

The Millennium

Rev Ronald Hanko

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Scripture's testimony concerning the coming of Christ raises the question, "When (and how) shall He come?" It is in answering this question that the subject of the *millennium* of [Revelation 20](#) comes up. The different millennial views, premillennialism, postmillennialism and amillennialism, therefore all have to do with the *time* and *manner* of Christ's coming.

From one point of view it is to be regretted that millennialism, something mentioned only a few times in Scripture and that in one chapter of a difficult and symbolic book, should have become such a matter of debate and disagreement among Christians. Nevertheless, the difference between these different millennial views is important and not to be dismissed as of no account. The time and manner of Christ's coming are important!

For example, the constant testimony of Scripture that Jesus comes *quickly*, is of enormous importance for our hope while we live our lives in the world (cf. [II Pet. 3:8](#), 9, 17). So is the fact that He comes suddenly and unexpectedly (cf. [I Thess. 5:1-10](#)).

So, too, the different views of the millennium also raise questions about the nature of Christ's kingdom, whether it is earthly or heavenly, present or future, Jewish or Christian, and these questions, too, are of the utmost importance. We are called to seek the kingdom and we must know what it is we seek, if we are to fulfill this calling.

We will not, therefore, dismiss the subject of the millennium as unimportant, but will attempt to explain the different views, and to show from Scripture what ought to be believed. We do this not to further divisions among Christians or to offend those who hold differing views from ours, but to show what the Word teaches and *why*.

We trust that everyone understands that "millennium" means "a thousand years," and refers to the "thousand years" mentioned six times in [Revelation 20](#). During that thousand years, according to [Revelation 20](#), Satan is bound, and those who have part in the first resurrection live and reign with Christ. At the end of that period, whatever period of time it describes, Satan is loosed for a "little season" the nations are deceived by him and gathered to battle against the holy city. God then intervenes and judgment follows. That much is clear to all from [Revelation 20](#). What that all means, however, is not so clear.

Some believe this is all in the future, including the thousand years itself (premillennialism), others that it has all already begun and that we are already in the period described as a thousand years (amillennialism). Still others teach that while it may have begun, its principle fulfillment is still future and will be seen only when a period of unprecedented peace, blessing and prosperity comes for the gospel and the church (postmillennialism).

In connection with this some believe that the next personal coming of Christ is prior to the millenium (pre-), others, that it is after the millennium (post- and a-). The former also teach *more than one* future coming of Christ, the latter two expect *only one* future coming. To these different views we turn in our next article.

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