal Lindsey, Chuck Smith, John MacArthur, Tim LaHaye, Charles Stanley, Norman L. Giesler, Perry Stone**



Comparison Chart

	Historical Premillennialism	Amillennialism	Postmillennialism	Dispensational Premillennialism
Will Jesus Return Physically?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
When will Jesus Return?	After tribulation; before the millennium	Anytime	After the millennium	After 7-yr tribulation; before the millennium
Rapture & 2 nd Coming occur at the Same time?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No, they are separated by either 7-yrs or 3.5 yrs
Will there be a Tribulation?	Yes	Occurs anytime there are wars, disasters, or Christian Persecution	Either 1 st Century Jewish War or ongoing conflict between good/evil prior to the millennium	Yes
Will Christians Suffer during the Tribulation?	Yes, Christians will go through the tribulation	Yes, Christians will endure persecution until Christ returns	Yes, tribulation occurs when the Gospel is opposed	Christians are raptured before the tribulation or 3.5-yrs into it

Comparison Chart

	Historical Premillennialism	Amillennialism	Postmillennialism	Dispensational Premillennialism
Literal 1000-yr Millennium?	Yes, after the tribulation, Christ will return; reign 1000-yrs	No, the millennium is the reign of Christ in the hearts of believers	No, it is a period of peace when the Gospels reaches all people	Yes, after the tribulation, Christ will return; reign 1000-yrs
Who is saved?	Christians Only	Christians Only	Christians Only	Christians Only
Is Israel relevant to Revelation?	No	No	No	Yes
When was this view held?	Late 1 st Century	AD 400	AD 300	1860

Believers in the Tribulation

Fifth Seal: The Cry of the Martyrs (Revelation 6:9-11)

When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, ***until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.***

- The New King James Version. (1982). (Re 6:9–11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Believers in the Tribulation (Revelation 7:9-17)

***These are the ones who come out of the great
tribulation***

Church Expeditionary Force

- **The Church (Living Word Congregation) must train in peacetime as it would fight in wartime – it must learn to operate and minister in all conditions (peace/security to severe persecution)**