

“Eschatology”
(Part 45: Postmillennialism and Amillennialism)

I. Postmillennialism and Amillennialism.

D. Postmillennialism in the New Testament:

1. Review.

- a. Premillennialism is excluded by Scripture: The Millennium must take place prior to Christ’s Second Coming.
- b. Only Amillennialism and Postmillennialism are plausible.
 - (i) Both agree on what will happen when Christ returns.
 - (ii) But they differ on how predominant the kingdom of Christ will be in history.
 - (a) Is the restoration of all things reserved for the eternal state?
 - (b) Or will it break into history in some measure prior to Christ’s coming?
 - (c) This difference can have a profound impact on us.
- c. Postmillennialism in the Old Testament: reversal of the Fall predicted.
 - (i) Originally:
 - (a) God made Adam in His image, gave him authority as His vicegerent, blessed with the ability to multiply, and charged him to fill the earth and subdue it for His glory: “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth’” (Gen. 1:27-28; Cultural Mandate).
 - (b) In the Fall, however, Adam lost the image of God; lost his authority over the earth (while Satan usurped it); would now fill the earth with sinful men (total depravity); would subdue the earth, but now for man’s glory, not God’s; would now have to fight the Creation itself (curse on the ground), and would have his life cut short through sickness and death (Gen. 3:17-19).
 - (ii) Christ would come and reverse these effects: “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice” (Gen. 22:18).
 - (a) He would crush the serpent’s head: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel” (Gen. 3:15; cf. Matt. 12:29).
 - (b) He would regain the authority lost by man and usurped by the devil.
 - (1) All nations would *serve* and *worship* Him: “I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13-14; cf. Isa. 9:6-7; Ps. 22:27-28; 72:8-11).
 - (2) His kingdom would *fill* the earth: “Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth” (Dan. 2:35; cf. v. 44).

(c) He would gather a people to complete the Cultural Mandate.

- (1) They would be His people by reward: “But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; *if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring*, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:10-12).
- (2) He would renew their hearts and cause them to walk in His ways:
 - (A) “Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live” (Deu. 30:6).
 - (B) “And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God” (Eze. 11:19-20).

(d) As His kingdom advances, it would bring peace and prosperity:

- (1) “The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Now it will come about that in the last days the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning His ways and that we may walk in His paths.’ For the law will go forth from Zion and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, and will render decisions for many peoples; and they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war” (Isa. 2:1-4; cf. Micah 4:1-5).
- (2) “There will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying. No longer will there be in it an infant *who lives but a few* days, or an old man who does not live out his days; for the youth will die at the age of one hundred and the one who does not reach the age of one hundred will be *thought* accursed” (Isa. 65:19-20; cf. vv. 17-25).

(e) He would completely reverse the effects of the Fall on man and Creation.

- (1) “As water evaporates from the sea, and a river becomes parched and dried up, so man lies down and does not rise. Until the heavens are no longer, he will not awake nor be aroused out of his sleep” (Job 14:11-12; cf. 19:25-27; Ps. 49:15).
- (2) “He will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; for the LORD has spoken” (Isa. 25:8; 26:19).

2. Postmillennialism in the New Testament: reversal of the Fall accomplished.

a. Did Christ crush the serpent’s head as predicted?

- (i) He bound Satan in His ministry: “But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong *man*, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. But when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder” (Luke 11:20-22; cf. Matt. 12:29; Luke 10:17-19).
- (ii) His victory was definitive on the cross:

- (a) “Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself” (John 12:31-32).
 - (b) “Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives” (Heb. 2:14-15; cf. 1 John 3:8).
- b. Did He take back the authority usurped by Satan as promised?
 - (i) God exalted Him to the place of highest authority: “For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:8-11; cf. Matt. 28:18).
 - (ii) He has placed all things under His feet: “*These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (Eph. 1:19-23; cf. Acts 2:34-36).
 - (iii) He now rules over all the kings of the earth: “John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and *the ruler of the kings of the earth*” (Rev. 1:4-5).
 - (iv) He will reign until all His enemies are defeated: “For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet” (1 Cor. 15:25; cf. Heb. 10:12-13; Rev. 20:4).
- c. Did He gather a people to do His work as prophesied?
 - (i) He defeated the strong man and took possession of His people:
 - (a) “Or how can anyone enter the strong man’s house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong *man*? And then he will plunder his house” (Matt. 12:29; cf. Luke 11:20-22).
 - (b) “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:13-14).
 - (ii) He regenerated them by His Spirit: “The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8).
 - (iii) He renewed them in the image of God: “Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him” (Col. 3:9-10).
 - (iv) That they might serve Him: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them” (Eph. 2:10; cf. Titus 2:14).
- d. Will His kingdom fill the earth and all the nations serve and worship Him?
 - (i) As the kingdom advances, Satan retreats: “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it” (Matt. 16:18).
 - (ii) His reign will bring the subjection of all authority:
 - (a) “Then *comes* the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death” (1 Cor. 15:24-26).
 - (b) “For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on

earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11).

(iii) Those nations that don’t submit will be destroyed:

- (a) “And she gave birth to a son, a male *child*, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne” (Rev. 12:5).
- (b) “Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware” (Ps. 2:8-9).

(iv) His kingdom will fill the whole earth:

- (a) “Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; *for all the nations will come and worship before You*, for Your righteous acts have been revealed” (Rev. 15:4).
- (b) “He presented another parable to them, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; and this is smaller than all *other* seeds, but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches’” (Matt. 13:31-32).
- (c) “He spoke another parable to them, ‘The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened’” (v. 33).

(v) Because this is promised, Christ instructs us to seek this in our prayers:

- (a) “Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven’” (Matt. 6:9-10).
- (b) We are to do this until the Great Commission has been completed: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (Matt. 28:19-20).

e. Will His kingdom bring peace?

- (i) Until the time the kingdom comes in power, there will be tribulation.
- (ii) But when the nations have been discipled and have submitted to God’s will, then the peace that was prophesied by the angels will be fulfilled.
 - (a) “And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased’” (Luke 2:13-14; cf. Rom. 14:17).
 - (b) “And He will judge between the nations, and will render decisions for many peoples; and they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war” (Isa. 2:4).

f. Will He reverse the effects of the Fall on man and the Creation?

- a. He will return to raise and transform our bodies: “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself” (Phil. 3:20-21).
- b. He will create a New Heavens and a New Earth: “But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells” (2 Pet. 3:13).
- c. Things will vastly improve when the kingdom comes with power, but the full renewal awaits the consummation.