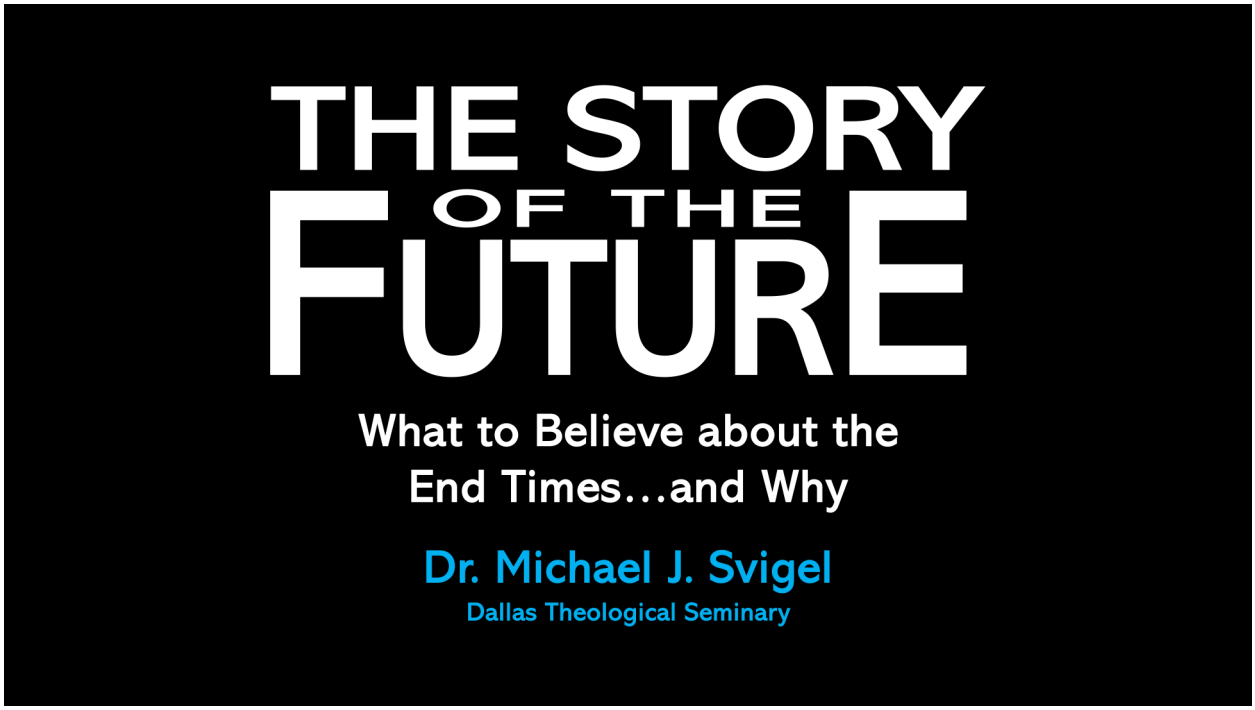


NOTES

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2026

Session 1: The Coming Kingdom in Context
Introduction; The Three "Rs" of Eschatology; Where Do We Go from Here?
The Imago-Dei Mission; The Kingdom of God

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2026

Session 2 The Coming Kingdom in Scripture
The Prophets' Vision of the Kingdom; The Kingdom in the Gospels;
The Kingdom in Acts**;** The Kingdom in Paul

Session 3: The Coming Kingdom in Revelation 20
The Coming of Christ and the Millennium; The Binding of Satan
The First and Second Resurrections; The Coming Kingdom in the Earliest Church

Session 4: The Coming Day of the Lord
The Day of the Lord in the Old Testament; The Day of the Lord in the New Testament
The Future Day of the Lord

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2026

Session 5: The Coming Assumption of the Church
The Reality of the Assumption; The Timing of the Assumption

Session 1
The Coming Kingdom in Context

1.1 Introduction

1.2 The Three "Rs" of Eschatology

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 3: *Bodily Resurrection in the History of the Church*. www.fathersonthefuture.com

Three Things on Which All Christians Agree

- **The RETURN of Christ as Judge and King**—to bring all things to completion and to reign forever (Acts 1:11)
- **The RESURRECTION of the dead**—the righteous raised bodily to eternal life and the wicked raised bodily to eternal condemnation (Acts 24:14–15)
- **The RESTORATION of all creation**—when all sin, suffering, death, and devil will be banished forever (Rom 8:21–23)

1.3 Where Do We Go from Here?

Though all Christians have always agreed on the foundation of the **return**, **resurrection**, and **restoration**, the details of just how God will accomplish the end of the story have been disputed almost from the beginning. The disagreements relate to three major areas: 1) **Millennial Views**: Amillennialism, Postmillennialism, or Premillennialism? 2) **Tribulation Views**: Preterism, Historicism, Eclecticism/Idealism, or Futurism? 3) **Rapture Views**: Post-Tribulation, Pre-Wrath, Mid-tribulation, Partial/Multi-Phase, or Pretribulation?

1.3.a Millennial Views

- **Amillennialism:** The *Realized* Kingdom—Christ's millennial reign is present and heavenly/spiritual.
- **Postmillennialism:** The *Realizable* Kingdom—The millennium will begin when the gospel converts the world before Christ's return.
- **Premillennialism:** The *Unrealized* Kingdom—Christ's millennial reign will follow His second coming.

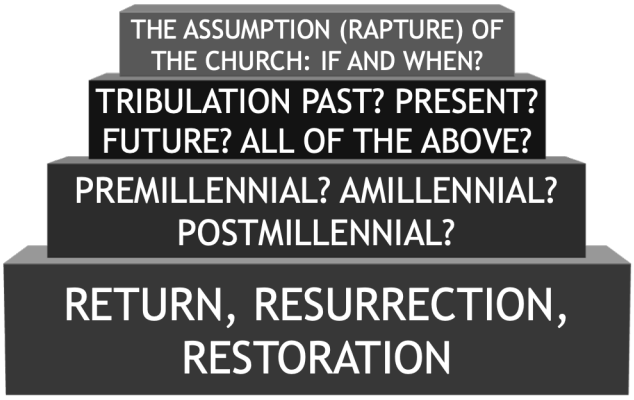
Amillennialism

"*Amillennialism*…holds that the millennium is not limited to a thousand years but includes the entire period of time between the first and second coming of Christ….This period is marked by conflict, martyrdom, and revolt against God. Revelation 20 depicts the church militant, not the church triumphant….There is a real millennium despite the *a*millennial nomenclature. The millennial age in which Christ rules, however, is a present reality and not a future hope."[1]

[1] Kim Riddlebarger, *A Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 29, 234.

Postmillennialism

"The thing that distinguishes the biblical postmillennialist, then, from amillennialism and premillennialism is his belief that Scripture teaches the success of the great commission in this age of the church. The optimistic confidence that the world nations will become disciples of Christ, that the church will grow to fill the earth, and that Christianity will become the dominant principle rather than the exception to the rule distinguishes postmillennialism from the other viewpoints."[2]



Premillennialism

"Premillennialism…is the belief that the future kingdom that comes with Jesus will undergo a two-stage fulfillment: first, a millennial phase, a one-thousand year reign of Christ and his saints from the time of his coming to the time of the final judgment, and secondly, the final, eternal kingdom of God, extending from the time of the final judgment throughout all eternity, set within the conditions of God's new creation. The word *premillennial* refers to the order of Christ's coming in relation to the millennial phase of the kingdom: his coming is premillennial because he comes before the millennium."[3]

1.3.b Tribulation Views

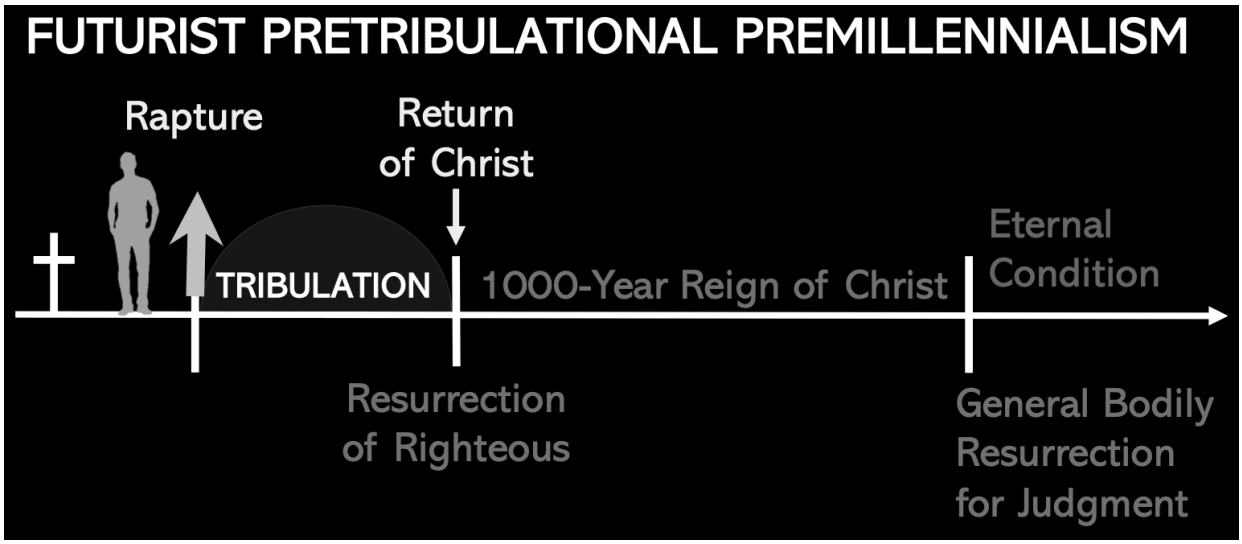
- **Preterism:** The Tribulation described in the Olivet Discourse and the Book of Revelation already occurred in the first century or so.
- **Historicism:** Tribulation(s) have been ongoing throughout church history and will continue until Christ returns.
- **Futurism:** The Tribulation described in the Olivet Discourse and Book of Revelation will occur during a distinct period in the future.
- **Eclecticism/Idealism:** Some Tribulation prophecies have been fulfilled in the past, some ongoing throughout history, and some await future fulfilment.

[2] Greg Bahnsen, "The Prima Facie Acceptability of Postmillennialism," *Journal of Christian Reconstruction* 3 (Winter 1976-77): 68.

[3] Craig Blaising, "The Kingdom that Comes with Jesus: Premillennialism and the Harmony of Scripture," *SBJT* 14.1 (2010): 4-5.

1.3.c Rapture Views

- **Post-Tribulation Rapture:** The assumption/rapture of the church will occur after the future Tribulation period.
- **Pre-Wrath Rapture:** The assumption/rapture of the church will occur near the end of the future Tribulation but prior to the final wrath and earthly judgments.
- **Mid-Tribulation Rapture:** The assumption/rapture of the church will occur halfway through the future Tribulation period.
- **Partial/Multi-Phase Rapture:** The timing of the rapture depends on holiness of believers, with some taken up earlier, some later, throughout the future Tribulation period.
- **Pretribulation Rapture:** The assumption/rapture of the church will occur prior to the start of the future Tribulation period.



1.4 The Imago-Dei Mission

The End of the Story in Light of the Beginning of the Story

- God's original plan for humanity was the fulfillment of the *Imago Dei Mission.*
- The Fall postponed God's plan, but it did not cancel it . . . *and God has no Plan B*.
- In the End, Christ will fulfill the *Imago Dei Mission*: the conformity of all creation to the likeness of heaven on earth.
- This will be the full realization of the Kingdom of God on earth.

What is the Imago Dei Mission?

"Then God said, 'Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over the cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth'" (Gen 1:26).

"God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth'" (Gen 1:28).

"Humanity is expected to subdue the earth and exercise dominion over the other living creatures. . . . [God's] blessing involves both relationship and the ability to carry out a function. Here, humans are placed in a particular relationship with YHWH (the only creatures made in his image) and granted the ability to carry out the particular functions of dominion, subduing, and reproduction."[4]

"The mandate to subdue the earth was intended for its good, just as God's own ordering of the earth was 'good.' As humanity fulfilled its instruction to multiply and fill the earth, this blessing would move forward to spill out beyond the borders of the garden of Eden to the rest of the earth as well. As humanity takes seriously its function of multiplying and filling the earth, they will move out into the area beyond the garden. In so doing, they will need to subdue the land that is outside of the garden so that it becomes like the land that is within the boundaries of the garden."[5]

[4] Paul Krüger and Matthew Haynes, "Creation Rest: Genesis 2:1–3 and the First Creation Account," *OTE* 30.3 (2017): 667–668, 677.

[5] Krüger and Haynes, "Creation Rest," 680.

What Happened to Paradise?

"And he was saying, 'Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom!' And He said to him, 'Truly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.'" (Luke 23:42–43)

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 2: *Had Adam and Eve Eaten from the Tree of Life?* www.fathersonthefuture.com

"I know a man in Christ, who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a man was caught up to the third heaven. And I know how such a man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows—was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak." (2 Cor 12:2–4)

"The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes, I will grant to eat from the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.'" (Revelation 2:7)

"Christ will return one day with all the inhabitants of paradise to consummate his reign on earth. In the meantime, those who die confessing (with the believing thief) faith in Christ's kingdom can rest assured they will be with Christ in paradise during the strange, unexpected in-between time between Jesus' first and second coming."[6]

Simply put, Paradise—the intersection of the heavenly and earthly realms—once occupied space in this world prior to the fall "in Eden, in the east" (Gen 2:8). After the fall, this Paradise, along with the tree of life, was taken up into the "third heaven" (2 Cor 12:2, 4) and became the place of departed saints (Luke 23:43) as well as those who, like Enoch or Elijah, had been assumed bodily into heaven. In certain instances, the heavenly and earthly realms intersect, and humans catch a glimpse of Paradise (e.g., Exod 24:1–11; Matt 17:1–8) or they are taken up to Paradise (2 Cor 12:1–4). In the coming kingdom in the future, Paradise will return to earth, which will then be progressively transformed into the quality of Paradise itself (Isa 51:3; Ezek 36:34–35; Rev 2:7; 22:1–2). Thus, the coming kingdom is to be identified with the return of Paradise to earth.

1.5 The Kingdom of God

When we look to Scripture for the use of "kingdom," we see the term used in the following distinct—though often related—ways:

1. God's universal sovereign rule over all creation, all nations, and all people (Ps 22:28; Dan 4:3, 34; 6:26). This kingdom is characterized by divine virtues of justice (Ps 45:6), grace, compassion, mercy, universal goodness, glory, power, faithfulness, and holiness (145:8–13).

[6] Christopher A. Hall, "Christ's Kingdom and Paradise," *CT* 47.11 (Nov 2003): 79.

2. Human, earthly kingdoms (e.g., Gen 10:10; Ps 68:32; Matt 4:8; Luke 4:5, etc.), though even these "kingdoms of the earth" are under the sovereign rule of God (#1 above) (2 Kgs 19:15; 2 Chron 20:6; 36:23; Dan 2:37).
3. The people of Israel as a whole—God's unique "kingdom of priests" under God's direct, unique theocratic rule, intended to acknowledge and reflect #1 above (Exod 19:6; Num 24:7).
4. The kingdom of Israel under a human king—Saul or David and his dynasty (Deut 17:18; 1 Sam 13:13; 2 Sam 3:10; 7:16; 1 Kgs 2:12), which was nevertheless viewed as the kingdom of YHWH mediated through that human ruler among his special theocratic nation (#1 and #3 above) (2 Chron 13:8).[7]
5. The divided kingdom of Israel in the north (1 Kings 11:31) or Judah in the south (2 Chron 11:17).
6. The Messianic kingdom, which seems to combine elements of the previous expressions of the kingdom, particularly #1, #3, and #4 (Isa 9:7; Dan 2:44; 7:14, 18, 22, 27 [cf. Dan 4:3, 34; 6:26]; Mic 4:8; Mark 11:10; Luke 1:33).
7. A spiritual and ethical way of life in keeping with God's values, priorities, virtues, and standards—the rule of God in the minds and lives of those submitting to him (Matt 5:3, 10; 6:33). This form of the kingdom is realizable in the present through proclamation and faith (Matt 13:24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47; 19:14; John 18:36; Rom 14:17).
8. The imminent coming kingdom brought about by the preaching first of John the Baptist then of Jesus—the "gospel of the kingdom" (Matt 3:2; 4:17, 23; 9:35; 10:7; Luke 4:43; 10:9; Acts 8:12), which may be identified with or related to #6–7 above as the means by which those aspects of the kingdom are more fully realized (Matt 24:14).
9. Closely associated with #6–8, the term "kingdom" sometimes refers more strictly to the future eschatological kingdom under Jesus and fully manifested in the world (Matt 7:21; 8:11; 13:41, 43; 20:21; Mark 14:25; Luke 13:28–29; 21:31; 22:16; 22:30; Acts 1:6; 1 Cor 15:24; 2 Tim 4:1).
10. The present church as that body fulfilling the spiritual and ethical life of faith (#7) and foreshadowing the coming eschatological kingdom (#9) (Matt 16:18–19; 21:43; 25:34; 26:29; John 3:3–5; Col 1:13).
11. On occasion, the eschatological term seems to refer to a kingdom in the realm of heaven itself, apart from and "above" the earth, though necessarily under the universal rule of God over all things (#1) (2 Tim 4:18).[8]

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 4 *"Your Will Be Done" as "Your Kingdom Come."* www.fathersonthefuture.com

[7] Whether the phrase in 2 Chron 13:8 was God's perspective on the matter or a theory of theocracy advanced by Abijah to rally the troops does not change the fact this this was a common view and consistent with the promise of perpetuity in the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7).

[8] References to the "kingdom of heaven," especially in Matthew, are not necessarily references to a kingdom located in the heavenly sphere, as a passage like Matt 11:12 indicates.

So, What Is the "Kingdom of God"?

"Our Father, who is in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven."
(Matthew 6:10)

- God's will done on earth as in heaven.
- *Presently* realized spiritually in the heavenly realm—Paradise.
- *Partially* realized when individuals, communities, nations conform to God's will
- *Progressively* realized when Christ returns and begins transforming this world
- *Perfectly* realized when the whole creation is delivered from bondage to corruption

Session 2
The Coming Kingdom in Scripture

2.1 The Prophets' Vision of the Kingdom

""As the prophets look to the future, they anticipate a better world. Jeremiah envisions it on the basis of the new covenant (31:31ff.). To that picture Ezekiel adds God's renewal of human hearts and the bestowal of his Spirit (36:24ff.). Isaiah's contribution to the prophetic vision of the future is the creation of new heavens and a new earth."[9]

"The prophets look forward to a time, beyond judgment, when God will deliver and restore his people and usher in a new age, an era of salvation and peace, where his reign will be established over the whole earth."[10]

Summary of the Coming Kingdom in the Old Testament

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 11: *The Coming Kingdom in the Old Testament: Detailed Analysis for Key Passages*. www.fathersonthefuture.com

Gowan summarizes the basic characteristics of Old Testament eschatology in four points:
1) "Old Testament eschatology is a worldly hope. The OT does not scorn, ignore, or abandon the kind of life which human beings experience in this world in favor of speculation concerning some other, better place or form of existence, to be hoped for after death or achieved before death through meditation and spiritual exercises."
2) "Old Testament eschatology understands the future to be completely in the hands of God.... The basis for hope in the OT is not faith in human progress, but the assurance of a coming divine intervention that will introduce a new thing that people have failed and will fail to accomplish."
3) "Old Testament eschatology emphasizes human society more than personal salvation...Certainly the OT does not ignore the

[9] Terry R. Briley, *Isaiah,* vol. 2, The Collect Press NIV Commentary (College Press, 2000), 309.
[10] Robin Routledge, *Old Testament Theology: A Thematic Approach* (InterVarsity, 2012), 273.

redemption of individuals, but it puts its strongest emphasis on the truth that full human life is life in community."

4) "Old Testament eschatology is a comprehensive hope. The OT neither focuses on an improved social structure inhabited by the same kind of people who created the mess we are now in; nor does it promise that personal salvation will somehow make social problems go away; neither does it imagine that a healthy human society can exist without a wholesome interaction with the natural world."[11]

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 10: *What Are We Seeing in Old Testament Prophecy: Fantasy, Photo, or Figure?* www.fathersonthefuture.com

"[The Coming Kingdom in Scripture] includes a perfectly righteous king—the long-awaited descendant of David—who will defeat the enemies of God and of his people. He will establish his throne in Jerusalem, which will become the center of his glorious kingdom of justice, peace, and prosperity. The remnant of Israel who had been dispersed in judgment will be restored in blessing under a new, eternal covenant of peace. All nations will submit to the rule of the Messiah and find their fullest blessing united to that future kingdom. All nature itself will be tamed, and all the earth will be transformed until it becomes like the Garden of Eden itself—a veritable return of paradise. Ultimately even death itself will be conquered, including a resurrection from the dead. This kingdom will have no end."[12]

What Becomes of the Old Testament Expectations?

- Are they set aside with the rejection of Israel?
- Are they spiritualized by the New Testament?
- Are they simply summed up in Christ?
- Are they symbols of the New Creation?

A: They are reasserted in the New Testament…but postponed until Christ's second coming and the repentance and restoration of Israel.

2.2 The Kingdom in the Gospels

During Christ's Ministry (Matt 19:28)

28 Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the **renewal of all things,** when the Son of Man sits on his **glorious throne**, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

renewal of all things

[11] Donald E. Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament,* 2d ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 122–23.

[12] Michael J. Svigel, *The Fathers on the Future: A 2nd-Century Eschatology for the 21st-Century Church* (Hendrickson, 2024), 70.

"of the renewing of the world in the time of the Messiah" (*BDAG*)[13]

"an era involving the renewal of the world (with special reference to the time of the Messiah)" (Louw-Nida)[14]

"It lies outside our object to discuss the meaning of this term in the teaching of the Stoics and Pythagoreans, but as illustrating its reference to the Messianic 'rebirth' of the world in Mt 19:28, we may cite its application to the world's renewal after the flood in Philo *Vit. Mos.* (ed. Cohn) II. 65 and to the restoration of Judah in Jos. *Antt.* XI. 66 (iii. 9)."[15]

glorious throne—"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne" (Matt 25:31)

2.3 The Kingdom in Acts

Post-Resurrection/Pre-Pentecost (Acts 1:3-7)

6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time *(chronos)* going to restore *(apokathistēmi)* the kingdom to Israel?"
7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times *(chronos)* or dates *(kairos)* the Father has set by his own authority."

Jeremiah 16:14-15 (Greek Septuagint [LXX])
14 "Because of this, look, the days are com-ing," says the Lord, "and they will no longer say, 'The Lord lives, he who brought the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt,' 15 but in-stead, 'The Lord lives, who brought the house of Israel out of the land of the north and out of all the territories where they had been forced.' And I will restore *(apokathistēmi)* them to their land that I gave to their fathers."

Jeremiah 23:7-8 (Greek Septuagint [LXX])
7 "Therefore look, the days are coming," says the Lord, "and they will no longer say, 'As the Lord lives, who brought up the house of Israel from the land of Egypt,' 8 but 'As the Lord lives, who gathered all the seed of Israel from the land of the north and from all the territories where he had thrust them, and restored *(apokathistēmi)* them to their land.'"

Jeremiah 27:19-20 (Greek Septuagint [LXX])
19 "And I will restore *(apokathistēmi)* Israel to his pasture, and he will feed on Carmel and on Mount Ephraim and in Gilead, and his soul will be satisfied. 20 In those days and at that time they

[13] William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 752.
[14] Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 648.
[15] James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930), 476.

will seek the injustice of Israel, and there will be none; and they will seek the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, because I will be merciful to those who remain upon the land," says the Lord.

Post-Pentecost (Acts 3:19-21)

19 "Repent, then, and turn to God *(epistrephō),* so that your sins may be wiped out, that times *(kairos)* of refreshing may come from the Lord, 20 and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. 21 Heaven must receive him until the time *(chronos)* comes for God to restore *(apokastasis)* everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets."

Jeremiah 24:6-7 (Greek Septuagint [LXX])
6 And I will set my eyes upon them for good things, and I will restore *(apokathistēmi)* them to this land for good things. And I will rebuild them, and I shall not tear them down, and I will plant them and shall not pluck them up. 7 And I will give them a heart for them to know me, that I am the Lord, and they will be a people for me, and I will be a God for them, for they will return to me *(epistrephō)* with their whole heart."

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 14: *The Case for Concurrent Periods in Acts 3:19–21.*
www.fathersonthefuture.com

2.4. The Kingdom in Paul

Regarding Jewish Rejection (Rom 11:25-27)

25 I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, 26 and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written:
"The deliverer will come from Zion;
he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.
27 And this is my covenant with them
when I take away their sins."

Isaiah 59:20-21 (Greek Septuagint [LXX])
20 The deliverer will come for the sake of Zion, and he will turn ungodliness back from Jacob
21 "And this is my covenant with them," says the Lord. "My spirit which is upon you, and my words which I put in your mouth, will not cease from your mouth or from the mouth of your descendants."

Jeremiah 31:33-34 (Greek Septuagint [LXX])
33"For this is my covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord… 34 And each one will not teach his fellow citizen, or each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord!' because everyone will know me, from the smallest of them to the greatest of them, because I will be gracious to their injustices. And I will by no means remember their sins any longer."

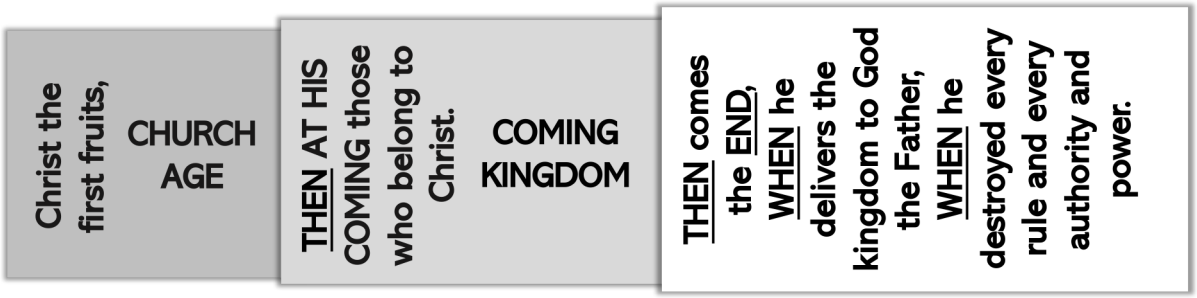
Reckoning with Resurrection (1 Cor 15:22-26)

22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in turn: Christ, the
firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. 24 Then the end will come, when he
hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and
power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be
destroyed is death.

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 15: *The Case for a Three-Stage Resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:20–28*. www.fathersonthefuture.com

"in turn"—*tagmata:* *"class, group," "a stage in a sequence, order, turn." (BDAG)*
"then…then"—*eita/epeita*: *"being next in order of time" (BDAG)*
"when"—*hotan*: *"at the time that, whenever, when" (BDAG)*

- Paul's second "THEN" seems to rule out a single, general resurrection and final judgment at the second coming.
- Only if this second "THEN" were absent would Paul be asserting a single resurrection/final consummation at the second coming.
- The "kingdom" handed over, during which all enemies are subdued—even death—is a kingdom established between the Christians' resurrection and "the End."



Session 3
The Coming Kingdom in Revelation

Content of Revelation 20:1-10
- Satan bound for 1000 years (20:1–3)
- Thrones for rule/judgment established (20:4)
- Souls of martyrs raised to reign (20:4)
- Second resurrection after kingdom (20:5–6)
- Satan released to deceive nations (20:7)
- Satan and followers destroyed (20:8-10)

3.1 The Coming of Christ and the Millennium

Amillennial View of Revelation 20:1-6
- These events describe the present church age until the second coming of Christ and general resurrection
- Satan is currently bound to prevent him from thwarting the preaching of the gospel
- Revelation 19:11-21 and Revelation 20:1-10 are *separate visions*
- The events of 19:11-21 coincide with the events of 20:7-10

Postmillennial View of Revelation 20:1-6
- These events describe the future result of the victory of the gospel in converting the world
- Satan is increasingly bound as the church is victorious against the spirits of wickedness
- Revelation 19:11-21 symbolically pictures Christ's kingdom advancing by the gospel
- Revelation 19 and 20 portray sequential events

Premillennial View of Revelation 20:1-6
- These events describe the future earthly reign of Christ after His second coming with His saints
- Satan was bound at Christ's second coming to be released at the end of the millennium
- Revelation 19:11-21 pictures Christ's coming after the Tribulation
- Revelation 19 and 20 is one single vision of sequential events

One Progressive Vision in Rev 19–20
- Crucial Text: Revelation 20:4
- The Greek text—*kai eidon thronous kai ekathi**san** ep' autous kai krima edothē autois*
- Literal translation—"And I saw thrones, and **they** sat upon them, and judgment was given to them."
- Problem: Who are **they**?

Modern Translation Confusion

"Then I saw thrones, and **those seated on them** were given authority to judge." (NRSV) "Then I saw thrones, and **the people sitting on them** had been given the authority to judge" (NLT) "I saw thrones **on which were seated those who** had been given authority to judge." (NIV)	VS	"Then I saw thrones, **and they sat on them**, and judgment was given to them." (NASB) "And I saw thrones, **and they sat upon them**, and judgment was given unto them" (KJV) "And I saw thrones, **and they sat down on them**, and authority to judge was granted to them." (Lexham English Bible)

Problem: John Uses a Simple Past Tense Verb, *not* a Participle in Revelation 20:4

- When John wants to describe somebody *already seated* when the vision opens, he uses a participle:

"At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting (*kathēmenos*) on it. And the one who sat there (*kathēmenos*)…" (Rev 4:2-3, NIV)

"I looked, and behold, a white horse, and the one who sat (*kathēmenos*) on it had a bow…" (Rev 6:2, NASB)

- IF John knows how to use participles to indicate when somebody is already seated when the vision opens (Rev. 4:2-3; 5:2)
- AND John *doesn't* use a participle ("those seated on them") in Revelation 20:4, but uses a simple past tense ("they sat on them")
- WHY do many modern versions translate the phrase as if it were a participle?
- Because they can't seem to answer the question, "Who are *THEY*?" (What is the antecedent?)

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 17: *Revelation 19:11–20:10 as a Single Progressive Vision*. www.fathersonthefuture.com

The Best Solution

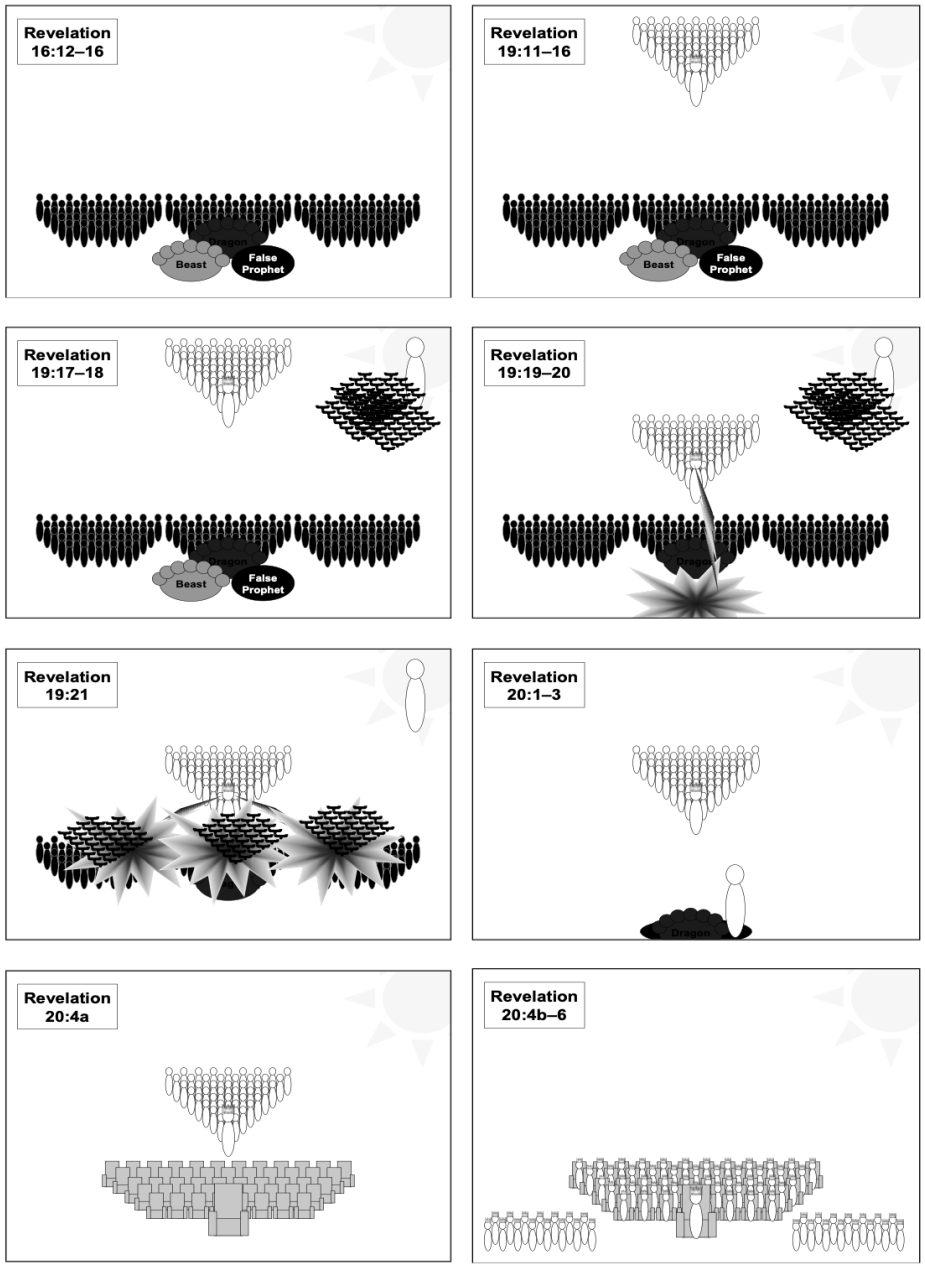
- Solution: The remote visionary antecedent
- See Revelation 21:9, 15; 22:1-6—a similar example of the interpreting angel as a remote visionary antecedent
- The subject of ἐκάθισαν *(ekathisan)*—"and they sat" is *Christ and His armies described in Revelation 19:11-21, as these are the only figures remaining in the vision.*

Order of Events in Revelation 19:11–20:10

- Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet gathered with kings and armies of the earth for Armageddon (Rev 16:12-16)
- Christ descends to earth with army of heaven; birds gathered to feast (19:11-18)
- Beast, kings, and armies gathered to fight Christ (19:19)
- Beast and False Prophet thrown into lake of fire (19:20)

- All remaining wicked kings and armies destroyed by Christ and eaten by birds (19:21)
- Angel descends and confines Satan for 1000 years (20:1-3)
- Christ and army sit on the thrones (20:4a)
- Tribulation martyrs are raised to life and reign with Christ and the armies for 1000 years (20:4-6)
- Satan released to deceive nations (20:7)
- Satan and followers destroyed (20:8-10)

Visualization of the Single Vision



3.2 The Binding of Satan

Amillennial Interpretations of the Binding of Satan

"The thousand years' binding, and the loosing for a little time, describe two events which occur contemporaneously. While the godly need have no fear, because even in this world Satan's power as regards them is completely limited by Christ's act of redemption, yet in another sense, as regards the ungodly, Satan is loosed and obtains power over them. The chief difficulty in this interpretation lies in the words, 'after this.' But it must be remembered that the 'thousand years' do not express a period of time, but the quality of completeness. Therefore the loosing of Satan must not be supposed to take place in a period subsequent to the period of the binding."[16]

"What is meant, now, by the binding of Satan? In the Old Testament times…all the nations of the world except Israel were, so to speak, under Satan's rule. At that time the people of Israel were the recipients of God's special revelation, so that they knew God's truth about themselves, about their sinfulness, and about the way they could obtain forgiveness for their sins. During this same time, however, the other nations of the world did not know that truth…except for an occasional person, family or city which came into contact with God's special revelation. One could say that during this time these nations were deceived by Satan, as our first parents had been deceived by Satan when they fell into sin in the Garden of Eden. We conclude, then, that the binding of Satan during the gospel age means that, first, he cannot prevent the spread of the gospel, and second, he cannot gather all the enemies of Christ together to attack the church."[17]

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 18: *A Survey and History of Interpretations of Revelation 20:1–3*. www.fathersonthefuture.com

"The binding of Satan means that he shall not prevent this heralding of the gospel to all the nations. Once the nations were without this heralding, all were under the deception of Satan. One nation alone had the Word. Then came Christ and his command: 'Having gone into all the world, herald the gospel to every creature!' Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:19, 20. Where was Satan to stop it? The strong symbolism of being bound with a great chain and thrown into the abyss reveals how mighty was the foe who above all else intended to stop this heralding, and what was required to stop him, and how thoroughly he was stopped. Is the imagery too strong for you? Perhaps the Lord who uses it in this vision knows the dragon better than you do, seeing that he conquered him on the cross at the cost of his own death."[18]

"The imagery that Satan is presently bound means that he cannot deceive God's people en masse, nor can he attack the covenant community with relative impunity, as he did before the coming of the Messiah….

Although Satan remains a fierce foe, persecuting God's people as he is allowed, he cannot triumph because he is bound until released at the end of the millennial age. When Satan is

[16] H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *Revelation*, The Pulpit Commentary (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1909), 471.
[17] Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 228.
[18] R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation* (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1935), 575-576.

released, the rebellion of the nations in Revelation 20:7–10 occurs, and the beast deceives the nations (Rev. 13)….The binding of Satan for a thousand years and his subsequent release surely belong to the present age."[19]

"Although Satan may and will do much in this present age (as the New Testament epistles clearly indicate), there is one thing of which John assures us: Satan will never be permitted to incite and organize the unbelieving nations of the world in a final, catastrophic assault against the Church, until such time as God in his providence so determines. That event, which the Lord will immediately terminate with the fiery breath of his mouth (Rev. 20:9), will come only at the end of this age."[20]

"So what does the binding precisely mean? Satan's deceptive powers are restricted in two ways. First, during the church age he is unable to deceive the elect among the peoples of the world and prevent them from being saved and God's church from being built. Second (and this is the primary focus of the "binding"), until God's appointed hour, he is unable *to deceive the pagan nations into gathering together for a final assault on the church*."[21]

Premillennial Interpretation of the Binding

"The amillennial position takes this as a description of the church age, saying that Satan is restricted from stopping the missionary enterprise of God's people…. But I maintain that the language of binding here is much stronger than this. It says here that Satan will not be able to 'deceive the nations,' yet that is exactly what he does in this present age. During the time of the millennial reign, Satan will not be present and will be kept from deceiving the nations. In this present age, he is only restricted with respect to believers; he has full control over the unbelieving nations. He 'blinds their minds' (2 Cor 4:4), traps them (1 Tim 3:7), and devours them (1 Pet 5:8). In Revelation 20:1–10 he does not deceive anyone until the period is ended (20:7–8). Therefore, this is not the partial binding of the present age but the full binding of a future period after Christ returns."[22]

Background Imagery and Language of Revelation 20:1-3

[1]And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. [2] He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound *(deō)* him for a thousand years. [3] He threw *(ballō)* him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended *(achri telesthē ta chilia etē)*. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

***1 Enoch* 10.4-5**

"And again the Lord said to Raphael: 'Bind *(deō)* Azâzêl hand and foot, and cast him into the darkness: and make an opening in the desert, which is in Dûdâêl, and cast *(ballō)* him therein. And place upon him rough and jagged rocks, and cover him with darkness, and let him abide there for ever, and cover his face that he may not see light."

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[19] Riddlebarger, *A Case for Amillennialism*, 238, 240.
[20] Sam Storms, *Kingdom Come: The Amillennial Alternative* (Fearn, Scotland: Mentor, 2013), 440.
[21] G. K. Beale, *Revelation: A Shorter Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 430.
[22] Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation: Verse by Verse* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2016), 324–325.

***1 Enoch* 10.11-12**
"And the Lord said unto Michael: 'Go, bind *(deō)* Semjâzâ and his associates….bind *(deō)* them fast for seventy generations in the valleys of the earth, till the day of their judgement and of their consummation *(mechri hēmas kriseōs autōn, mechri hēmeras teleōseōs).*""

***1 Enoch* 54.4-6**
"'For whom are these chains being prepared?'… He said unto me: 'These are being prepared for the hosts of Azâzêl, so that they may take them and cast them into the abyss of complete condemnation….that the Lord of Spirits may take vengeance on them for their unrighteousness in becoming subject to Satan and leading astray those who dwell on the earth.'"

The Crucial Background Imagery of *1 Enoch*
- In every case those demonic spirits being bound and imprisoned are *utterly incapable of any influence on the earth*.
- Thus, the language and imagery of the binding of Satan in Revelation 20:1-3 draws from a well-established apocalyptic idiom representing *complete impotence of those bound.*
- Our interpretation of Revelation 20:1-3 must match the symbols as they would have been understood in their first-century context.
- No first-century Jewish or Christian reader familiar with Enochian imagery would conclude that Revelation 20:1-3 pictured anything other than total incapacity—an utter removal from the inhabited creation.
- Amillennial interpreters mostly ignore this evidence.

3.3 The First and Second Resurrections

The Vision
4 And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead (*hoi loipoi tōn nekrōn*) did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.

"Those who hold the amillennial view say this [first resurrection] refers to either the new spiritual life after conversion, the exaltation of the saints to heaven after death, or the intermediate state. Yet the verb regularly in the New Testament refers to physical life and better fits the idea of bodily resurrection. So this pictures the saint's resurrection at the second coming and then their reign with Christ for the 'thousand years.' This is another of the primary purposes of this millennial period—the vindication and exaltation of those who lost all for the cause of Christ.

John now tells us in 20:5 that 'the rest of the dead,' most likely the unbelievers, 'did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.'"[23]

[23] Osborne, *Revelation*, 327.

Facts to Consider

- The crucial phrase "the rest of the dead (*hoi loipoi tōn nekrōn*)" (Rev 20:5)
- The phrase "the rest of" (*hoi loipoi*) implies the "souls" in verse 4 are a subset of the larger category of "the dead"
- This large category of "the dead" (*tōn nekrōn*) made up of the "beheaded souls" (20:4) and "the rest" must be in the same category of death—either physical death or spiritual death

Exegetically and Theologically Problematic Interpretations

Scenario 1

- If "came to life" is used consistently for "spiritually in heaven," it results in universalism and no physical resurrection.
- To avoid universalism, "came to life" must shift meanings from "spiritual" to "physical", but it results in no physical resurrection of the saints.

Scenario 2

- If "dead" is used consistently as "spiritually dead" and "came to life" as "spiritual resurrection", it leads to universalism.
- To avoid universalism, it must switch the definition of "dead" and "came to life" from "spiritual" to "physical" midway through the passage, resulting in no resurrection for the saved.

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 20: *A Detailed Examination of the Two Resurrections in Revelation 20*.
www.fathersonthefuture.com

Scenario 3

- This uses "dead" consistently as "physically dead" and "came to life" consistently as "physical resurrection."
- Does not result in universalism.
- Results in premillennialism.

3.4 The Coming Kingdom in the Earliest Church

Premillennialism in the Early Church

- *When they were not silent*, first and second century fathers seem to have held a premillennial perspective (*Didache*, *"Barnabas"*, Papias, Justin, Irenaeus, Apollinarius)
- This premillennial perspective was not isolated, but geographically widespread
- This premillennial perspective appears in very diverse texts and traditions

From Premillennialism to Amillennialism

- A non-premillennial view first appears in the second century, regarded as a deviant view with dubious origins (Justin, Irenaeus)
- There are no clear, first-hand affirmations of amillennialism in the second century
- Amillennialism gradually replaced premillennialism as the dominant view from the second to fifth centuries

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 8: *The Coming Kingdom in Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Hippolytus*.
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Reasons for the Shift from Premillennialism

- *Intellectual*—Premillennialism was increasingly viewed as less sophisticated, too naïve
- *Philosophical*—Influence of Platonic thought, dichotomizing physical and spiritual, exalting spiritual above physical
- *Hermeneutical*—Rise of allegorical and spiritual approaches to interpretation
- *Political*—Premillennialism no longer made sense in an increasingly Christianized human government and society
- *Prejudicial*—Increasing anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism rendered Premillennial view unfavorable

Session 4
The Coming Day of the Lord

4.1 The Day of the Lord in the Old Testament

Jeremiah 30:5–7
5 "I have heard a sound of terror, of fear, and there is no peace. 6 Ask now and see if a male can
give birth. Why do I see every man with his hands on his waist, as a woman in childbirth?
And why have all faces turned pale? 7 Woe, for that day is great, there is none like it; and it is the
time of Jacob's distress, yet he will be saved from it.

Joel 1:15; 2:1–2; 3:30–31
1:15 Woe for the day! For the day of the Lord is near, and it will come as destruction from the
Almighty….
2:1 The day of the Lord is coming; indeed, it is near, 2 a day of darkness and gloom, a day of
clouds and thick darkness….
3:30 I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire, and columns of smoke. 31 The
sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood.

Daniel 7:24–25
24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and
another will arise after them, and he will be different from the
previous ones and will humble three kings. 25 And he will speak
against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest
One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and
they will be handed over to him for a time, times, and half a time.

For more information, see
Go Deeper Excursus 22:
The Old Testament and the Day of the Lord.
www.fathersonthefuture.com

Daniel 9:27
27 And he [the coming prince] will confirm a covenant with the
many for one week [of seven years, cf. 9:24–26], but in the middle
of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and
on the wing of abominations will come the one who makes
desolate, until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, gushes forth on the one who makes
desolate.

Daniel 12:1
1 Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will
arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until
that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be
rescued.

Daniel 12:7
7 And I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, as he raised his
right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a

time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish smashing the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed.

"By the close of this prophetic period, the 'Day of the Lord' had become a technical concept that employs stock language and imagery to point to any period of [God's mediated judgment] against any nation. Images closely associated with the Day of the Lord include wrath, anger, judgment, destruction, fire, sword, invading armies, death, darkness, and trumpet blast."[24]

4.2 The Day of the Lord in the New Testament

Matthew 24:21–22
21 For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will again. 22 And if those days had not been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.

1 Thessalonians 5:1–3
1 Now as to the periods and times, brothers and sisters, you have no need of anything to be written to you. 2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord is coming just like a thief in the night. 3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction will come upon them like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

2 Thessalonians 2:1–10
1 Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, regarding the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, 2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit, or a message, or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come [*literally, 'that the day of the Lord is present*]. 3 No one is to deceive you in any way! For [*it will not be present*] unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. 5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? 6 And you know what restrains him now, so that he will be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is removed. 8 Then that lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will eliminate with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and false signs and wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved.

Revelation 11–13
11:1 Then there was given to me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. 2 Leave out the courtyard which is outside the temple and do not measure it, because it has been given to the nations; and

[24] Svigel, *The Fathers on the Future*

they will trample the holy city for forty-two months. [3] And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."
[12:6] Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for 1,260 days. [7] And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, [8] and they did not prevail, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

[12:9] And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him…. [12] Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you with great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."

[12:13] And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. [14] But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time, times, and half a time, away from the presence of the serpent….

[12:17] So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.
[13:1] And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten crowns, and on his heads were blasphemous names.

[13:5] A mouth was given to him speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him…. [7] It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority was given to him over every tribe, people, language, and nation.

4.3 The Future Day of the Lord

Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* 5.25.2
"For he [Antichrist] being endued with all the power of the devil, shall come, not as a righteous king, nor as a legitimate king, in subjection to God, but an impious, unjust, and lawless one; as an apostate, iniquitous and murderous; as a robber, concentrating in himself satanic apostasy, and setting aside idols to persuade that he himself is God, raising up himself as the only idol, having in himself the multifarious errors of the other idols. This he does, in order that they who do [now] worship the devil by means of many abominations, may serve himself by this one idol, of whom the apostle thus speaks in the second Epistle to the Thessalonians."

Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* 5.25.3, 4
"For three years and six months, during which time, when he comes, he shall reign over the earth… And then he [Daniel] points out the time that his tyranny shall last, during which the saints shall be put to flight, they who offer a pure sacrifice unto God: And in the midst of the week," he says, "the sacrifice and the libation shall be taken away, and the abomination of desolation into the temple: even unto the consummation of the time shall the desolation be complete." Now three years and six months constitute the half-week."

Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist* 43
"Now Daniel will set forth this subject to us. For he says, "And one week will make a covenant with many, and it shall be that in the midst of the week my sacrifice and oblation shall cease." By one week, therefore, he meant the last week which is to be at the end of the whole world of which week the two prophets Enoch and Elias will take up the half. For they will preach 1,260 days clothed in sackcloth."

Hippolytus of Rome, *On the Visions of Daniel* 39
"Thus, then, does the prophet set forth these things concerning the Antichrist….He shall cut off the two witnesses and forerunners of Christ, who proclaim His glorious kingdom from heaven. As also it was announced to Daniel: 'And one week shall confirm a covenant with many; and in the midst of the week it shall be that the sacrifice and oblation shall be removed'—that the one week might be shown to be divided into two. The two witnesses, then, shall preach three years and a half; and Antichrist shall make war upon the saints during the rest of the week."

Purposes of the Coming Day of the Lord

Purification and Preparation of Israel
- Jeremiah 30:7
- Daniel 9:24
- Romans 11:25–27

Repentance or Reprobation of the Wicked
- Isaiah 26:21
- Joel 2–3
- Revelation 6:12–17
- Revelation 11:18
- Revelation 15:1



The Antichrist and 666

א	1	י	10	ק	100	1 α	10 ι	100 ρ
ב	2	כ	20	ר	200	2 β	20 κ	200 σ
ג	3	ל	30	ש	300	3 γ	30 λ	300 τ
ד	4	מ	40	ת	400	4 δ	40 μ	400 υ
ה	5	נ	50	ך	500	5 ε	50 ν	500 φ
ו	6	ס	60	ם	600	6 ς	60 ξ	600 χ
ז	7	ע	70	ן	700	7 ζ	70 ο	700 ψ
ח	8	פ	80	ף	800	8 η	80 π	800 ω
ט	9	צ	90	ץ	900	9 θ	90 ϟ	900 ϡ

Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* 5.30.3
"It is therefore more certain, and less hazardous, to await the fulfilment of the prophecy, than to be making surmises, and casting about for any names that may present themselves, inasmuch as many names can be found possessing the number mentioned; and the same question will, after all, remain unsolved."

Session 5
The Coming Assumption of the Church

5.1 The Reality of the Assumption

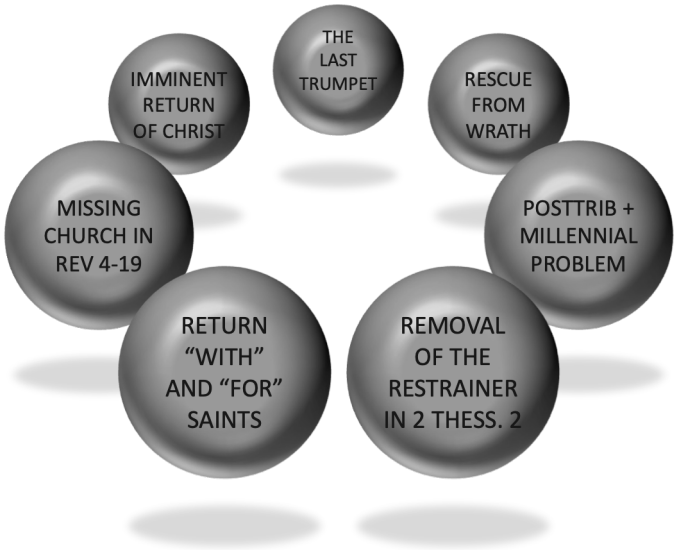
1 Thessalonians 4:13–18
13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you
will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose
again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say
to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord,
will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord
Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of
the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ
will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up
(*harpazō*) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the
air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort
one another with these words.

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 28: *The Rapture of the Church in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 as an Actual Event*.
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1 Corinthians 15:51–53
51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all
be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last
trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised
imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable must
put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

5.2 The Timing of the Assumption

5.2.a The Last Trumpet



Jeremiah 4:5–6
5Declare in Judah and proclaim in
Jerusalem, and say, "Blow the trumpet in
the land; Cry aloud and say, 'Assemble
yourselves, and let us go Into the fortified
cities.' 6"Lift up a standard toward Zion!
Seek refuge, do not stand *still*, For I am
bringing evil from the north, And great
destruction.

Joel 2:1–2
1 Blow a trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm

on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming; it is near, [2] day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness!

Hosea 5:8, 10
[8]Blow the horn in Gibeah,
The trumpet in Ramah.
Sound an alarm at Beth-aven:
"Behind you, Benjamin!"…
[10]The princes of Judah have become like those who move a boundary;
On them I will pour out My wrath like water.

Summary
1. The "trumpet of God/last trumpet" in Paul refers to the announcement of the last "Day of the Lord."
2. In the Old Testament, the trumpet always precedes the Day of the Lord.
3. The "Day of the Lord" is a technical term for a prolonged period of time, including invasion, disasters, and destruction; it is never a single day or short period.
4. A pretribulation rapture fits this best.

For more information, see Go Deeper Excursus 24: *The Last Trumpet in 1 Corinthians 15:52 vs. the Seventh Trumpet in Revelation 11:15*.
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5.2.b The Rescue from Wrath

1 Thessalonians 1:9–10
[9] You turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, [10] and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues (*rhuomai*) us from the wrath (*orgē*) to come.

Philippians 3:20–21
[20] Our citizenship is in heaven, from which we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, [21] who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.

1 Thessalonians 4:16–5:11
[16] For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. [17] Then we who are alive and remain will be caught together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. [18] Therefore comfort one another with these words. [5:1] Now as to the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. [2] For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. [3] While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. [4] But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; [5] for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; [6] so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. [7] For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. [8] But

since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. [9] For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, [10] who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. [11] Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

Summary
1. In the New Testament, the "coming wrath" is a reference to the coming "Day of the Lord" or "Tribulation."
2. Christians await Christ both to rescue them from the coming wrath (1 Thess 1:9–10) and to transform their bodies (Phil 3:20–21).
3. These events occur at the time of the rapture (1 Thess 4:13–5:11; 1 Cor 15:52).
4. A pretribulation rapture fits this best.

5.2.c The Post-Trib + Millennial Problem

Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* 5.35.1
…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. For it is in reference to them that the prophet says: "And those that are left shall multiply upon the earth."

Summary
1. In the classic premillennial position of Irenaeus of Lyons, at the end of the Tribulation, Christ will return to a multitude of saints who survived the tribulation still in their mortal bodies and will repopulate the earth (*AH* 5.35.1)
2. These cannot be unsaved wicked or last-second converts.
3. A pretribulation rapture fits this best

5.2.d Removal of the Restrainer

2 Thessalonians 2:1–8
- Paul's eschatology had been undone (2 Thess. 2:5, 15)
- Thessalonians had turned against Paul's eschatology by a spirit, a message, or a letter, saying they were in the Day of the Lord
- Paul could not have simply asserted the opposite, as his authority had been undermined
- He had appeal to what they knew, based especially on common authority of the OT
- Paul's point: the "apostasy" had not happened; nor was the man of sin revealed.
- These were clear Old Testament indications that the Day of the Lord was present.
- Therefore, they could not have been in the midst of the Day of the Lord.
- Therefore, the anti-Pauline eschatology is proven false.

2 Thessalonians 2:6–8
[6] And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. [7] For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. [8] Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming.

Aristides of Athens, *Apology* 16 (c. AD 125)
"And because they acknowledge the goodness of God towards them, lo! on account of them there flows forth the beauty that is in the world….And I have no doubt that the world stands by reason of the intercession of Christians."

Tertullian of Carthage, *Apology 41* (AD 200)
""And, for all that is said, if we compare the calamities of former times, they fall on us more lightly now, since God gave Christians to the world; for from that time virtue put some restraint on the world's wickedness, and men began to pray for the averting of God's wrath."

Ignatius of Antioch, *To the Ephesians* 13:1–2 (AD 110)
"Therefore make every effort to come together more frequently to give thanks and glory to God. For when you meet together frequently, the powers of Satan are overthrown and his destructiveness is nullified by the unanimity of your faith. There is nothing better than peace, by which all warfare among those in heaven and those on earth is abolished."

Justin Martyr, *2 Apology* 7 (c. 150)
"Wherefore God delays causing the confusion and destruction of the whole world, by which the wicked angels and demons and people will no longer exist, because of the seed of the Christians, who know that they are the cause of preservation in nature. Since if it were not so, it would not have been possible for you to do and be impelled to these things by evil spirits; but the fire of judgment would descend and utterly dissolve all things, even as formerly the flood left no one but one only with his family who is called by us Noah."

Summary
1. The identity of the restraining person/ power in 2 Thess 2:1–8 is unclear
2. Perhaps preserving echoes of Paul's teaching, the early Christians understood the Spirit working through the church as the restrainer of Satan, evil, and end-times
3. The removal of this restrainer could correspond to the rapture of the church
4. A pretribulation rapture fits this best

5.2.e Return "With" and "For" the Saints

Summary
- We await the Son to rescue us from the coming wrath (1 Thess 1:10)
- Living and dead saints will be raptured to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess 4:17)
- Christ will take us to be with Him in the heavenly realm (John 14:1–3)
- Christ will RETURN WITH THE SAINTS after the Tribulation (Rev 19:11–14; cf. 17:14)

5.2.f The Missing Church in Revelation

Summary
1. John refers to the church (*ekklesia*) repeatedly in Revelation 1–3.
2. In the description of future things after Revelation 4 (seals, trumpets, and bowls), tribulation believers appear, but the word "church" (*ekklesia*) is never used
3. The pretribulation rapture of the church helps explain why "church" (*ekklesia*) is not mentioned during the tribulation descriptions

5.2.g The Imminent Return

Summary
1. We are told to wait for the return of Christ, which will occur when we do not expect it (Matt 24:42, 44; 1 Thess 1:9–10).
2. Nobody knows the day or hour of Christ's coming (Matt 24:36)
3. Only a pretribulation rapture fully satisfies imminency.

5.2.h The Catching up of the Male Son in Revelation 12:5

Revelation 12:5
5 And she bore a son, a male, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, and her child was caught up (*harpazō*) to God and to His throne.

Exegetical Arguments for the Male Son as the Body of Christ

1. **Consistency in Symbolism**
   The Woman (Israel) and the Dragon (Satan/Nations) both represent corporate entities. The Male Son as Christ/Church is more consistent.

2. **Allusion to Isaiah 66:7–8**
   The neuter ἄρσεν (arsen) and image of Israel giving birth in Isaiah 66:7–8 argues for a similar idea of corporate representation.

3. **Background of Daniel 7**
   The vision of the "Son of Man" (*huion anthrōpou*) in Dan 7:13–14 is interpreted corporately as Messiah and His saints in 7:18; 26–27.

4. **Allusion to Isaiah 26:16–27:1**
   The many correspondences in language and imagery between Isa 26:16–27:1 and Reve 12 are too specific to be coincidental. Isaiah 26–27 involves tribulation, birth pains, resurrection, protection from wrath, and warfare against a serpent/dragon. This is a clue that we are to understand the catching up of the Male Son as occurring at the time of resurrection and rescue from wrath.

5. **Use of Psalm 2:9 in Revelation**
   Psalm 2:9 is alluded to three times in Revelation. In Rev 2:26–27 Christ extends the promise to rule over the nations to overcoming believers. In 19:14–15 Christ is leading the armies of heaven and is described as the one who will rule the nations with a rod of iron. The Male Son as the Body of Christ is consistent with the book of Revelation's other uses of Psalm 2:9 referring to Christ and the Church.

6. **Use of *Harpazō* in 12:5**
   Harpazō means "to snatch," often used in rescue contexts (Acts 23:10; Jude 23), as in Rev 12:5. Christ's ascension was neither sudden nor a rescue (Acts 1:10) but is described with neutral terms *epairō* "be lifted up" (Acts 1:9), *anabainō* "to ascend" (John 20:17; Eph 4:8–10); and *analambanō* "to take up" (Mark 16:19; Luke 1:11). *Harpazō* is wrong for Christ's ascension but is used for the rapture (1 Thess 4:17).

7. **Death and resurrection missing**
   In the account of the Male Child's birth, the text makes no mention of his death and resurrection prior to ascension. There seems to be no good explanation of why these essentials of the Gospel would be missing from this text if the passage refers to Christ.

Summary
1. There is no good reason to reject the Male Son as representing the Body of Christ.
2. Identifying the Male Son as Christ alone does not account for all evidence and *contradicts* the meaning of *harpazo*.
3. Identifying the Male Son as the Body of Christ incorporates all evidence.
4. Therefore, the best interpretation of Rev 12:5 is the rapture of the Church described in 1 Thess 4:17.

Timing of the Rapture in Revelation 12:5

In Revelation 12–13, These Events *Follow* the Catching up of the Male Son:
1. Flight of Woman to wilderness (12:6, 14)
2. Angelic war in heaven (12:7)
3. Casting down Dragon (12:8-9)
4. Dragon's wrath on earth (12:12)
5. Dragon's pursuit of Woman (12:13)
6. Dragon's flood (12:15-16)
7. Woman protected for 3.5 years (12:6, 14)
8. Dragon's war on other offspring (12:17)
9. Reign of Beast for 42 months (13)