

End Times Overview September 20th and 27th, 2023.

Final Conclusion

The goal of this appendix is not to get anyone to change their views on the end times. But it is my goal to challenge them. At the very least, I hope you are challenged not to be dogmatic about it. I hope the next time you talk about the end times; you speak out of “this is what I think” rather than “this is what’s going to happen.”

Even more so, I hope anyone who has an uncontrollable desire to study the end times realizes this is not something that a solid conclusion can be achieved. Our time is not best spent endlessly studying this topic. Instead, we should spend most of our time seeking and knowing Him. Revelation is not about our end times systems; it’s a warning to make sure we know Him! It’s a letter to believers to “hold on” to Him. Things will get rocky, but he protects those who are His.

I certainly don’t mean we should never talk about the end times, or the topic should be altogether avoided. Still, I believe some issues are more straightforward and more easily understood for a reason. I pray we as believers would rise up to be the temple He has made us to be, holy and pure. Devoted to Him, bold in our witness, not loving our lives even unto death (Revelation 12:11).

What does Pastor Josh believe?

- “The first coming of the Messiah was veiled, and the second coming is as well.”
- We can have some idea about what will happen, but I don’t think we can know the extreme specifics.
 - The reason for ambiguity in scripture is essential. Paul tells us why: in 1 Corinthians 2:8: “None of the rulers of this age understood [that Jesus must die], for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” In other words, you can’t have a clear game plan for your enemies to check. It needs mystery and uncertainty, or the enemy could stack the deck against the plan.
- I believe the teaching that “the Holy Spirit leaves the Earth during the rapture” is heresy. There is no salvation without the Holy Spirit. I reject merit-based salvation in the OT as Paul did.
 - The OT and the words of the Lord Himself make it very clear that following the law came from a belief in Yahweh and a rejection of foreign gods.
- I reject a non-literal second coming and a non-literal reign on earth. Jesus will return, set feet on the ground, and reign in Jerusalem.
- I reject any system or belief that DOES NOT include national Israel; I don’t think Paul could have been much more explicit in Romans 9-11.
- Have fun! Discuss theories. Wrestle with your beliefs. These are not salvation theology! STOP DIVIDING OVER THEM!!
- **While I will strongly disagree with some end times systems, if they still believe in Jesus and Him alone as the means of salvation, they are my brother or sister in Christ. I am to love and respect them!**

How Does Biblical Interpretation and Prophecy Work?

Psalm 22:

1. My God, my God... Psalm 22:1 ESV - Mark 15:34 ESV
2. Pierced hands and feet. Psalm 22:16 ESV
3. Casting Lots. Psalm 22:18 ESV - John 19:24 ESV

Isaiah 7

- Isaiah 7:14 ESV ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.
- *Read the context:*
- Isaiah 7:16-17 ESV ¹⁶ For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted.

Rachel Weeping: Matthew 2:16-18 ESV - Jeremiah 31:15 ESV

As we see from these three examples, prophecy is not as simple as “event, date, time.” There can be multiple fulfillments of this prophecy. We see this with Daniel’s abomination, who was Antiochus persecuting the Jews in the mid-100s BC. But Jesus Himself will use prophecies about Antiochus to speak about a future Antichrist in Matthew 24. End-time Prophecy will do much of the same.

Principle: Scripture Interprets Scripture.

Why Exodus is so important:

1. Genesis end with how Israel arrived in Egypt and eventually slavery.
2. Exodus is the story of how Yahweh delivered Israel out of slavery. (Exodus 6:6)
3. It’s about Yahweh’s war with the gods of the nations (Exodus 12:12).
4. This war ends by the blood of the Passover Lamb (Exodus 12:13).
5. Yahweh makes a covenant with the people of Israel (Exodus 19:5, Exodus 24:8)
6. Yahweh’s warns His people about apostasy (Exodus 15:26).

Jesus fulfilled all of these things for us:

1. Mankind has a sin problem, originating from Genesis 3, 6, and 11.
2. Jesus comes to take us out of our slavery to sin (Galatians 4:7).
3. Jesus made war against the powers of darkness (1 Corinthians 2:8).
4. The war ends with our Passover Lamb (John 19:30; 1 Corinthians 5:7)
5. Jesus made a covenant with His people (Luke 22:20).
6. Warning against apostasy (Matthew 7:21-23; Hebrews 3:6, 12, 14, 16).

John’s use of Exodus in Revelation, just one example: Revelation 12:6, 14, 16-17; Exodus 19:4, 15:12.

Do we think we know better than the author and original readers?

Matthew 2:23 “He will be called a Nazarene.”? Where’s that in the Bible?

Isaiah 11:1: “There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.”

Branch is “netzer”: spelled with Hebrew: NZR. Same letters as NaZaRene.

Matthew is using a play-on-words. Something common in scripture. Jesus is the Netzer-ene. The Branch.

John will use a play-on-words in Revelation 2:6, 15 with the Nicolaitans. Nicolaitan can be separated into “nika laon” which means “he overcomes/conquers the people.” John compares the Nicolaitans with Balaam, whose name just happens to do the same thing Balaam - Ba’al am”: “he overcomes the people/rules over the people.”

Daniel’s 70 Weeks

Daniel 8:13-14; Daniel 9:24-27; Daniel 12:5-13

Daniel 9 layout:

70 weeks = 490 years

Coming of an anointed one: 7 weeks = 49 years

Jerusalem is rebuilt and an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing: 62 weeks = 434 years

434+49= 483 (Seven years or one week left)

The last week is split into two.

7 years divided by 2 = 3.5 years.

A strong covenant for one week = 7 years

Half a week: he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering = 3.5 years.

Where do we start the 70 weeks (all dates are by modern calendar)? 7 Options:

1. When Jeremiah prophesy referred to in Daniel 9:2 - 605 BC (Jeremiah 25:12) or 597 BC (Jeremiah 29:10)?
2. Prophecies concerning the fall and restoration of Jerusalem - 587-586 BC (Jeremiah 30:18-22; 31:38-40)?
3. Gabriel’s words to Daniel right now - 539 BC (exact date unknown)?

4. Decree of Cyrus - 539-537 BC? (Isaiah 45:1; Ezra 1:1-4)
5. Decree of Darius - 521 BC? (Ezra 6:1-12)
6. Decree of Artaxerxes - 458-457 BC? (Ezra 7:12-26)
7. Warrant given to Nehemiah - 445-444? (Nehemiah 1)

Option #6 and Option #7 are presented for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture.

The problem is Option #6 mentions nothing about the rebuilding of anything (Ezra 7:12-26).

And Option #7 only works with a Lunar Calendar.

Three types of calendars:

Solar Calendar: 360 days per year | Lunar Calendar: 353 - 355 days per year | Sabbatical Calendar: 364 days per year

Daniel clearly uses a Solar Calendar. *John clearly attests Daniel's use of a Solar Calendar: Revelation 11:3, 12:6.*

Time, times, and half a time = $1 + 2 + 1/2 = 3.5$ years

3.5 years = 1260 days.

Daniel 12: 1290 days = 3.5 years + 1 solar month (30 days). 1335 days = 1290 days + 1 and a half solar months (45 days).

Option #1:

- Daniel's 1260 days start at the beginning of Antiochus' persecution = 167 B.C.
- Tracking backwards from this point we get to 605 B.C. and Jeremiah's Prophecy.
- Now take 167 B.C. and add Daniel's 1150 days via a Sabbatical Calendar (2300 days and nights), you end up in the same year and season "which according to Maccabees and Josephus the feast of Hanukkah took place."
 - Hanukkah is the rededication of the temple after the desecration by Antiochus.
- Daniel's 1,260 days ends in the spring. From there if you add 30 days (1,290) you get Passover.
- Add another 45 days (1335) and you get to Shavuot or the Feast of Weeks.
 - The Feast of Weeks is the feast celebrating the harvest, right before Pentecost.

How this works out on a symbolic level is the second coming of Christ is preceded by Passover. This is a prophesy about the marriage feast of the Lamb. Recall Jesus saying, "I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." - Matthew 26:29.

After that, you have 45 days, the final harvest. You have the glorification of the believer and the White throne judgment.

Is this the answer? I don't know! That's my point. This theory lines up so well, but its a theory. What I like about this one is it's based just on the numbers, not a system that doesn't automatically make it correct. Still, it is something that needs to be considered.

The Millennial Reign

1. The literal Millennium is taking place AFTER the return of Christ.
2. A spiritual, non-literal millennium that is taking place right now.

Option #1: In a reading of Revelation 20 on its own, one would naturally conclude that it is after Christ's return. It mentions 1,000 years six times in Chapter 20. Option #1 comes from a strictly straight literal reading.

Option #2 requires asking, "Why is John using the language he is using?"

Gog and Magog, Armageddon, and the Enemy from the North.

Revelation 20:7-10

Why is Jesus fighting two battles against a multitude of people? At the Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16), we have 200 million named as the army's size (Rev. 9). In Revelation 20, they are as numerous as "the sand of the sea."

Two options to this question: 1) the Battle of Gog and Magog and Armageddon are the same. 2) God wants to defeat Satan and his followers twice.

Gog and Magog are not original to Revelation. They are from Ezekiel 38-39.

While John only uses the terms "Gog and Magog in Revelation 20." However he uses the language Ezekiel 38-39 all over the place BEFORE the return of Jesus throughout Revelation 16-19. Scripture is inspired, is this an accident or intentional?

Battle of Armageddon

Revelation 16:12-21

Euphrates dries up (Revelation 9:14; Revelation 16:12) in the 6th Trumpet and Bowl.

This is the prophetic depiction of the antichrist army being able to march against Jerusalem (Revelation 9:16; Revelation 16:14-16) for the Battle of Armageddon.

- "Armageddon" is "har magedon." In Hebrew, 'har' means 'mountain,' so we get 'mount magedon.'

This is not Megiddo. There is no mountain in Megiddo.

- Isaiah 14:12-17 Verse 13: You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;
- Hebrew: "assembly" is spelled "mem," "ayin," and "dalet." M - ' - D. The '-' is a guttural "G" sound. Har Maged = mount of assembly.

The mount of assembly is the place where God dwells, it's Jerusalem, Zion. Joel 3 and Zechariah 14 prophesy this battle taking place at Jerusalem in the valley between the Temple and the Mount of Olives

It is Jerusalem where Jesus will set His feet on the Mount of Olives and defeat the army of the Antichrist. Hopefully, you noticed I underlined the word "north" in Isaiah 14:13. The divine rebel said he would sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the North.

The Enemy From the North

Isaiah 14:13; Jeremiah 46:10; Ezekiel 38-39; Psalm 48:2

In Ezekiel 38-39, Gog and Magog come from "the north." This leads many prophesy teachers to say Gog and Magog are Russia. This, however, lacks credible biblical interpretation. Every army against Israel that didn't come from Egypt came from the North. The mountains and rivers on its East and South borders naturally guard Israel. At the same time, its West border is in the Mediterranean Sea. The East and South are deserts. If a military wanted any chance against Israel, they would have to take their armies north, where there is food and water for their troops and animals. Not to mention not having to traverse rivers and mountains.

The "North" is a spiritual figure of speech. While we today usually think of heaven as up and hell as down, Israelites viewed the "North" as the "Realm of the Deity." Psalm 48:2: "2 beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King."

- Mount Zion (Jerusalem) is not in the North. It's not even in the North of Israel. It's in the middle of the country. Pagan gods were also from the North. Baal for example.

What a coincidence that "Armageddon and the North" are in the same passage about a divine rebel, the same divine rebel leading these armies against God?

Ezekiel 39:2 especially stands out: "2 And I will turn you about and drive you forward and bring you up from the uttermost parts of the north, and lead you against the mountains of Israel."

Look at the outcome of Ezekiel's prophesy" Ezekiel 39:4: "4 You shall fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your hordes and the peoples who are with you. I will give you to birds of prey of every sort and to the beasts of the field to be devoured."

When does John say this will happen? Revelation 19, when Christ returns, not 1,000 years after:

- Revelation 19:17-21 "17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, 18 to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of... 21... birds were gorged with their flesh."

Ezekiel's Temple and The New Heaven and Earth

After the Battle of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 39, the Lord promises the restoration of Israel, Ezekiel 39:25-29. These promises come at the return of Christ, not 1,000 years later.

Ezekiel 40-48 = Ezekiel's restored temple. Many believe this is the Millennial Kingdom post return of Christ. Why does John use it for the New Heaven and New Earth?

Compare:

Ezekiel 47:1 & Revelation 22:1 - River flowing from temple/throne.

Ezekiel 47:7-12 & Revelation 22:1-5 - River produces life. Removes the "salt" and "accursed" so there is only life.

Ezekiel 47:7, 12 & Revelation 22:2 - The trees produce fruit every month.

Ezekiel 47:12 & Revelation 22:2 - Leaves are used for the "healing of the nations."

While there certainly are differences. Ezekiel, for example, depicts a physical temple with walls. John's temple, on the other hand, is God Almighty and the Lamb, this makes sense in the context of scripture. If you're a Jew living in exile in Babylon, what is the sign of everything being set right and brought out of exile? A temple, with God dwelling with His people. In the New Testament, it is revealed that God no longer dwells in temples made by the hands of men, but in His people, the body of Christ. It makes sense then that the temple in the New Jerusalem is God Almighty and the Lamb.

End Times Systems Overview

Replacement Theology

The church replaces natural Israel and becomes the new Israel. Natural Israel has no part to play in the New Covenant. Takes a "spiritual non-literal view" of scripture.

- The belief of most of the church fathers through the end of the reformation. The view favored by most non-evangelicals.

Dispensational Theology

The church and Israel are separate entities. Natural Israel is still Yahweh's chosen people. The Church is completely separate from Israel. Israel is placed on a shelf until a proposed rapture takes place, in which Israel will again be in the forefront of Yahweh's plan. Takes a "literal view" of scripture.

- Has become primary belief of American Evangelicals beginning in mid-1800s.

Non-Systems: Historical/“Already but Not Yet”

The church and Israel are one, but the Lord is not done with national Israel. The church is grafted into natural Israel, and natural Israelites who do not believe in Jesus as Messiah are cut off from Israel (Romans 11).

Interprets scripture based on literal and non-literal/spiritual/metaphorical views. Different genres require different approaches, and most languages contain many metaphors in ordinary speech.

- Primary beliefs of the early church and many non-American evangelicals.

End-Times Systems General Details

Note: None of these options are “set in stone.” There are different things people who put themselves into a system will believe differently. This is a general overview and should not be viewed as all-inclusive.

While some views generally don’t have a literal Antichrist, some believers in that system might believe a literal Antichrist. If your system hasn’t been described to your beliefs, please understand it is not done to provoke; my intention with this list is to be as general about particular belief systems as possible. I tried to find the systems’ origins or what is generally believed as a whole in the systems according to different sources.

Note: The use of metaphor in the Bible does not mean “not real.”

Replacement Theology Systems

Key themes:

- Spiritual/metaphorical return of Jesus.
- The Church replaces Israel in the plan of God.
- No literal reign on earth after the 2nd Coming.
- Spiritual Reading of Revelation (except where it can’t).
- Satan is already bound and presumably judged by God already.

Shared Pros:

- Doesn’t ignore spiritual reading scripture consistent with Jewish writing of the day, especially Apocalyptic writings.
- Doesn’t require Daniel’s 70 weeks to start on a certain date (see section on Daniel’s 70 weeks).

Shared Cons:

- Goes further than interpreters of Jesus’ day in it’s “spiritual only” reading of prophesy.
- Preterism (full/partial):
- The belief that all (full) or most (partial) of the contents of end time prophesies in Revelation and the prophesies about the end times were fulfilled before and during 70 AD. The Anti-Christ was Nero. In this view Revelation is viewed as a *lawsuit* against Israel before it’s collapse in 70 AD.

Full Preterism believes in a spiritual 2nd coming that already came in 70 AD. When we die we go to heaven and live with Him there forever. *This will continue supposedly until there is no life in this plain of existence.*

Partial Preterism believes scripture has been completely fulfilled except Jesus is yet to come.

Pros:

- Some events may have been fulfilled or partially fulfilled in 70 AD. For example Matthew 24:15-20 may have been fulfilled or partially fulfilled. Some events in Revelation could be thought as prophesy about the siege of Rome against Jerusalem.

Cons:

- This view holds a large inconsistency with an extreme metaphorical/spiritual reading of scripture with an extreme literal reading of the events leading to 70 AD and the destruction of the temple.
- Requires an early writing of Revelation which is the minority view of scholars and history.

- Its spiritualistic reading cannot be found as a consistent interpretation of the Messiah's first coming (see *Isaiah 53, Psalm 22 for example*).
- Satan being bound in Revelation 20 is a major issue, it appears he is clearly active in deceiving the nations still.
- While there is most certainly a prophetic lawsuit part to Revelation there is no indication it is only a lawsuit narrative. This claim is overstated.
 - Also, the lawsuit in Revelation is not aimed at Israel but clearly aimed against Rome and "Babylon." Babylon being the representation of the fallen world in general.
- In 70 AD the nations were not judged, Israel was. Revelation clearly speaks to the nations being judged (see Revelation 11:17-18).

Amillennial:

The scriptures are not to be understood from a literal perspective but only a spiritual one. Christ's "millennial reign" is now through believers. Jesus will return at the fulfillment of the Great Commission where He will spiritually return to take believers to Heaven for eternity and judge the non-believers. No need for a literal Anti-Christ.

Pros:

- Doesn't ignore spiritual perspectives of scripture prevalent in the early church and 2nd Temple period.
- There are certainly indication to a "reign of Christ" now.

Cons:

- Everything is interpreted spiritually except where it cannot because of contradictions, leading to inconsistent readings with First Coming prophesies.
- Binding of Satan in Revelation 20 makes no sense as the enemy is clearly deceiving the nations.
- Paul is rather specific that God is not done with natural Israel (Revelation 11).
- Verses on a literal coming of Christ are hard to explain as metaphorical.

Post-millennial:

Same as amillennialism except: Christ's "millennial reign" is now through believers and culminates with believers essentially "taking over the world" with the Gospel which ushers in the 2nd Coming of Jesus in which Jesus will spiritually return and take believers to be with Him. No literal reign on earth. No literal Anti-Christ needed. *There are some postmillennial beliefs that are closer to dispensationalism but it is not what typically comes up when post-mill is discussed.*

Pros:

- Doesn't ignore spiritual perspectives of scripture prevalent in the early church and 2nd Temple period.

Cons:

- Has to interpret spiritual vs literal inconsistently and possibly contradicts itself when its needed to support its system.
- Bible seems to clearly speak of the world getting worse not better. The language of almost all end-times passages speak of horrible evil and it's judgement, of war, abominations, and it's defeat. The support texts for post-mill shouldn't be considered separate from other Day of the Lord passages.

Dispensational Theology Systems

- History is divided into eras or "dispensations."
- This leads to ideas like salvation in the OT is based on works, where salvation in the NT is based of grace and faith because of the different "dispensations." This system doesn't hang it's hat on this belief, and the system can work with a proper understanding that salvation in the OT and NT is based on grace and faith.
- Israel and the Church are completely separate entities
- Rapture of the church so Israel can regain it's relationship with the Lord (except for Post-Tribulation).

- Extreme focus on a literal seven year tribulation.
- Literal 1000 year Reign on Earth.
- Satan is bound for 1000 years.
- After Satan is released he will wage war against Jerusalem again and be defeated once and for all.
- Literal Reign on Earth for eternity
- Literal Anti-Christ.
- Literal and Chronological reading of Revelation.

Shared Pros

- Ephesians 1:10 does speak of the “plan/administration/dispensation of the fullness of times.”
- Understand prophesy from a literal fulfillment is consistent with many passages about the First Coming of Jesus.
- Emphasis on Jesus as our protector.
- Emphasis on the salvation of natural Israel.
- Fulfills all Covenants with Israel (if there are still other covenants that need to be fulfilled).

Shared Cons

- Making a system based on one Greek word “οἰκονομία - oikonomia” in Ephesians 1:10 can be viewed as an over-statement in that it supposed different οἰκονομία means God managed with humanity differently in other Eras. This comes from a misunderstanding of the OT sacrificial system and purpose of the Law (see the book of Hebrews).
- Literal fulfillment of prophesy lacks spiritual fulfillment found in many passages about the First Coming (see section on How Does Biblical Interpretation and Prophecy Work?).
- This system tends to be inconsistent with it’s literal vs spiritual; most problems are explained away with “this one is a spiritual prophesy” but there is no consistency to it’s interpretation.
- Possible over emphasis of how Jesus protects us that is inconsistent and possibly offensive to Christians dying for their faith in the worst ways all over the world for the last 2000 years.
- While prophesies and scriptures are taken literal, rapture scriptures must be taken spiritual and out of their larger context. Rapture scriptures require interpretation techniques that do not work in any other parts of the Bible.
- There is no scripture in the entire Bible that mentions a 7 or 3.5 year period with a tribulation or Great Tribulation. *This doesn’t exclude it, but should be known.*
- A linear reading of Revelation is extremely hard to reconcile. Especially with John’s use of the Old Testament.
- Requires Two-Last Trumpets (one for the rapture, one for second coming).
- Possible contradiction of the meaning and Jewish/Greek traditions of the word “meet” (Greek: apantesis) in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. The word “meet” is the word used to describe people going out of the town to immediately escort the king or important person back into the town. This is both a Greek custom and an expected Messianic custom in Jewish thinking.
- Requires external resources or teaching to arrive at conclusions, especially a pre-2nd Coming rapture.
- Daniel 70 (see Daniels 70-Weeks section below for a deeper dive).
- Dispensationalism requires Daniels 70 years to start at an exact time, and Jesus’ death to take place on a certain date. The date of Jesus’ death is far from certain and the date at which Daniel’s 70 weeks has to begin is the least likely option.
- Jesus’ death has to be in 33 AD.
- The Daniel’s prophesy of “word going out to rebuild Jerusalem” to start Daniel’s 70 weeks must take place in Ezra 7:11-26 which doesn’t contain a single mention of rebuilding anything in the passage.
 - An option for Nehemiah 1 to start Daniel’s 70 weeks makes more sense but requires the use of a lunar calendar which doesn’t work with Daniel’s descriptions of the weeks.

- There are other ways to read Daniel 9. Including the 70 years which are 490 years (Daniel 9:24) and a 2nd 70 years (Daniel 9:25-27). If this is taken you can start at Cyrus and end the 490 years and the 70 years at 25 AD another very possible date for the crucifixion.

Pre-Tribulation Rapture:

Jesus returns for the Church at the beginning of the 7 years, Israel is put at the forefront for revival. Some believe the Holy Spirit is taken from earth during this period of 7 years. Some believe the Marriage Feast of the Lamb takes place during the 7 years.

Pros:

- Primary view of evangelicals in America since 1850s.

Cons:

- Seeming contradiction with 2 Thessalonians 2, which says we will “see the man of lawlessness” and we know Christ hasn’t come back yet because we haven’t seen this man of lawlessness be exalted.

Mid-Tribulation Rapture:

Jesus comes back in the middle of the Tribulation and before the Great Tribulation which is a final 3.5 years.

Pros:

- Possibly removes the contradiction with 2 Thessalonians 2.

Cons:

- Doesn’t work with Daniel’s 70 years as well. Specifically the final week and the return on Israel in dispensational thinking.

Post-Tribulation Rapture:

Christians will go through all of the Tribulation. Jesus will return for His followers at the end.

Pros:

- Removes problems with Pre and Mid Tribulation positions.

Cons:

- Removes the need for a 7-year dispensation to put Israel in the spotlight. The Lord can’t/won’t focus on Israel at the same time as the church, yet the church never leaves for the Lord to focus on Israel.
- No need for a dispensational system.

Pre-Wrath Rapture:

Jesus will return at some point in the last 3.5 years right before His Second Coming.

Pros:

- Adds in what Jesus says in Matthew 24:22 into thought.

Cons:

- Same as Post-Tribulation cons

The Non-Systems: Historical Pre-Mill and “Already But Not Yet” Perspectives

- God has always been the same and will always be at work with all creation.
- Salvation is faith in Him alone in both the OT and NT, consistent with what Paul says (Romans 4; Galatians 3) and the writer of Hebrews (Hebrews 11).
- Interpreting prophesy contains both literal and spiritual components.
- Interpretation starts at the scriptures, not in aligning scriptures with my system.
- “Already but not yet.” Fulfillment of a prophesy doesn’t mean the prophesy has been entirely fulfilled. Psalms 22 and Matthew 24 for example.

- Revelation is read as a cycle.
- Deep connection with the Old Testament.
- Literal Anti-Christ.
- A seven-year final “week” works if there is a week left to be fulfilled.

Shared Pros:

- Interpretation includes both spiritual and literal, consistent with First Coming prophecies and all of scripture in general.
- Doesn’t require “either/or” interpretation but allows for “both/and” interpretation.
- Requires a deep knowledge of the Old Testament.
- Allows Daniel’s 70 weeks to be interpreted in its own contexts.
- Takes pros of previous theologies and works with them together.
- Israel still has a plan, the Church is grafted into Israel. After Satan is released he will wage war against Jerusalem again and be defeated once and for all.
- Fulfills all Covenants with Israel (if there are still other covenants that need to be fulfilled).
- Can be understood with only the Bible and understanding of the culture of original authors and recipients.

Shared Cons:

- Requires a deep knowledge of the Old Testament.

Traditional Pre-Millennial:

- Jesus returns at the end of the Great Commission. He sets up His literal Millennial Kingdom and reigns for 1000 years until He remakes the earth and reigns in the New Jerusalem forever with His believers. After Satan is released he will wage war against Jerusalem again and be defeated once and for all.

Pros

- Consistent reading of prophesy.
- Allows Revelation 20 to be read on its own.

Cons

- Requires making hard decisions about certain parts of Revelation, especially in passages John seems to be using the Old Testament and reuse of words.
- Especially hard decisions with Revelation 20 and Ezekiel 38-39/Revelation 16-19.

“Already But Not Yet”:

Same as Historical Pre-Millennial except the Millennial Reign is spiritual and right now. Jesus will literally return, defeat the anti-Christ and set up His eternal kingdom from Israel for eternity. In Revelation 20 Satan is not bound entirely, he is bound from gathering the nations to attack Jerusalem. When God allows Satan will be released to gather the nations for a final battle against Israel, the Lord will return and defeat the Antichrist and his army.

Pros:

- Reconciles the OT and John’s use of it in Revelation the best.
- Reconciles John’s reusing of phrases and words in Revelation.

Cons:

- Requires a specific definition of the term “bound” (Greek: edesen) in Revelation 20:2 which would have to mean “bound from doing a specific thing or task” (*there is support for this definition*).
- I’ve heard an argument that a 1000 year Reign after Christ’s return is necessary to fulfill all of Israel’s promises. Though I haven’t been able to find a list of promises that can only be fulfilled in a 1000 year reign.

Note: The understanding of Satan being bound from accomplishing a specific task DOES NOT work in the replacement systems as traditionally believed, those systems do not necessarily believe in a literal anti-Christ nor a literal attack on Israel by the Satanic forces.