

What Is Premillennialism?

by Wayne Goff

Premillennialism is the doctrine which teaches Jesus Christ will return to the earth a second time to set up an earthly kingdom on David's literal throne in Jerusalem and reign for one thousand years.

Pre- (before) suggests that Jesus will come *prior* to the earthly kingdom being set up. (There are post-millennialists, a-millennialists as well.)

-Millennial- (thousand) has reference to the supposed thousand-year reign of Jesus on the earth. The number is *plucked* from Revelation 20:4 with total disregard to the context and its figurative meaning.

-ism (teaching) is the suffix which completes the word. However, I like what Foy E. Wallace said about "-ism." He said that means "it's not so!"

Now while you may not be familiar with the term "Premillennialism," you are probably very familiar with the book series *Left Behind* by Timothy LaHaye. In the seventies, this doctrine was popularly promoted by Hal Lindsey under the title *The Late, Great Planet Earth*.

Other basic features of this doctrine include:

1. "**Church Age.**" The present Christian era in which the church was substituted for the kingdom Jesus failed to set up because the Jews rejected him.
2. "**Rapture.**" This is supposedly taught in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 where the phrase "*caught up*" in Latin is **raptura**. This is the time when believers are to be *instantly, unexpectedly* taken up to heaven to avoid the terrible, violent period of wickedness known as the "tribulation period."
3. "**Tribulation.**" Supposedly taken from Matthew 24, this is the time when wickedness so greatly prevails upon the earth that the only solution is for Jesus to return from heaven and physically defeat Satan and his wicked subjects. This period is supposed to last either 3.5 years or 7 years, depending upon the one to whom you talk.
4. "**Millennium.**" The period of world peace when Jesus reigns from His throne in Jerusalem.
5. "**Great White Throne Judgment.**" The final judgment of the wicked who have not received Christ, Rev. 20:11ff. The righteous were supposedly judged while in heaven during the rapture.

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