

Doctrine of Anti-Christ

Part 2

A Matter of Confusion

The subject of anti-Christ has become confusing to many because different positions have been taken.

- There is antichrist, the Doctrine according to 1 John
- There is antichrist, the Beast according to Revelation 13
- There is antichrist, the Man of Sin according to 1 Thessalonians
- There is antichrist, the Institution according to the Baptist Confession
- There is antichrist, the One Person according to the conversion theory

“Who”, are “What” is the anti-Christ? How can “Who” or “What” be identified? These are the questions of concern.

A Matter of Interest

The world’s fascination with anti-Christ is reflected by Hollywood films such as Rosemary’s Baby and The Omen. Years ago Jean Dixon prophesied the anti-Christ had been born.

“A child born somewhere in the Middle East shortly before 7:00 A.M. (EST) on February 5, 1962 will revolutionize the world. Before the close of this century, he will bring together all mankind in one all-embracing faith. This will be the foundation of a new Christianity, with every sect and creed united through this man who will walk among the people to spread the wisdom of the almighty powers.”

The Identity of the Anti-Christ

Any study of “the” anti-Christ, in the singular, “begs the question”, or assumes the conclusion of an argument, for the Scriptures teach there is not just one, but many who could be called anti-Christ. The apostle John wrote that several “anti-Christ” already existed in his day in the form of false teachers, and that John considered himself to be in the last times.

- *1 John 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*

Special Note.

Notice the time frame reference. “*Little children, it is the last hour.*” Notice also that John refers to many anti-Christ who had already come and gone. “*They went out from us.*” John links anti-Christ with apostasy.

- *1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: *
- *1 John 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.*
- *1 John 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*
- *2 John 1:7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an anti-Christ.*

According to John, anti-Christ was not simply a person, but a doctrine. Specifically, for John, anti-Christ was a person who set himself up to oppose Christ, and the people of God, by teaching that Jesus did not come in the flesh, which is a direct assault upon the Lord’s incarnation.

Moreover, the term “anti-Christ” also has reference to anyone who places themselves in the place of Christ. In other words, the concept of an anti-Christ does not always mean someone who is hostile to Christ per se. It can refer to someone who says they are here in the place of Christ, thereby diverting glory from Jesus to self, or the office they hold. The Catholic Church holds to the tradition that the pope is here on earth as the Vicar of Christ. The pope presents himself to the church, and to the world, instead of Christ, or in place of Christ, which many Protestants have found to be offensive, thereby leading to charges that the papacy is the anti-Christ institutionalized. The charge is not without foundation.

Innocent III taught that, “The Pope holdeth place on earth, not simply of a man but of the true God.”

Leo XIII (1885) declared that the Pope holds “upon this earth the place of God Almighty.”

Pius IX said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.”

When crowned, they said to Pius XII (1939) ‘Receive this tiara adorned with three crowns that thou mayst know that thou art the father of princes and of kings, the ruler of the world, the Vicar on earth of our Saviour Jesus Christ.’

This is significant, because while many Christians today are being taught to look for a political leader as an “anti-Christ”, more care should be taken to look within the professing Church for teachers who deny major historic doctrines concerning Christ, or set themselves up in His place. 2 Thessalonians 2:3 explains.

- *“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [of the Second Coming of Christ] shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”*

Being sensitive to anti-Christ coming from within the church, the 1689 Baptist Confession had this to say in Chapter 26 Paragraph 4:

“Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner; neither can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God; whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” (Colossians 1:18; Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:11, 12; 2 Thessalonians 2:2-9).

The anti-Christ is someone who is against Christ, as he puts Himself forth as a substitute for Christ. Paul amplifies this concept in his epistle to the Thessalonians.

- *2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:*

The content in which Paul speaks of the mystery of iniquity, the Man of Lawlessness, the Son of Perdition, is in response to the concerns within the community at Thessalonica that the Lord had already come. Paul wrote to correct that misapprehension. Paul reminded the church that certain events had to take place before the Lord’s return.

The Man of Sin who is the Son of Perdition

- The first event: an apostasy. *“that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first.”* Here Paul speaks of a repudiation of true faith. Unlike the pagan who never embraces Jesus Christ as Lord, the apostate does embrace Christ as Lord but later repudiates that belief. An apostate can only be someone within the covenant community.

B. B. Warfield believed that Paul was talking about the apostasy of the Jews in the church in the first century. *John 1:11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*

- The second event: the revealing of the man of sin. *“and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.”*
- The third event: the Man of Sin will be identified by exalting himself above God. *“Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”*

It is possible that the Man of Sin is the same person that John speaks of, for Paul describes the Man of Sin in two basic ways. First, the Man of Sin opposes Christ, he is anti Christ, and second, the Man of Sin exalts himself above all that is God, and claims the right to be worshipped.

- The fourth event: the Man of Sin will sit in the temple, *“so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”*

If these words are to be taken literally, then this event occurred while the Herodian Temple was still standing prior to AD 70, or, it refers to a future event that will require the rebuilding of the temple. A third option is to view the “temple” as a reference to the church, the temple of God.

The desecration of the temple by the Man of Sin does link Paul’s teaching with the Lord’s teaching in the Olivet Discourse, and the Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet. *Matthew 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)*

- The fifth event: the working of the mystery of iniquity. *“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.”*

This time frame reference was a present reality in Paul’s day. Just as John talked about anti-Christ being already in the world, Paul speaks about the Man of Sin (Lawlessness) being presently, already at work.

- The sixth event: the restraining of the Man of Sin. *“only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.”*

Here is another great mystery of the New Testament. Who, or what, is the restraining one? Dispensational teachers advocate that the Holy Spirit is in view here. The idea they present is that when the Church is removed at the Rapture, prior to the Great Tribulation Period, so is the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit is gone, then the Man of Sin will be revealed.

The restraining power, or person, is unclear. It may be God Himself who restrains men from doing evil. It may be the Roman government, which was able to control evil. Or, it maybe that Paul was referring to himself, as he restrained lawlessness by his apostolic authority. But all of this is speculation.

- The seventh event: the revealing of the Man of Sin. *“And then shall that Wicked One be revealed.”*
- The eighth event: the destruction of the Man of Sin. *“whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:”*
- The ninth event: the Man of Sin will be accompanied by signs and wonders. *Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.”*
- The tenth event: the judgment upon the unrighteous. *“And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:”*

It seems that the Man of Sin will be given supernatural powers in order to manifest signs and wonders. He will be in concert with Satan. These elements of the Man of Sin (Lawlessness) correspond to the description of The Beast of Revelation 13 whose mark is the mark, 666.

The Beast of Revelation

In the study of the Olivet Discourse, and the teaching of Jesus, concerning the last days of the Jewish age in the first century AD, attention must be given to the Beast of Revelation 13. The time frame reference is of particular significance. In the first century, John spoke of the spirit of the anti-Christ being in the world. The Man of Lawlessness was already said to be at work. The language of the book of Revelation contains many passages about events that must shortly come to pass. Because of the nearness of the events, because of the madness of men such as Nero, because of the danger Christians faced, the Revelation was written in code in order to protect the saints, while at the same time encouraging their hearts.

REVELATION 13

The First Beast The Beast from the Sea

And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

13:2. the sea. the Mediterranean Sea.

2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

13:2-3. And the beast. The character of the beast is more significant than his actual appearance, as hideous as that was to behold. The character of the beast was that of an animal. Taking the most base features of previous individuals who ruled Israel, such as Alexander (the leopard), Cyrus (the bear), and Nebuchadnezzar (the lion), John combined them into one hideous personage of Rome. Nero excelled in his beastly character.

A Description of the Beast from the Sea

- Body Leopard
- Head Seven heads with the name of blasphemy on each one
- Horns Ten horns with a crown on each horn
- Feet Bear
- Mouth Lion

Three Gifts of the Dragon

- Power
- Seat
- Authority

3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

13:3. and his deadly wound was healed. Following the death of Nero, there was a popular belief during the last part of the first century that he returned after his death in AD 68. This is called the Nero Redivivus Legend.

The Dragon

4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?

13:4. and they worshipped the beast. Nero, who ruled as emperor from AD 54 to AD 68, demanded absolute devotion as he went increasingly mad, being intoxicated with power to live a life of debauchery. No one could resist him. Nero castrated a boy and then married him. He murdered his own wife, who was pregnant, by kicking her. Nero had his mother slaughtered by the sword after three failed assassination attempts on her life. Suetonius writes that Nero, in an act of royal entertainment, devised a game for his guests in which, disguised as a wild animal, he was set free to attack chained Christians whose private parts were torn to pieces.

Two Intimidating Questions

- “Who is like unto the Beast?”
- “Who is able to make war with him?”

5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

13:5. forty and two months. Three and one half years is a long time, but in the providence of God, evil has a saturation point, and a date of termination. Nero began to persecute Christians in AD 64. In AD 68 he committed suicide. Nero was 30 years old at his death on 8 June AD 68. He had been born in December, AD 37.

Three Provisions Given to the Beast

- A mouth which allowed the Beast to speak great things, and blasphemies.
- Power to endure.
- A time frame of forty-two months, or three and one half years.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

13:7. war with the saints. Under Nero's authority, the church suffered great persecution. Both Paul and Peter were put to death during his reign. Following the great fire in July of AD 64 that engulfed ten of the fourteen regions of the city of Rome, the Christians were blamed, and persecuted for that, and other crimes against the state, such as the failure to pledge their loyalty to Caesar.

8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

13:8. slain from the foundation of the world. The Fall of Man, and the need of a redemptive Savior was not a surprise to God. Before the universe was brought into existence the Plan of Redemption was established.

9 If any man have an ear, let him hear.

10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

13:10.

Two Principles of Divine Justice

- He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity.
- He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.

The Second Beast The Beast out of the Earth

11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

13:11.

The Beast out of the Earth

- His body Like a lamb with two horns
- His mouth Spoke as a dragon (with authority)

First Power

12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

Second Power

13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

Third Power

14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

13:14. an image to the beast. Nero had an image of himself established within the Temple of Mars.



Fourth Power * Fifth Power

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

Sixth Power

16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

Seventh Power

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

13:12-17.

The Various Powers of the Beast out of the Earth

- First power. The Beast out of the Earth had the ability to force individuals into acts of worship. *Revelation 13:12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.*
- Second power. The Beast out of the Earth was able to perform miracles. *Revelation 13:13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.*
- Third power. The Beast out of the Earth had power to deceive and to motivate individuals to create an image to the Beast from the Sea. *Revelation 13:14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.*
- Fourth power. The Beast out of the Earth had power to energize the inanimate image made to the Beast from the Sea, causing it to speak. *Revelation 13:15a And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*
- Fifth power. The Beast out of the Earth had power to kill those who refused to worship the image made to the Beast from the Sea. *Revelation 13:15b ...and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*
- Sixth power. The Beast out of the Earth had the power to forcibly mark individuals for the purpose of identification. *Revelation 13:16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:*

- Seventh power. The Beast out of the Earth had economic authority over individuals. *Revelation 13:17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*

666

The Mark of the Beast

18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

13:18. the number of a man. Throughout history the identify of “the man” whose number is 666 has been attempted.

The Identify of the Man

666

- The Beast whose number is 666 has been identified as the personified power of the Roman government. This conception is based on the great political power of the Beast.
- The Beast whose number is 666 has been identified as the ruler of the Roman government, Nero.
- The Beast whose number is 666 has been identified as the papacy. This conception is based on the religious facets associated with the Beast. At the time of the Reformation the most popular candidate for fulfilling the anti-Christ was the pope (Leo X and then Clement VII). Luther and Calvin were convinced that the pope in Rome was the anti-Christ. The Roman Catholic Church was the anti-Christian institution. The Vicar of Christ identified himself with his own title as the anti-Christ.
- The Beast whose number is 666 has been identified as a future world ruler, either in the world today or someone who is yet to emerge. Historically, some of the candidates for anti-Christ have been: Joseph Stalin, Mussolini, and Adolf Hitler.

Special Note.

After WWII, some classified documents from the archives were released, and among them was a private document titled: Hitler, the Scourge of Europe. These private documents of Hitler's was photocopied and printed for people to see and read. One of these documents was an early entry from his diary, and in his own handwriting is written, *"This evening I have made a covenant with Satan."* Adolf Hitler made a serious effort to engage the assistance of the 'prince of darkness' in the programs he set forth (R. C. Sproul).

13:18. the number of a man. The number of “the man” is the number of “the Beast”, and “the Beast” was Nero, from a historical record. Tacitus spoke of Nero’s cruel nature. Pliny, the Roman naturalist, described Nero as the destroyer of the human race, and the poison of the world. The Roman satirist Juvenal spoke of Nero’s cruel and bloody tyranny.

Apollonius of Tyana, in his writings, said that the favorite nickname people had of Nero, was, The Beast. He makes this comment. “In my travels which have been wider than ever man yet accomplished, I have seen many wild beasts in India. But this beast, commonly called a tyrant, I know not how many heads it has, nor if it be crooked of claw, or armed with horrible fangs. Of a wild beast you cannot say they were ever known to eat their own mother, but Nero has gorged himself on this diet.”

13:18. the number of a man. 666. In a textual variant manuscript of the Revelation, the number is 616.

Special Note.

In the ancient world cryptograms were well known. A cryptogram was an encoded style of writing whereby numbers and letters were related. Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages had systems of using their letters for numbers. Roman numerals are letters that have a numerical value. The letter “x” stands for the number 10. The Latin letter “v” has the numerical number 5. The Latin letter “m” has the numerical value of 1,000. This was also true in Nero.

In Hebrew, Nero Caesar is Neron Kaiser. When translated into numbers it comes to the number 666. In Greek, Neron Kaiser comes out to the number 616.

Bruce Manning Metzger was an American biblical scholar, and textual critic, who was a longtime professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, and Bible editor, who served on the board of the American Bible Society, Born on February 9, 1914, Dr. Metzger died on February 13, 2007. As a supreme textual critic, it was the opinion of Dr. Metzger that the variant reading of 616 was intentional in order to allow Greek speaking people who read the Revelation to know the identity of the “Beast.”

REVELATION 20

The Millennium

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

20:2. bound him a thousand years. This is the first reference to the millennium, and is united with the binding of Satan.

Satan is Prohibited from Deceiving the Nations

3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

20:3.

Timeline

Satan is bound * Satan is in the bottomless pit * A 1000 years pass * The release of Satan *
The rest of dead live

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

20:4.

What John Saw

- John saw thrones.
- John saw those that sat upon the thrones.
- John saw that judgment was given to those that sat upon the thrones.
- John saw the souls of the martyrs for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God.

What the Martyred Souls Did Not Do

- The martyred souls did not worship the beast.
- The martyred souls did not worship the image of the beast.
- The martyred souls did not receive the mark of the beasts on their foreheads.
- The martyred souls did not receive the mark of the beast on their hands.

The Reward of the Martyred Souls

- The martyred souls lived.
- The martyred souls reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

20:6. and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Various Millennium Positions

- Amillennialism does not view the teaching of Revelation 20 to refer to a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on the earth. The teaching of Revelation 20 is understood to mean that the martyred saints live beyond the grave to rule and reign with Christ for a completed period of time. The Age of the Church is the Kingdom of God, which began with the first appearance of Christ.

The radical nearness of the kingdom of which John spoke was “*at hand*” (Matthew 3:2). Jesus said, “*the kingdom of God is within you*” (Luke 17:21). The fact that Jesus was able to cast out demons by the finger of God indicated that the kingdom of God had come (Luke 11:20). At the ascension of Christ He went to His coronation where He was crowned King of kings, and Lord of lords. Sitting at the right hand of God in glory, Christ is the Author and Finisher of our faith (Hebrews 1:2).

In Christ the church fulfills the prophecies of the Old Testament. The church enjoys the kingdom blessings and promises. The church consists of believing Jews and Gentiles which comprise the true seed of Abraham by faith (Galatians 3:7). There is no future dealing with ethnic Israel being exalted though in Christ “*all Israel*” shall be saved.

The Christian community, as it manifests the kingdom, will have a positive influence upon society. Rather than speaking of “no millennial”, the amillennial position speaks of

a realized or fulfilled millennial. The task of the church is to make the invisible kingdom, a visible kingdom (John Calvin).

- Dispensationalism teaches that the kingdom age is yet to come. Christians are now in the church age which represents a parenthesis between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. With the rapture the Church Age will end, God's unique covenant promises to national Israel will resume, there will be a period of great tribulation, the anti-Christ will be revealed, the battle of Armageddon will be fought, Christ will then return to establish a literal kingdom on earth over which He shall rule for one thousand years.

For the Dispensationalist the coming of the kingdom is in the future. Classical Dispensationalist do not believe that Jesus is King, though He is Lord. One day Jesus will be King when He sits in Jerusalem on the throne of David to rule the nations with a rod of iron. He will preside over a reestablished sacrificial system in a rebuilt temple. The ethics Jesus taught on the Sermon on the Mount will be binding upon those in the millennial because they have no relevance to believers in the Church Age.

In the original Scofield Bible we read: "The Sermon on the Mount in its primary application gives neither the privilege nor the duty of the Church." Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder and first president of Dallas Theological Seminary, wrote: "The Bible provides three complete and wholly independent rules for human conduct – one for the past age (there was no need of recording such rules as held good for people who lived before the Bible was written) which is known as the Mosaic Law and is crystallized in the Decalogue; one for the future age of the kingdom which is crystallized in the Sermon on the Mount; and one for the present age which appears in the Gospel of John, the Acts, and the Epistles of the New Testament" (Systematic Theology, 5:98).

Because Dispensationalism postulates two distinct programs, one for national Israel, and one for the church, all the Old Testament prophecies are yet to be fulfilled after Jesus comes and during the millennial period. The church is not viewed as the New Israel.

- Postmillennialism believes that the church is a New Israel. A positive and hopeful position, postmillennialism believes the church shall grow in power and influence to transform society through the gospel and then, when the world is essentially Christianized, Jesus will return. The kingdom of God is a kingdom of spiritual redemption. The kingdom of God is not based on an earthly or political transformation of society, but the effectual power of the gospel to permeate society.
- Historic Premillennialism does distinguish itself from Classical Dispensationalism in that it does not concern itself with some of its more sensational aspects. While the New Testament church, as an initial expression of Christ's kingdom shall enjoy some victories, it will fail in its mission to evangelistically transform the world necessitating the return of Christ to reign over the earth for 1,000 years.

7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

Satan is Allowed to Deceive the Nations

8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.