

Israel and the Church

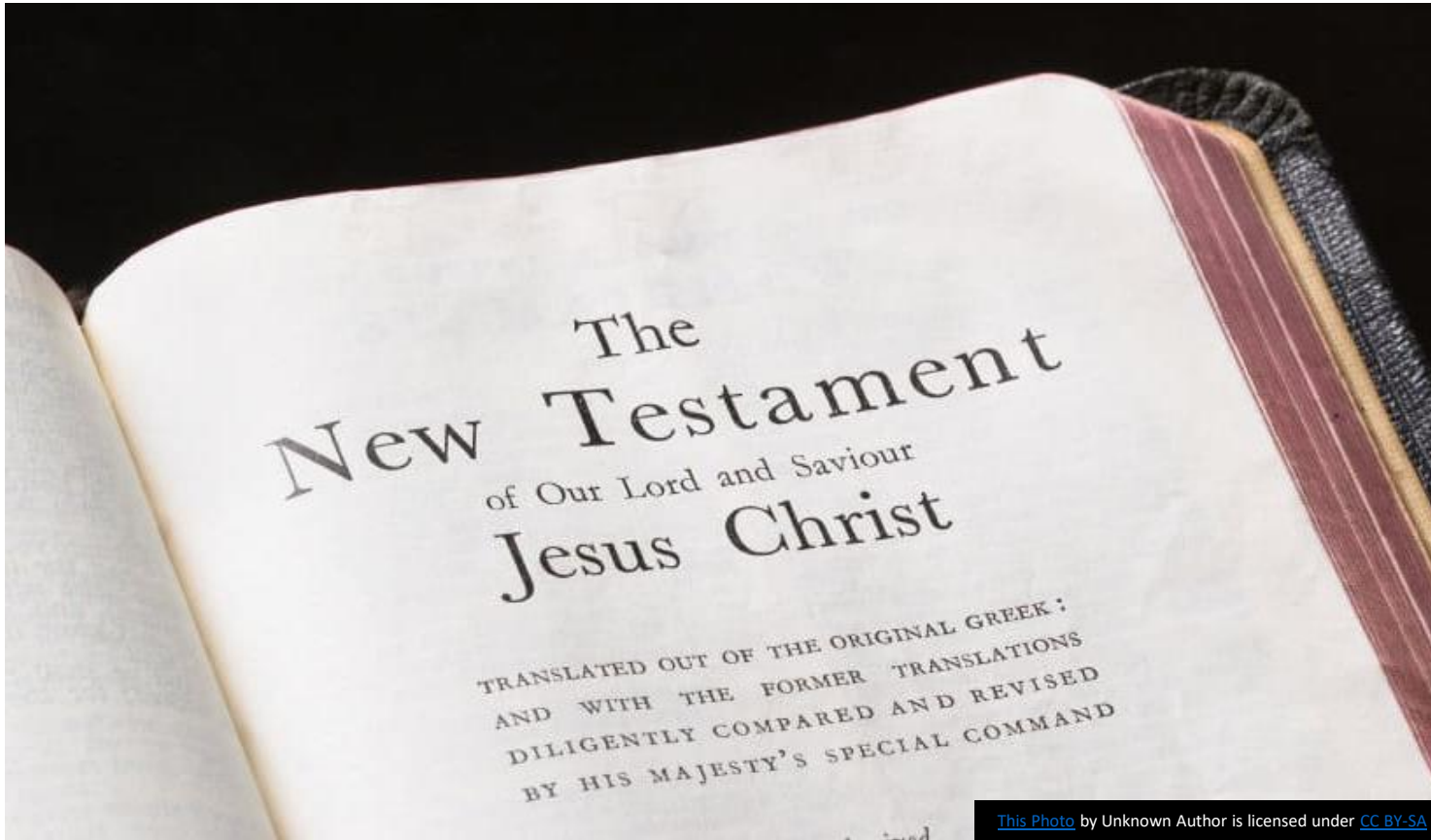
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New Testament Books by Recipient

The New Testament addresses both Jews and Gentiles as Christians

- Gospels
 - Matthew – to the Jews
 - Mark – to the Romans
 - Luke – to the Greeks
 - John – to all
- Paul's Epistles
 - To the Gentiles in the church
- Hebrews through Jude
 - To the Jews in the church
- Revelation
 - To both in the Church

God's Purpose for Israel in the Old Testament

- So that his revelation could come to the world in the scriptures
- To provide us with an understanding of sin and God's righteousness in requiring sacrifice (Gal 3:24 = the law was our "schoolmaster")
- To be the people through which the Messiah could come into the world, suffer, die and rise again to redeem us from sin.
- To be the vehicle whereby God could display his omniscience, omnipotence, righteousness, character, faithfulness, forgiveness, and great love and mercy



God's Purposes for Israel in the Future

- To demonstrate the eternal nature of his promises
 - Even over millennia

“With God, a day is as a thousand years, a thousand years as a day”
- To demonstrate the magnitude of his love and mercy

“as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.” (Romans 11:28-29)



The Church Age (70 AD Until Now)

- Until the full measure of the gentiles has come in (Luke 21)
- When you see these things happening...
- Indicators of the end of the age of the gentiles
 - Israel reestablished as a nation
 - Jerusalem reestablished as their capital
 - The temple rebuilt and in use
- Manifest issues of the church age
 - Jews to be scattered and suffer
 - Christians will be persecuted. "In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world."



When Will the Church Age End?

“When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

“There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

“Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.” Luke 21:20-33





What is the Church?

- Sunogogue - “the gathering”
- Ekklesia – “the called out ones”
- Kuriokous – “of the Lord”: idiom for “the family of the Lord”
- The body of Christ on earth
 - 1 Cor 12:27 – “Now you are the body of Christ, and each of you is a part of it.”
 - Jesus’ physical body that is carrying out his ministry on earth
 - All believers, Jew and Gentile, are part of his body
 - The Holy Spirit mobilizes and actuates the members of Christ’s church

God's Purpose for the Church

- Eph 4:11-13 - "So Christ himself gave the **apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers**, to equip his people for works of service, so that the **body of Christ** may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."
- Eph 4:13-16 – "...speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. **From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.**"
- Matt 28:19-20 – "Therefore go and **make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you**"



God's Purpose for the Church

- To be witnesses of Jesus' life, claims, death and resurrection.
- To make disciples of Jesus, baptizing them in his name, teaching them to obey all he commanded.
- To proclaim repentance & forgiveness in Jesus' name.
- To go throughout the world with this mission, sent by Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit.



The Millennium

- The term comes from Revelation 20.
- Millennium is Latin for "1,000 years."
- Several things are to happen in this period of one thousand years:
 - Satan will be bound in the Abyss (Rev 20: 2-3).
 - Certain believers will come to life & rule with Christ (Rev 20:4-6).
 - At the end, Satan will be released & lead a rebellion of the nations (Rev 20:7-10).

Four Major Eschatological Views of Israel and the Church

- Four views disagree on the timing of the Millennium relative to the return of Christ, and on the nature of the Millennium. This leads to differing views on the Israel and the Church:
 - Premillennial – Jesus returns **before** the Millennium
 - Historic Pre-Millennial
 - Dispensational Pre-Millennial
 - Amillennial - There is **no** [earthly] Millennium
 - Postmillennial – Jesus returns **after** the Millennium

Premillennial View - Historic

- The Millennium is a “silver age” following the return of Christ, preceding the “golden age” of the eternal Kingdom
 - A time of unprecedented peace, righteousness, and prosperity
- The Kingdom
 - Is already present in some restricted sense, but not in its fullest sense.
 - Began partially at Jesus 1st coming, rather than refused and postponed entirely
- Israel and the Church
 - God’s promises to Israel carry over to the church
 - Not a big distinction between the two since the New Jerusalem in Rev 21:12 combines the features of both Israel and the Church

- Revelation 21:12 – “It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel... 14 The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”



Historic Premillennialists in Early Church

view appears very early:

- Papias, died about 130-155 AD, according to Eusebius, *Church History* 3.39
- Justin Martyr, died ~165, see *Dialog w/ Trypho* 80-81
- Irenaeus, died ~200, see *Against Heresies* 5.33-36 = “For all these and other words were unquestionably spoken in reference to the resurrection of the just, which takes place after the coming of Antichrist, and the destruction of all nations under his rule; in [the times of] which [resurrection] the righteous shall reign in the earth, waxing stronger by the sight of the Lord: and through Him they shall become accustomed to partake in the glory of God the Father, and shall enjoy in the kingdom intercourse and communion with the holy angels, and union with spiritual beings; and [with respect to] those whom the Lord shall find in the flesh, awaiting Him from heaven, and who have suffered tribulation, as well as escaped the hands of the Wicked one.”

Premillennial View - Dispensational Theology

- First postulated in 1800s by John Darby
- The Millennium is a 1,000 year “silver age” following the return of Christ
 - A time of unprecedented peace, righteousness, and prosperity
- The Kingdom
 - Was indeed refused by the Jews and the offer of the Kingdom postponed entirely
- Israel and the Church
 - Israel and the Church are two different entities. Although there are Jews in the Church, God will keep his promises to Abraham and restore the Jews to the Land
 - Like Historic Premill, some believe that his promises are also fulfilled in the Church

Amillennial View – Covenant Theology

- First appears in the early church. Systematized by Augustine. The dominant eschatology of the Medieval and Reformation periods. Very popular belief amongst Pilgrims, Puritans.
- The millennial reign of Christ began after his ascension and will continue until Christ's return. This view does not hold that Jesus Christ will physically reign on the earth for exactly 1,000 years.
- The church age is the Millennium. The saints are ruling from heaven, and Satan is bound to such an extent that the Gospel is going out to all the nations.
- Christ's reign during the millennium is [spiritual](#) in nature, at the end of the church age, [Christ will return](#) in [final judgment](#) and establish a permanent reign in the new heaven and new earth.
- The Kingdom is now and is a spiritual reality that all Christians partake in and that is seen presently by faith, but will be grasped by sight when Christ returns.
- The Church is the eschatological fulfillment of Israel and has replaced Israel in prophecy.

Major Arguments for Amillennial View

- Are sacrifices really going to be re-instituted? What about the argument in Hebrews against them?
- The pre-mill scheme is earthly and Jewish, rather than heavenly and Christian.
- The pre-mill scheme duplicates the revolt at Christ's coming so as to have another revolt at the end of the millennium.

Postmillennial View

- Popular view until World War I
- Christ returns after the millennium, hence “post” millennial.
- The Millennium is not the entire church age, but only the latter part. Christians will spread the Gospel to all nations and make the world increasingly more righteous. When this is completed, there will be a time of great peace and prosperity.
- The Kingdom: a spiritual entity experienced on earth through the Christianizing affect of the Gospel.
- The Church is the eschatological fulfillment of Israel and has replaced Israel in prophecy.

Postmillennial View vs. Amillennial and Premillennial Views

- In the A-Mill scheme, now is the silver age, when Satan is bound and the Gospel can spread. Jesus hasn't returned yet. When he does, the golden age begins.
- In the Post-Mill scheme, the church will succeed in spreading the gospel, bringing in a silver age before Jesus returns. Then, the golden age.
- In the Pre-Mill scheme, Jesus will return. But before the golden age of the eternal state, there will be a silver age in which government is good, but sinners are still living free on earth.

Major Arguments for Post- Millennial View

- Same arguments as the amillennialists use against pre-mills.

Plus

- Is the church age really going to be a defeat rather than a victory? Doesn't Christ promise victory?
- Don't the pre-mill and a-mill schemes discourage effort, since God is going to bring in the kingdom without our help?

What About the Church?

- God has worked through the church for 2000 years
- The impact of the church is diminishing in the west
 - Europe is largely secular
 - More Muslims in most European nations than professing Christians
 - US has 20% fewer professing Christians in last ten years
 - Persecution of Christians is expanding worldwide
- Every day brings news of Israel
 - 100,000 Jews are immigrating to Israel because of their success in handling the coronavirus



What About The State of Israel?

- Amillennial and Postmillennial views do not easily accept a literal fulfillment of the prophecies related to the Jewish restoration to the land of Israel.
- But Israel continues to see very specific and detailed fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecies.
 - Back in the land
 - Jerusalem as their capital
 - Surrounded by enemies
 - All who come against them are defeated, often miraculously so
 - Jews have been coming to Christ since the 70's in large numbers
 - The wall between the Evangelical Church and the Jews has almost disappeared



Prayer Allowed on Temple Mount

- *Jewish worshippers pray in full view of police on Temple Mount*
- Led by Rabbi Eliyahu Weber and joyfully singing “Let us go up to the Temple,” a quorum of 10 Jewish men ascended the Temple Mount on Thursday morning at the beginning of non-Muslim visiting hours at 7:00 a.m.

Jerusalem Post, 12/19/19



(photo credit: THE ASSOCIATION OF TEMPLE MOUNT ORGANIZATIONS)



Money is being raised through selling temple coins honoring King Cyrus, Donald Trump, and Arthur Balfour

Temple Rebuilding is Already Planned

The Figs Are Appearing

