

VARIOUS ESCHATOLOGICAL* VIEWS WHICH INFLUENCE THE INTERPRETATION OF THE OLIVET DISCOURSE (Mark 13)

C.A. Hutchinson

1. Premillennialism**

The millennium will occur after the rapture@ and after Jesus returns to reign on earth. Emphasizes the "not yet@" aspect of God's kingdom and is pessimistic about human culture and history. Within premillennialism, there are disagreements about when the Tribulation@ occurs. National Israel is still a part of God's plan.

Dispensational Premillennialism believes history is divided into Seven Dispensations, and that the End Times will include separate Rapture, Tribulation, Second Coming, and a literal 1,000 year reign. The Church is the Parenthesis@ in history, with Israel being the main focus. This view is not in accord with PCA beliefs.

2. Postmillennialism

The millennium will be a glorious Church age (not necessarily a literal 1,000 years) before Jesus comes again when the world's cultures will be largely Christianized. Emphasizes the "already@" aspect of the Kingdom and is optimistic about history. Often includes partial preterism, that Jesus came again@ in judgement against the Jews in AD 70 (see below). A future Revival@ among the Jews still part of God's plan.

3. Amillennialism

The millennium is not literally 1,000 years, but is the period between Christ's First and Second Comings, which includes the tribulation.@ Therefore, the Gospel will spread to all nations, even in the midst of ongoing worldly power and persecution. The Church is the new Israel, and the Old Covenant is no longer in effect (no national Israel anymore; Rom. 11). The rapture occurs at Christ's Second Coming, which is the Judgment Day.

Optimistic Amillennialism or *Ironic Postmillennialism* stresses the growth of the Church throughout the world but – like yeast or the mustard seed – recognizes that the Kingdom of God not be seen or loved by the world, which will continue its evil ways until the Second Coming.

4. Preterism

The view that Jesus "came again" in AD 70 to fulfill part, if not all, of His predictions in Mark 13, by His judging of Israel in the destruction of Jerusalem through the Romans. This view can overlap with the various eschatological views above. However, *Full Preterism*, that AD 70 was Jesus' Second Coming in every way, is a heresy not supported by any Christian tradition.

***eschatology** = the study of the "end times" in the Bible. The key is often whether one emphasizes the "already" of Christ's First Coming, or the "not yet" of His Second Coming.

****millennium** = Jesus 1,000 year reign from Revelation 20