

Romans 11:25-36

The end of Biblical Prophecy

- Biblical prophecy has always held a fascination for Christians with the tendency to focus too much attention on “the signs of the times” and the order of the events that will characterize the end of the world.
- Does God yet have a plan for the nation Israel? Christians are divided on this issue. Is there sound evidence for a plan to restore the Jewish nation.
- This passage invites us to explore these questions and others.
- There is considerable disagreement among Christians on the subject of Biblical prophecy and this for good reason. Much of this material is not as clear as we would like. It is important to be humble and respectful of other positions. What I present here is a rather straightforward reading of the plain sense of the texts considered. I am not convinced that my reading is the end of the discussion.

25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “*The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.*” 27 “*And this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.*” 28 From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of {God’s} choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; 29 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 30 For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, 31 so these also now have been disobedient, in order that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. 32 For God has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all.

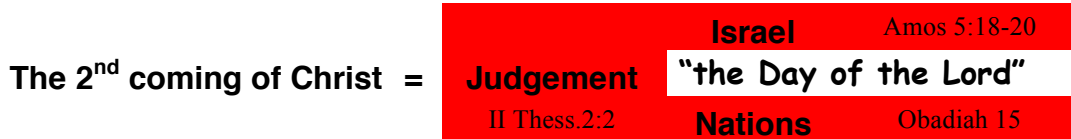
- Paul seems to clearly believe that the same Israel that has rejected her Messiah and his Kingdom will one day repent and receive the blessings that were promised her. Rom.11 “12 Now if their transgression be riches for the world and their failure be riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! 13 But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, 14 if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. 15 For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will {their} acceptance be but life from the dead? 16 And if the first piece {of dough} be holy, the lump is also; and if the root be holy, the branches are too.”

Israel		Gentile		Israel	
Israel chosen	Israel set aside	Gentiles grafted in	“Fullness of Gentiles”	Israel grafted back	The end of time

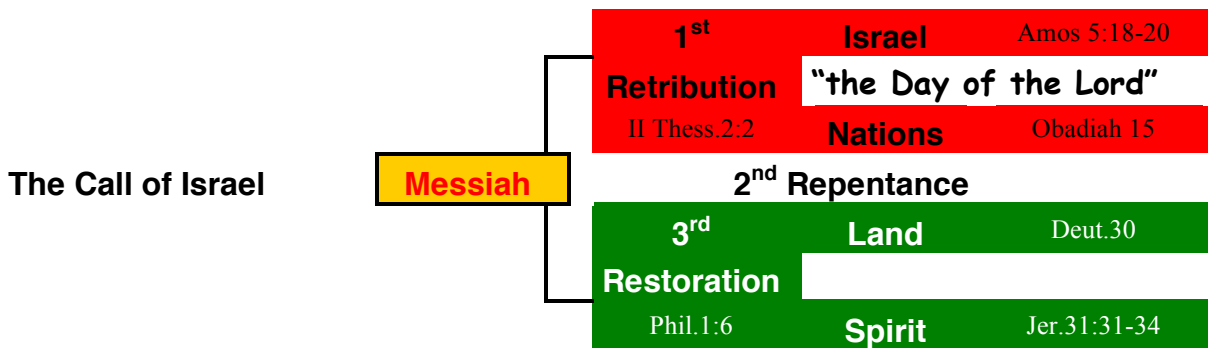
- Rom.11 seems to support the view that God's dealing with Israel is in some way distinct from His dealing with the church and that it is not yet finished. I Cor.10:32 “Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God;”



- The Scripture speaks of "the Day of the Lord" as a future time of judgment of Israel (Amos 5:18) and the nations (Obadiah 15) with repentance and blessings to follow (Zeph.3:9-20). In the NT the phrase is linked to the time of Christ's second coming (I Cor.1:8, 5:5; Phil.1:6,10, 2:16; II Thess.2:2). Could it be that this time coincides with the restoration of Israel spoken of in Rom.11?



- The restoration of Jews to the land of Palestine is a part of God's promise to the nation Israel and is to come **after** Israel's spiritual renewal. Deut.30:
 "1 When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come upon you and you take them to heart wherever the LORD your God disperses you among the nations, 2 and when you and your children return to the LORD your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today, 3 **then** the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you."



- Matt.24-25 (and the Epistles) speak of a period of "tribulation" that will come before Christ's return and a period of **judgment** that will follow His return.
- Luke's version of Jesus' words (Lk.21:24) has the second coming of Christ following the "fulfillment of the time of the Gentiles." Does this reference Paul's "fullness of the Gentiles" in Rom.11:25?

Matthew 24-25

<i>Beginning of birth pangs</i>	<i>Great Tribulation</i>	<i>Coming of Christ</i>	<i>Parables</i>	<i>Final Judgment</i>
24 • False Christs, • Wars & rumors of wars • Famine & earthquake • Believers hated • Conflict within the church • False prophets • Many will be misled • Lawlessness • Love will grow cold • World evangelism	• Desecration • Tribulation • False signs “Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot, by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Lk.21:24	• Cosmic signs • Christ is seen • Trumpet sounds • Elect gathered	• Fig Tree • Servants • Virgins • Talents	

II Thessalonians, II Peter, and Revelation

<i>Beginning of birth pangs</i>	<i>Great Tribulation</i>	<i>Coming of Christ</i>	<i>Parables</i>	<i>Final Judgment</i>
I Thess.5:1-11 Rev.6-7 SEALS (Antichrist)	II Thess.2:1-12 Rev.8-18 TRUMPETS (wrath on all) BOWLS (wrath on nations)	I Thess.4:13-18 Rev.19 II Pet.3:3-13		II Pet.3:3-13

Moses

1st Advent

2nd Advent



- In Rev.20 we read of a thousand year (millennial) reign of Messiah.
 “4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I {saw} the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.”
- This text is the only clear reference to “a thousand year” reign of Christ.
- The two resurrections seem to represent two spiritual conditions rather than two kinds of resurrection.
- Is this “thousand year” period the fulfillment of the promises made to Israel? It seems to fit.

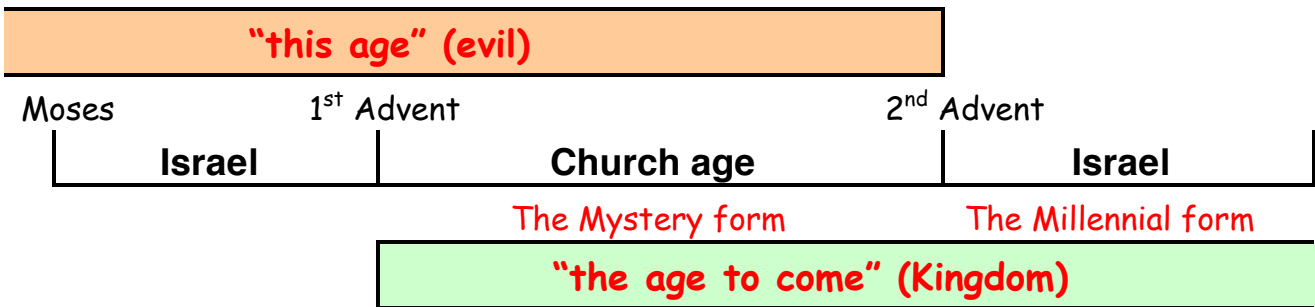


The Millennial Kingdom

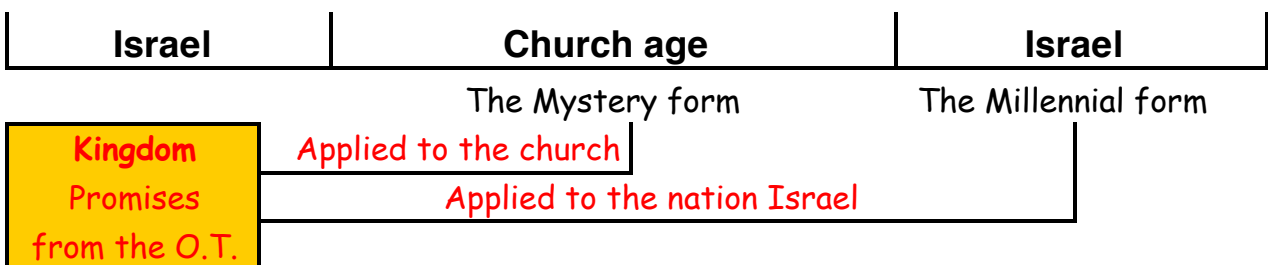
1st 2nd



- The Kingdom is a puzzle that is best understood as "the age to come" that coexists (in a mystery form) with this present evil age until Christ returns.
 - a. It is a present reality - Rom.14:17, Matt.12:28; yet it is to follow Christ's second coming - Matt.25:34, I Cor.15:50.
 - b. It is physical - Matt.13:41,43; Rev.11:15; yet it is spiritual - Lk.17:20-21.
 - c. It is something we have now entered - Matt.21:31, Col.1:13, Lk.16:16; yet it is something we will enter at Christ's return - Matt.8:11, II Pet.1:11.
 - d. It is at work in the world today - Matt.13; yet it is not of this world - Jn.18:36.
 - e. It is God's reign - Ps.145:11; yet it is God's realm - Lk.16:16.

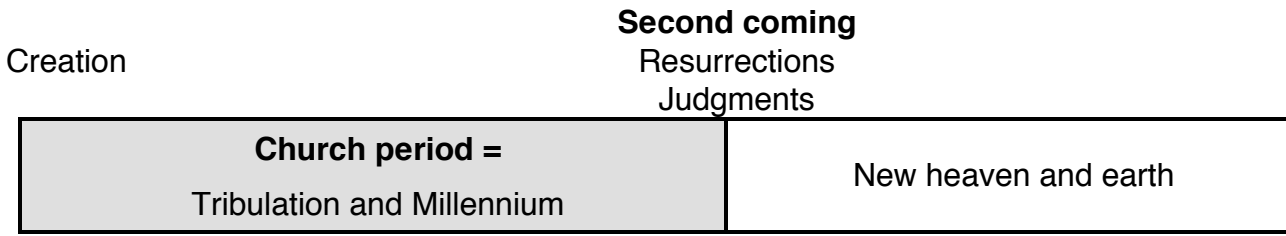


- Christians have recognized that many of the Kingdom promises to Israel in the OT have been applied (in the NT) to the church. Does this mean that the church is the New Israel? It is hard to spiritualize all of the OT promises made to Israel and apply them to the church.

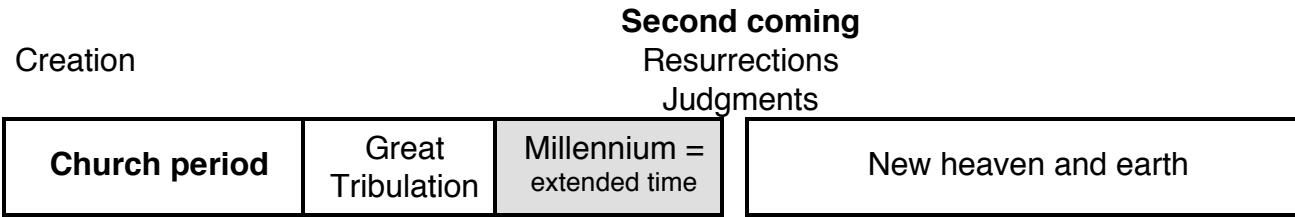


- The application of OT Kingdom promises to the Church has led to differing understandings of the nature of the Millennial Kingdom. There are three views.

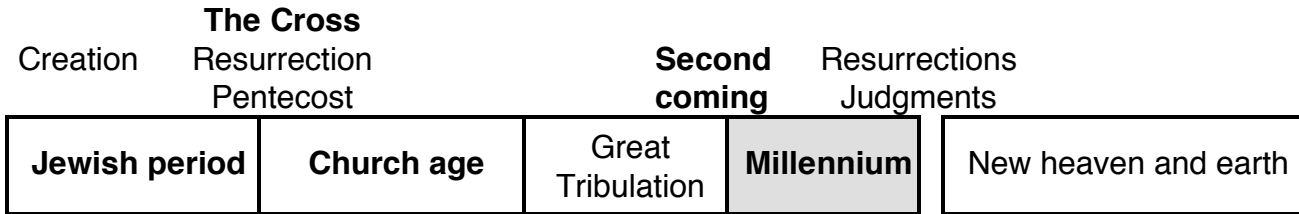
Amillennialism



Postmillennialism



Premillennialism



Doxology. (11:33-36)

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! 34 For *who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?* 35 Or *who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again?* 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him {be} the glory forever. Amen.

- In these verses we see the desired end to a proper understanding of God's prophetic plan - worship.
- We also are reminded that it will not be easy to unravel God's plan or come to dogmatic conclusions about what God will do in the outworking of His plan.
- It is best that we stand in awe as humble, worshipful, spectators, with a keen sensitivity to His hand in history.
- There are also warnings that we should watch, wait, and abide in faith with a willingness to suffer for following Christ.