## VIEWS OF THE SECOND COMING

### INTRODUCTION
A. This subject has caused great arguments.
B. The how is not certain, the when is not certain, but the event is sure!
C. Where did you get what you believe?
D. What is the purpose of the Second Coming?
E. Does the Bible teach a systematic eschatology?
F. Why is our day so interested in the Second Coming?
G. All theories concerning the physical return of Jesus are conservative views.

### EARLY CHURCH PREMILLENNIAL (Historical Premillennial)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incarnation</th>
<th>Ascension</th>
<th>Judgment Seat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6000 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 days of creation</td>
<td>Calvary</td>
<td>2nd Coming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>7th Day of Creation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Presuppositions**
1. History of the Earth is analogous to 7 days of Creation (Epistle of Barnabas, Irenaeus, Methodius)
2. Each day represents 1000 years (II Pet. 3:8; Ps. 90:4)

**Advocates**
1. Papias, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Methodius
2. George Ladd (Historical Premillennial)

**Strengths**
1. Certain events must occur before Parousia
   a. Gospel to all nations (Matt. 24:14)
   b. Conversion of Israel (Rom. 11:25ff)
   c. Great Apostasy (Matt.24:10; II Thess. 2:3)
   d. Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21)
   e. Revealing of Man of Sin - Antichrist (II Thess. 2:3)
2. A visible, universal Rapture and Coming

### AMILLENNIAL (realized or inaugurated millennium)

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<td>Calvary</td>
<td>2nd Coming</td>
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**Presuppositions**
1. The Church is Spiritual Israel (Gal. 3:9,29; 6:16; Rom. 2:5,9, 28-29; Rev. 1:6; I Pet. 3:6)
2. One Covenant (Old and New, Rom. 4 - Abraham is Paul’s example for justification by faith)
3. Christ’s Kingdom is not temporal (John 18:36)
4. One Second Coming
   One Resurrection
   One Judgment
   The Eternal Kingdom

**Advocates**
1. Some Early Church Fathers
2. Augustine
3. Zwingli
4. Calvin (Presbyterianism)
5. Ray Summers (Baptist)
6. Jay Adams (Reformed)
7. Most Churches of Christ

**Strengths**
1. Victory won at Calvary, not Millennium
2. Satan bound now
3. Unity of God’s plan of redemption

### POSTMILLENNIAL (millennium now)

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<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvary</td>
<td>2nd Coming</td>
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</table>

**Presuppositions**
1. Man’s efforts will bring in the Kingdom (II Pet. 3:12; Matt. 6:10)
2. Things are getting better and better

**Advocates**
1. Jonathan Edwards
2. A. H. Strong
3. W. T. Conner
4. Most 19th Century Scholars

**Strengths**
1. Takes Second Coming Seriously
2. Man has a part in God’s plan
3. Optimistic about contemporary culture
### Dispensational Premillennial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>69th week of Daniel</th>
<th>Secret Ascension</th>
<th>Judgment of Believers' (II Cor. 5:10)</th>
<th>Judgment of Nations (Matt. 25)</th>
<th>Satan’s Little Season (Rev. 20:7-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Several covenants (Adam to Moses)  ↓</td>
<td>(Church Age) ↑ 2</td>
<td>↓ 3</td>
<td>70th week of Daniel</td>
<td>Final Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarnation</td>
<td>Calvary</td>
<td>Secret Coming</td>
<td>Visible Return</td>
<td>Final Judgment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The ▼ symbol represents Christ coming to earth.
2. The ★ symbol represents Christ’s ascension back to heaven after His resurrection or the rapture of believers.
3. The ↓ symbol represents the cross of Calvary.
4. The ● symbol represents a throne of judgement.

### Presuppositions

1. The Bible is divided into seven distinct dispensations
2. Literal fulfillment of every OT prophecy to Israel
3. Church and Israel totally separate. The Church is God’s Plan B when the Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah
4. The Church will be secretly raptured, before the Tribulation. The book of Revelation, after chapter 5, is Jewish.
5. NT interpreted in light of OT prophecy

### Advocates

- **1. John Darby**
  - Takes Bible prophecy seriously (Plymouth Brethren)

- **2. Clarence Larkin**
  - Any-moment return (Matt. 24:40-42)

- **3. D. L. Moody**
  - Church and Israel totally separate. The Church is God’s Plan B when the Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah

- **4. C. I. Scofield (Reference Bible)**
  - Church and Israel totally separate. The Church is God’s Plan B when the Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah

- **5. Dallas Seminary**
  - Pentecost, Ryrie, Walvoord

- **6. W. A. Criswell**
  - Southern Baptist

- **7. Hal Lindsey**
  - Bible Churches (Dallas Seminary)

### Strengths

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### BOB’S TENTATIVE OPINION (Historical Premillennial/Post-Tribulationist/Nonmillennial)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creation</th>
<th>Second Coming</th>
<th>Judgment Seat (II Cor. 5:10; Matt. 25; Rev. 20)</th>
<th>General Resurrection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garden of Eden (Gen. 1-2)</td>
<td>Ascension</td>
<td>Heaven as a new Garden of Eden (Isa. 11:6-9; Rev. 21-22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvary</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↑ Rapture (I Thess. 4:17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>T h e   L a s t   D a y s</td>
<td></td>
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### Presuppositions

1. One Plan (Gen. 3:15)
2. Unity of the people of God (Rom. 2:28-29:4; Gal. 3:29; 6:16)
3. Apocalyptic nature of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation (literary genre)
4. OT saw one coming (Two Ages), one visible coming
5. One visible coming (Matt. 24:27)
   - One Rapture (I Thess. 4:13-18)
   - One Resurrection
   - One Judgment (Matt. 25; Rev. 20)
   - The Eternal Kingdom

### Dialectical Tensions:

1. between Old Covenant prophetic models and New Covenant apostolic models
2. between the Bible’s monotheism (one God for all) and the election of Israel
3. between the conditional aspect of biblical covenants and promises (“if...then”) and the unconditional faithfulness of God to fallen mankind’s redemption
4. between Near Eastern literary genres and modern western literary models
5. between the Kingdom of God as present, yet future
6. between belief in the imminent return of Christ and the belief that some events must happen first

### Conclusion

2. There is no approved or majority opinion on the Second Coming.
3. Every generation of believers forces the Bible into its own historical and cultural settings.
4. There is no systematic eschatology in the NT, but truth is revealed for us to “be ready” and “be active.”
5. Only conservatives fight over this issue.
6. It is every generation of believers’ hope, encouragement, and motivation to expect the Second Coming in their lifetime (Mark 13:33-37).

### Notes:

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