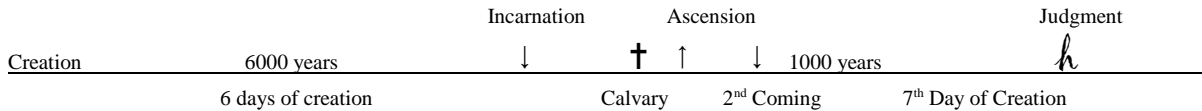


VIEWS OF THE SECOND COMING

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)



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)

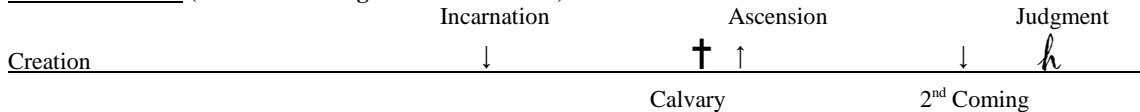
Advocates

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)



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

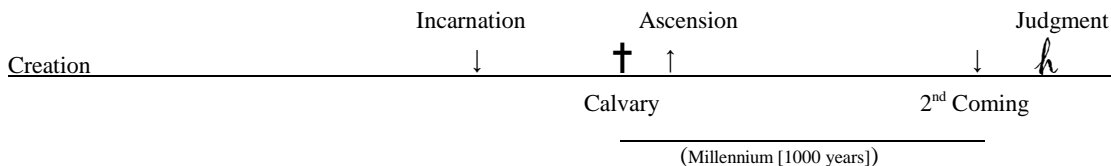
Advocates

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)



Presuppositions

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

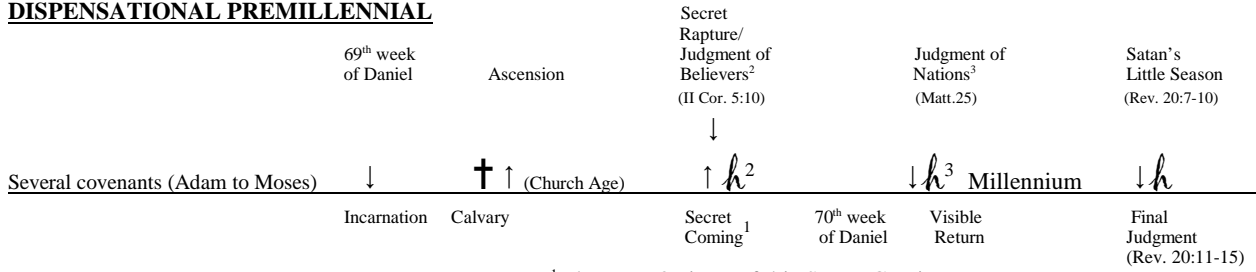
Advocates

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



¹ There are 3 views of this Secret Coming:

- 1) Pre-tribulationist
- 2) Mid-tribulationist
- 3) Post-tribulationist

² Judgment of Believers (II Cor. 5:10)

³ Judgment of Nations (Matt. 25)

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

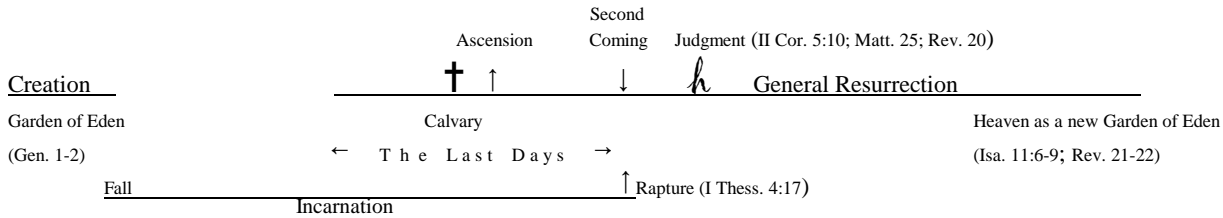
Advocates

1. John Darby (Plymouth Brethren)
2. Clarence Larkin
3. D. L. Moody
4. C. I. Scofield (Reference Bible)
5. Dallas Seminary (Pentecost, Ryrie, Walvoord)
6. W. A. Criswell (Southern Baptist)
7. Hal Lindsey
8. Tim LaHaye
9. Bible Churches (Dallas Seminary)

Strengths

1. Takes Bible prophecy seriously (especially Daniel)
2. Any-moment return (Matt. 24:40-42)

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



Presuppositions

1. One Plan (Gen. 3:15)
2. Unity of the people of God (Rom. 2:28-29; 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

1. John Calvin said of the book of Revelation, "Only God knows what this means."
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).