



## **Premillennialism: 2d Advent Occurs before the Millennium; Hermeneutic: A Literal Interpretation of Scripture that Distinguishes between Israel & the Church**

**Premillennialism.** This view is defined as follows by Ryrie on page 450 of his *Basic Theology*:

The second advent of Christ will occur prior to the Millennium which will see the establishment of Christ's kingdom on this earth for a literal 1,000 years. It also understands that there will be several occasions when resurrections and judgments will take place. Eternity will begin when the 1,000 years are concluded. Within premillennialism there are those who hold differing views as to the time of the Rapture.

This doctrine was established by the early church Fathers and was lost in the third century due to the acceptance of allegorical hermeneutics:

**Couch, Mal (ed.). *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1996), 310-11:**

Premillennialism is the oldest system of viewing the prophetic future and was adhered to by Clement of Rome, Ignatius \ig-nā' shē-us\ of Antioch, and Hippolytus \hip-äl' a-tas\ the antipope who lived collectively from A.D. 40 to 240. During the first three centuries of the church one could find very few who disagreed with the premillennial view. (p. 310)

The premillennial view holds that Christ will return to earth, literally and bodily, before the millennial age begins and that, by His presence, a kingdom will be instituted over which He will reign.

Premillennialism is based on two concepts that are unique to it:

- (1) Literal interpretation or the literal-grammatical-historical method of interpretation.
- (2) A distinction between Israel and the church. Prophecies given to Israel are for Israel and cannot be usurped by the church.

In the present age, Israel has been set aside, its promises held in abeyance. Adherents to premillennialism hold that the return of Christ to reign is but the second part of a two-part plan. The first part is called the Rapture. Separating the Rapture and the Second Coming is a seven-year time period known as the Tribulation. The purpose of the Tribulation is to bring judgment upon an unbelieving world. (p. 311)

The literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic is able to pull these increments of human history together and categorize them into a chronological sequence that once done not only organizes Scripture but it also provides a framework upon which the plan of God for the human race can be clearly defined.

Prophecy and a correct understanding of how it progresses in history serve a multiple purpose. (1) It gives the believer comfort and tranquility regarding his own eternal future. (2) Having a confident assurance of his eternal destiny he is enabled to fearlessly address the challenges of *cosmos diabolicus*. (3) He is able to see benefits attached to fulfilling the plan of God by means of promises that outline the conveyance of temporal and eternal rewards for compliance. (4) He can clearly present this incredible plan to both the unbeliever and the confused believer.