

Introduction to the Book of Revelation

Part 2

VIII. Four Main Interpretive Views of Revelation

A. Preterist View

1. Emphasizes Revelation's meaning for the _____ church and sees many visions as fulfilled in events near John's time.
2. Leans heavily on the book's _____ language (Revelation 1:1–3; Revelation 22:6; Revelation 22:10).
3. Often connects major symbols to _____, _____, and covenant judgment themes.
4. Partial preterists still affirm a future _____ return of Christ and final judgment (Revelation 19:11–21; Revelation 20:11–15; Revelation 21:1–5).

B. Futurist View

1. Emphasizes that much of Revelation from chapter 4 or 6 onward refers to events still _____.
2. Often reads _____, _____, _____, and the _____ as part of an end-times tribulation period (Revelation 6–18).
3. Focuses on a _____ return of Christ and end-of-age judgment (Revelation 19:11–16; Revelation 20:11–15).

C. Historicist View

1. Sees Revelation as a _____ of church history from the apostolic era until Christ's return.
2. Interprets symbols as corresponding to major _____, _____, or _____ across centuries.

D. Idealist View

1. Emphasizes Revelation's symbols as portraying _____ spiritual realities and recurring patterns.
2. Focuses on the _____ between the kingdom of Christ and the powers of evil in every age (Revelation 12:7–12; Revelation 14:12).

E. Note on mixed approaches:

1. Many interpreters combine approaches, recognizing that Revelation can address the first century, the ongoing church age, and the final consummation.

2. This keeps the book anchored historically while also allowing it to speak to the church in every generation.

IX. Three Prominent Views of the Tribulation

A. Clarifying what “tribulation” means

1. In one sense, Christians in every era experience tribulation because following Jesus brings _____ with the world (John 16:33; Acts 14:22).
2. In another sense, many interpreters believe Revelation describes a concentrated, climactic period of tribulation at the _____ of the _____ (Revelation 7:14; Revelation 13:7–10).

B. _____-Tribulation View

1. Christ gathers His church _____ a final, concentrated tribulation.
2. Often appeals to deliverance language such as being _____ from a coming “hour of trial” (Revelation 3:10).

C. _____-Tribulation View

1. Christ gathers His church _____ through a final tribulation.
2. Often distinguishes between tribulation caused by _____ and _____ poured out by God (compare Revelation 12–13 with Revelation 15–16).

D. _____-Tribulation View

1. Christ gathers His church _____ the tribulation at His return.
2. Often appeals to the pattern of Christ’s coming after tribulation language (Matthew 24:29–31) alongside the call for endurance (Revelation 13:10; Revelation 14:12).

X. Three Views of the Millennium (Revelation 20) and Postmillennialism

A. Premillennialism

1. Christ returns _____ the millennium (Revelation 19:11–16 followed by Revelation 20:1–6).
2. The millennium is a _____ reign of Christ, often understood as literal and earthly.
3. Two main forms:
 - a) Dispensational premillennialism (often pre-tribulation)
 - b) Historic premillennialism (often post-tribulation)
4. Early Christian example of millennial expectation: Justin Martyr speaks of “a thousand years in Jerusalem.”

Note: In the same chapter, Justin also acknowledges disagreement among Christians on this point.

B. Amillennialism

1. The “thousand years” is symbolic of Christ’s _____ reign during the church age (Revelation 20:1–6).
2. Satan is _____ in a real sense so that the gospel advances to the nations (Revelation 20:2–3; Matthew 12:29).
3. Christ returns _____ at the end of the age to raise the dead, judge, and renew creation (John 5:28–29; Revelation 20:11–15; Revelation 21:1–5).
4. Augustine expressed this view by describing the thousand years as “the time of His _____ coming.”

C. Postmillennialism

1. Christ returns after a long period of widespread gospel _____ and kingdom influence in the world.
2. The millennium is understood as a period of extensive gospel victory _____ Christ’s return, with many nations discipled and justice expanding (Matthew 28:18–20; Psalm 2:8; Isaiah 2:2–4).
3. Postmillennialism is not the belief that the world becomes _____ before Christ returns, but that the gospel’s influence becomes unusually extensive before the end.

XI. How We Will Approach Revelation in This Study

- A. We will keep Jesus at the _____. Revelation is “the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Revelation 1:1).
- B. We will start with what the text clearly says before we _____ what it might imply (Nehemiah 8:8; 2 Timothy 2:15).
- C. We will pay close attention to _____ background because Revelation constantly uses Old Testament language and imagery (examples: Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Isaiah, Exodus).
- D. We will recognize that Revelation includes _____ and _____ patterns, not only a straight timeline (example: repeated visions of judgment and victory across Revelation 6–7, 11, 14, 19).
- E. We will avoid _____-driven interpretations and focus on _____-driven interpretation (Revelation 1:3; Revelation 14:12).
- F. Our aim will be _____, _____, _____, and _____ (Revelation 4:11; Revelation 5:12–13; Revelation 19:6–8).

XII. Keys to Remember

- A. Revelation was written for pressured believers who needed _____ and _____ (Revelation 1:9; Revelation 2:10).

- B. Revelation reveals who is truly in control: _____ on the throne and _____ the victorious Lamb (Revelation 4:2; Revelation 5:6–10).
- C. Revelation calls believers to overcome through faithful _____ and steadfast _____ (Revelation 12:11; Revelation 14:12).
- D. Revelation assures the church that evil will be judged and God will make all things new (Revelation 19:1–2; Revelation 20:11–15; Revelation 21:1–5).
- E. As we move forward chapter by chapter, we will read _____, _____, and _____, trusting God to make clear what He intends, and remembering that prophecy is often best understood in retrospect (Luke 24:44–45; John 12:16; Daniel 12:8–9; 1 Peter 1:10–12).