



Eyewitnesses

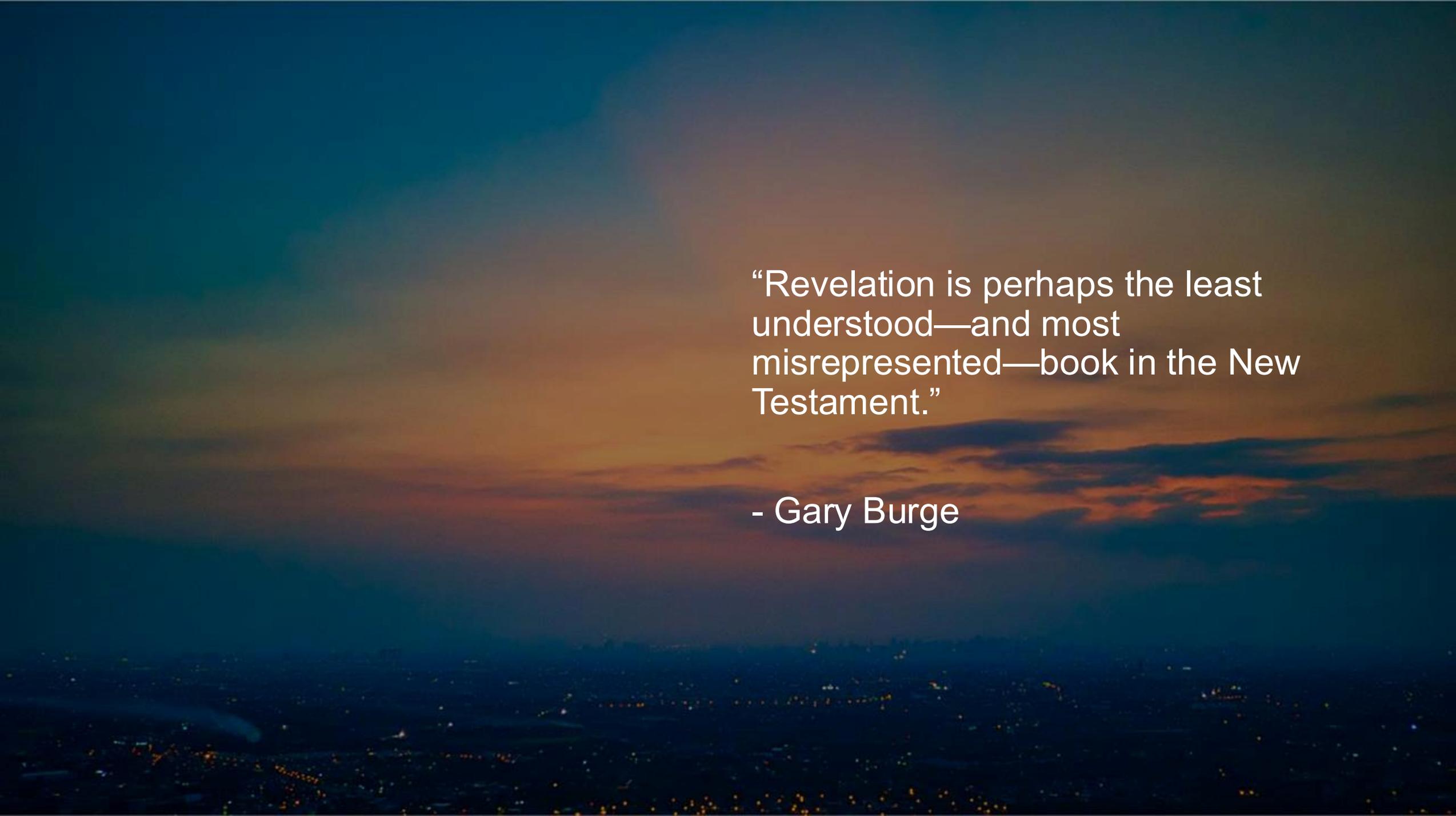
SESSION 6:

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Pre-Class Discussion

- Christians are called to be alert to signs that the end may be near. How do we do this without getting distracted and caught up in end times predictions?

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

An aerial night view of a city with a sunset sky. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a warm orange and red near the horizon, with scattered clouds. The city below is illuminated by numerous small lights, creating a dense pattern of yellow and white dots against the dark landscape.

“Revelation is perhaps the least understood—and most misrepresented—book in the New Testament.”

- Gary Burge

Review of Bible Interpretation Principles:

- The Bible is God's Word *for* us, but it was not originally written *to* us.
- Scripture must be interpreted according to its *genre*. Otherwise we will ask the wrong questions of the text.
- Beware of reading into Scripture your own ideas, thoughts, views.





Author & Circumstances

- Written by John the Apostle
- Exiled to Patmos
- Written to encourage, confront, and exhort seven churches in Asia Minor.

The Purpose of the Revelation

Revelation 13:9-10

“Whoever has ears, let them hear.¹⁰ “If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity they will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword they will be killed.”

This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of God’s people.

Revelation 14:12

This calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God who keep his commands and remain faithful to Jesus.

Who is on the Throne?

“...Revelation is fundamentally a book about Christ, worship and discipleship, and final hope for the world.”
– Michael J. Gorman

“Primarily, the book purposes to encourage Christians undergoing persecution, not to confuse or divide its readers over fine points of eschatology.”
(Introduction to Biblical Interpretation)

A lion and a lamb are shown resting on a large, fluffy white cloud. The lion is on the left, looking directly at the viewer with a calm expression. The lamb is on the right, nestled slightly behind the lion, also looking forward. The background is a dark blue sky filled with soft, white clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

Revelation

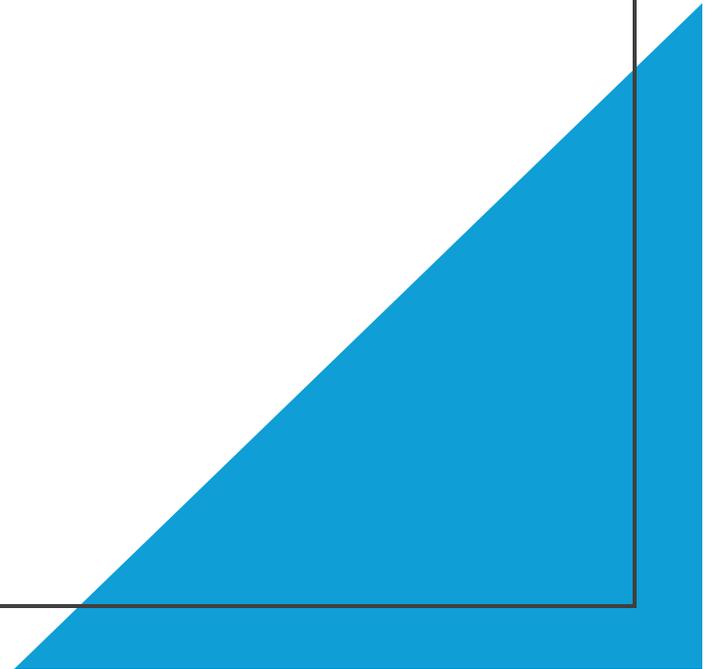
DON'T GIVE IN, JESUS WILL WIN!

Applying Revelation:

- We should expect persecution and suffering, and look to Jesus to endure it.
- Maintain your purity in the midst of a world and culture that push for compromise.
- There is more than meets the eye to the good and evil battles in this world.
- We should live this life in light of eternity and what God is going to do.

Genre

What kind of writing is this?



Revelation 1:1-4

The **revelation** from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ² who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. ³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this **prophecy**, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

⁴ John, **To the seven churches** in the province of Asia:

Letter:

John intended this to be a letter to seven historical churches located in Asia Minor.

There are timeless messages for the church in the book of Revelation, but we must **first** understand its historical message to these seven churches.

Revelation has an occasional nature to it—it was written for a specific reason, at a specific time to address specific problems.

modern day
TURKEY

Pergamos

Thyatira

Smyrna

Sardis

Ephesus

Philadelphia

Laodicea



Prophecy:

- Describes how God will work out his future will within history.
- Two dimensions:
 - Foretelling: announcing before the fact
 - Forthtelling: announcing God's message for the people at that time
- Even when prophecies were about the future, they still had a message of encouragement or correction for God's people at that time.





Apocalypse:

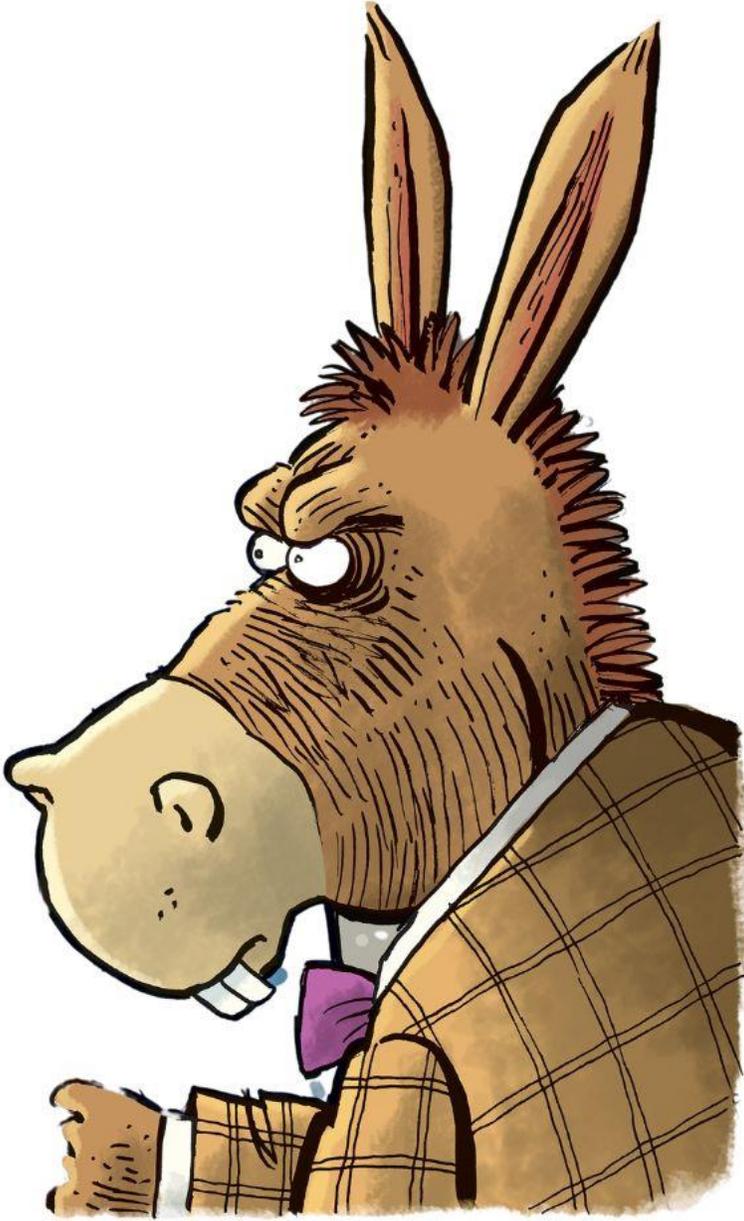
A “lost” genre of literature.

From the Greek “*apocalypsis*” which means “unveiling” or “revealing” (why the book is called the Revelation)

Most of the misreading of Revelation comes from a misunderstanding or ignorance of how to interpret/understand apocalyptic literature.

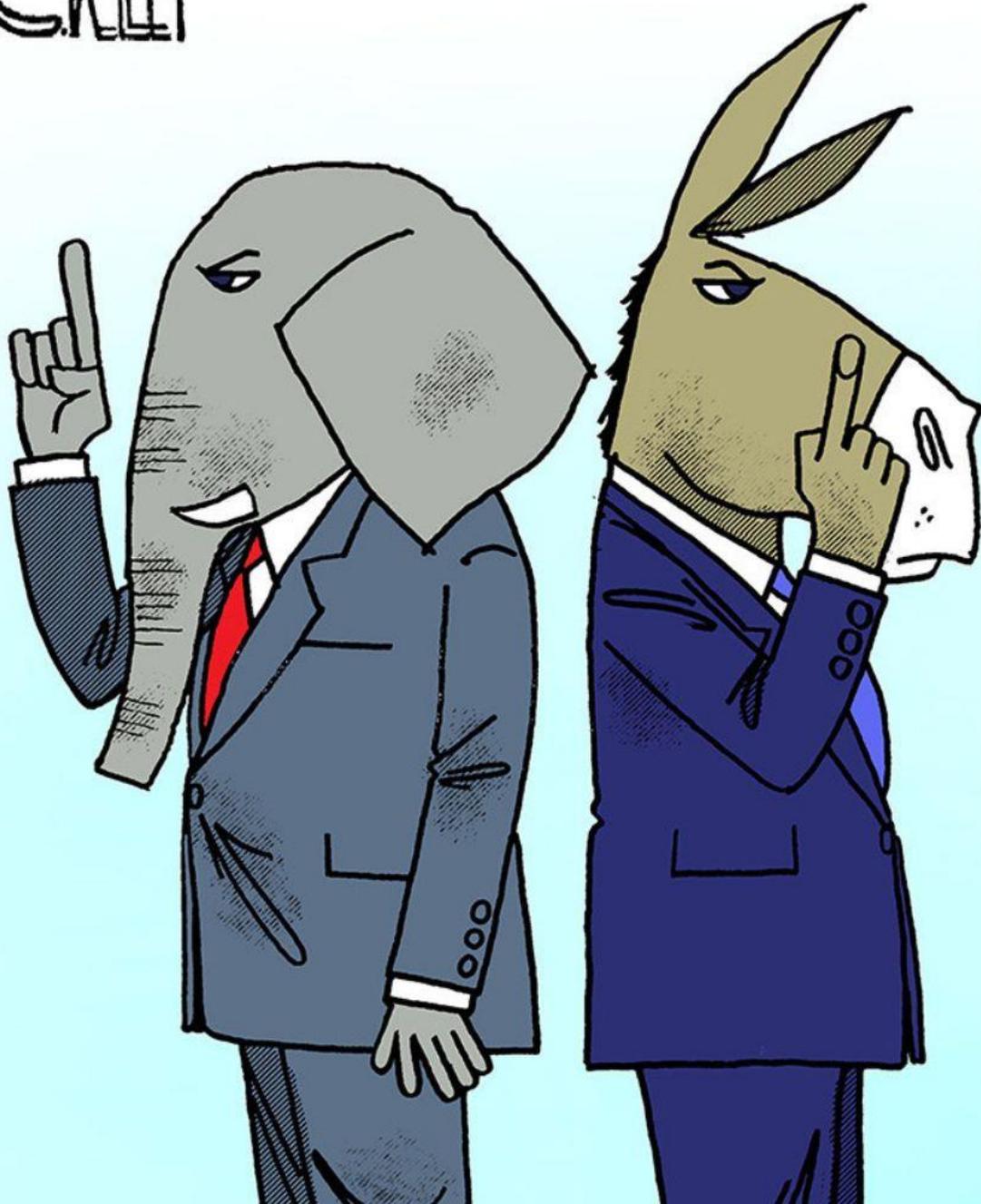






S. KELLY

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I THINK YOU BOTH KNOW THE DRILL... TEN PACES, TURN, AND COMMENCE POINTING FINGERS.



Daniel 7 – Four Beasts



A mosaic of a winged lion, known as the Lion of Babylon, is set against a background of a brick wall. The lion is depicted in profile, facing left, with its body and head rendered in shades of brown and tan. Its wings are a mix of brown and blue, with detailed feather patterns. The lion's tail is also visible, extending to the right. The background consists of rectangular bricks in various shades of blue, teal, and brown, with dark mortar lines. The overall image has a slightly dark, atmospheric quality.

Lion with Eagle's Wings - Babylon



Bear with three
ribs = Medo-
Persian Empire



Leopard with four
wings and four
heads = Greece

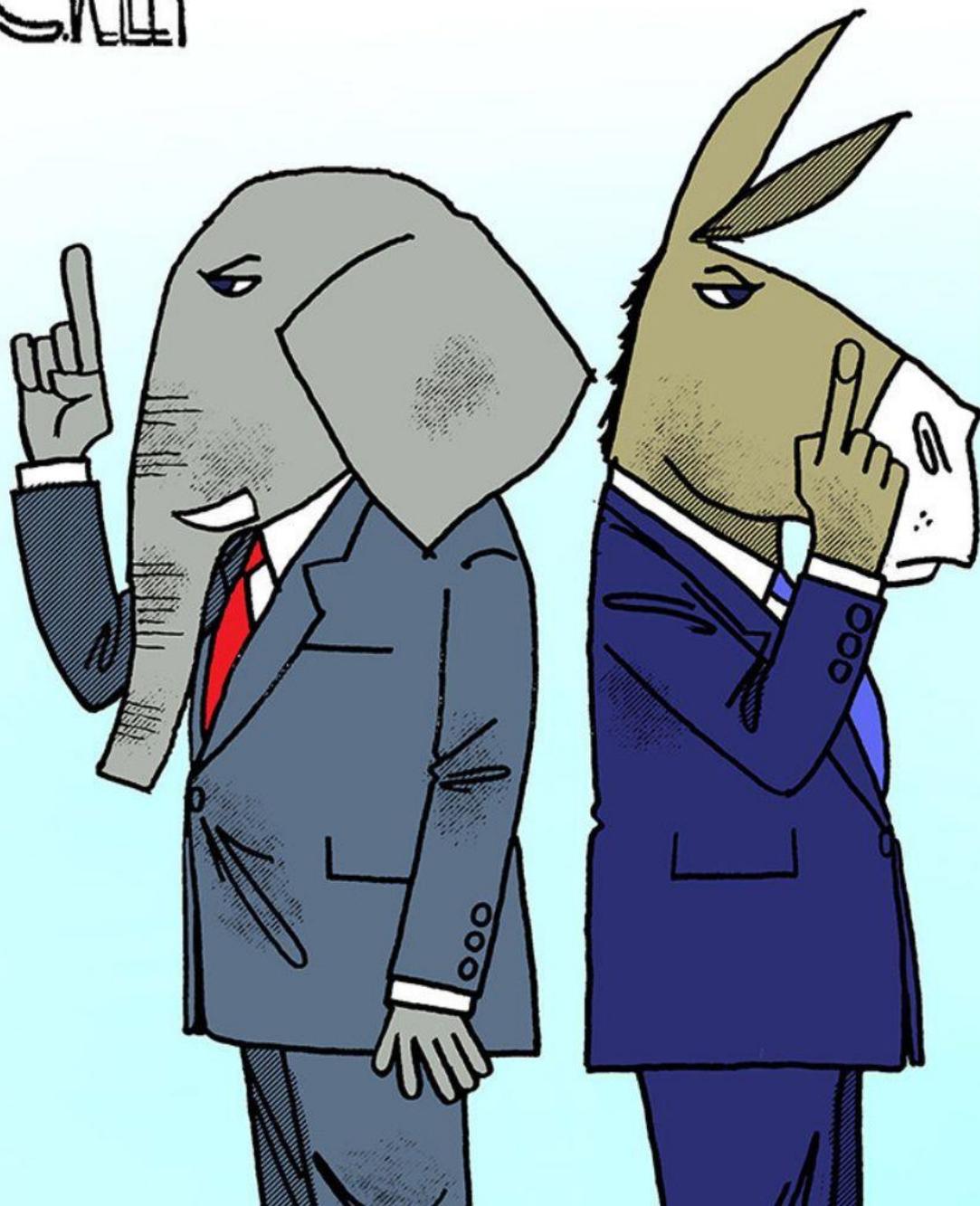
Revelation 12 - The sign of the woman and the dragon

John sees a sign: a woman, clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of 12 stars on her head. She gives birth to the Messiah, whom the dragon attempts to devour. The woman flees to the wilderness where she is protected. War breaks out in heaven and Michael, the archangel is victorious over the Devil and he and his angels are hurled down to earth. The dragon pursues the woman and her children.

- Sun, moon and stars recalls Joseph's vision of his father, mother and brothers (Genesis 37:9). Therefore, many identify the woman as the (Old Testament) people of God laboring (and suffering) as they awaited the coming of the Messiah.
- The woman's child (seed) fighting the seed of the dragon recalls the promise of Genesis 3:15.
- The child being brought to heaven could be Christ's ascension to heaven after His earthly work was complete.
- The wings like an eagle that are given to the woman could be a reference to Exodus 19:4 which records that God carried his people out of Egypt on eagle's wings.

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Interpretive Approaches

Revelation was applicable to first century readers

Revelation mostly describes past events

	Yes	No
Yes	Preterist: Revelation as a <i>letter</i> . It pertains to first and second century events (about the fall of Jerusalem and/or Rome).	
No		Futurist: Revelation as a <i>prophecy</i> (foretelling). It refers to events that will happen immediately before, during or after Christ's Second Coming.



Preterism

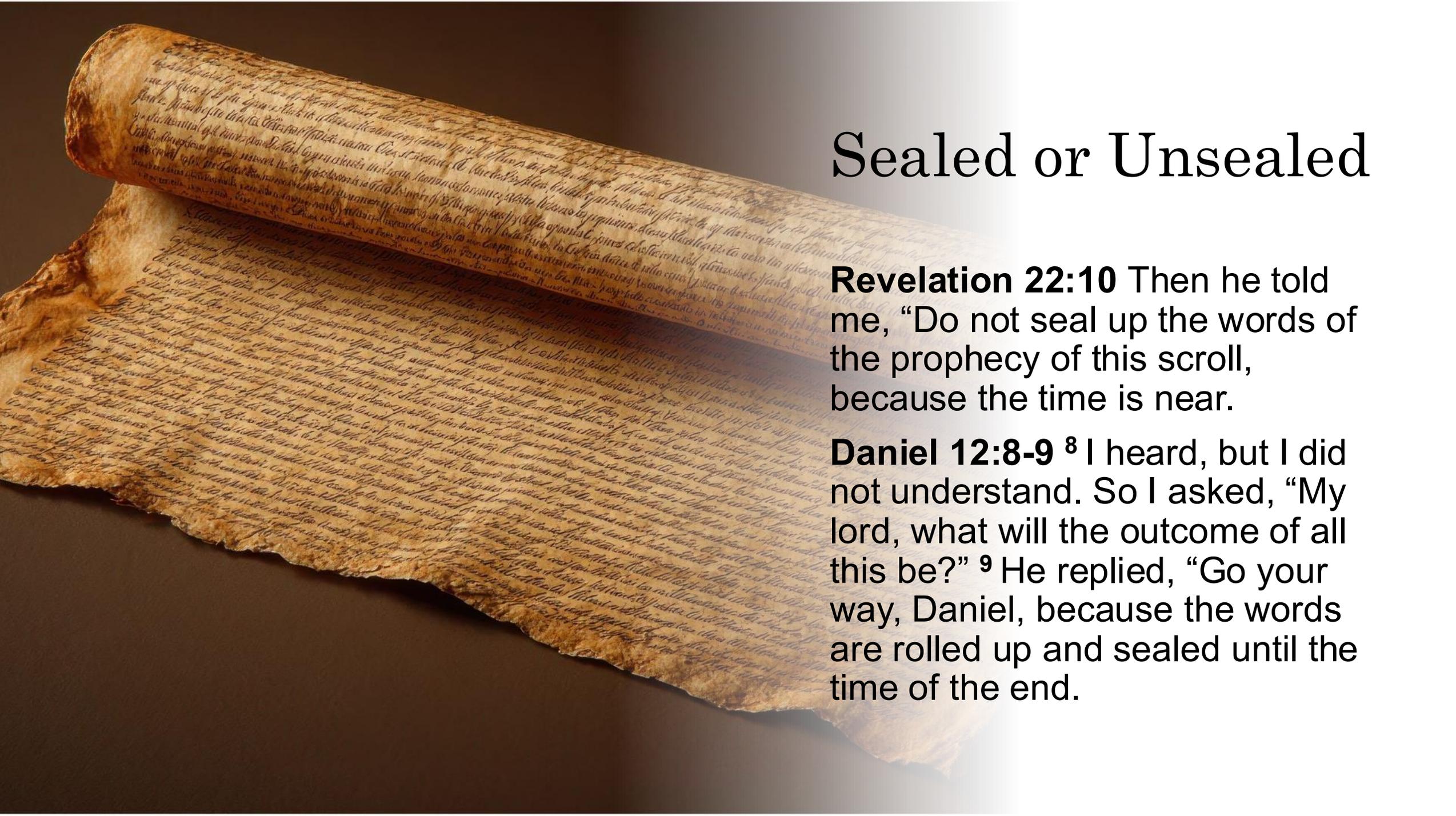
Partial vs Full Preterism

- Partial Preterism = Revelation 1-19 Happened and 20:1-6 is ongoing

The Time is Near

Revelation 1:1-3

The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ² who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. ³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.



Sealed or Unsealed

Revelation 22:10 Then he told me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this scroll, because the time is near.

Daniel 12:8-9 ⁸ I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, “My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?” ⁹ He replied, “Go your way, Daniel, because the words are rolled up and sealed until the time of the end.

“I will keep you safe”

Revelation 3:10

¹⁰ Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.

- This is said *only* to the church in Philadelphia
- It only makes sense if the crisis is going to happen while these people are alive.

Coming Soon

Revelation 3:11

¹¹ I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

Revelation 22:7,12

⁷ “Look, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy written in this scroll.”

¹² “Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.

Preterists on Jesus's Coming

Differentiate between:

- Jesus's spiritual coming in judgement on Jerusalem and Rome
- Jesus's physical Second Coming at the Final Judgement



Coming on the Clouds in Judgment

Revelation 1:7

“Look, he is coming with the clouds,” and “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him”; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.” So shall it be! Amen.

Isaiah 19:1

A prophecy against Egypt: See, the LORD rides on a swift cloud and is coming to Egypt. The idols of Egypt tremble before him, and the hearts of the Egyptians melt with fear.

Date: Mid-late 60s

- Preterists believe that the book of revelation was written during the reign of Nero

Revelation 17:9-11 ⁹“This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. ¹⁰They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for only a little while. ¹¹The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction.

- Vespasian, the Emperor who reigned during the destruction of the temple, was the 8th and was the first non-related Caesar.



Partial Preterists and the End of the Book

- Partial Preterists still believe that Jesus' physical second coming is something we are still waiting for.

The Seven Seals

- Seal 1: Romans Head for Invasion
- Seal 2: Peace is absent
- Seal 3: Shortage of food from invasion
- Seal 4: Death from multiple sources during war
- Seal 5: Punishment for Jews for martyring early Christians
- Seal 6: Destruction of the Powers in Israel (Isaiah 2:19)
- Seal 7: Silence because vengeance has been taken upon the persecutors.

The Harlot of Babylon

- Harlot = Jerusalem
- Babylon = Jerusalem
- Beast = Rome



Harlot

Revelation 17:3-6 ³ Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. ⁴ The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. ⁵ The name written on her forehead was a mystery:

BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

⁶ I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's holy people, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus.

When I saw her, I was greatly astonished.

Babylon

Revelation 18:21

Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said: “With such violence the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, never to be found again.

Revelation 18:24

In her was found the blood of prophets and of God’s holy people, of all who have been slaughtered on the earth.”

Beast

Revelation 17:9-11

⁹ “This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. ¹⁰ They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for only a little while. ¹¹ The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction.

The Beast, directed by God, kills the Harlot

Revelation 17:16-18

¹⁶ The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to hand over to the beast their royal authority, until God's words are fulfilled. ¹⁸ The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth."

Kings of the Earth - Acts 4:26-27

The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.' ²⁷ Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed.

A dramatic, high-contrast photograph of a massive wave crashing, with the word "Futurism" overlaid in white text. The image captures the raw power and motion of the ocean, with dark, turbulent water and bright, misty spray. The lighting is moody, highlighting the textures of the water and the spray. The word "Futurism" is centered in a clean, white, sans-serif font, standing out against the dark, chaotic background of the wave.

Futurism

Partial vs Full Futurism

- Revelation 1–3 relates messages to first century churches.
- Revelation 4–5 communicates present reality (the reign of Christ)
- Revelation 6–22 includes both already fulfilled and still future events — especially starting in Revelation 19.

What will take place later

Revelation 1:18-19

I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

¹⁹ “Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.



Date: A.D. 95-96

- Futurists believe that the book of Revelation was written during the reign of Domitian
- The emperor cult (worship of the emperor) was more strongly enforced under Domitian, and persecution was more widespread.

Irenaeus (c. 180 AD)

In *Against Heresies* 5.30.3, he wrote:

“For it [the Apocalypse] was seen not very long time since, but almost in our own day, toward the end of Domitian’s reign.”

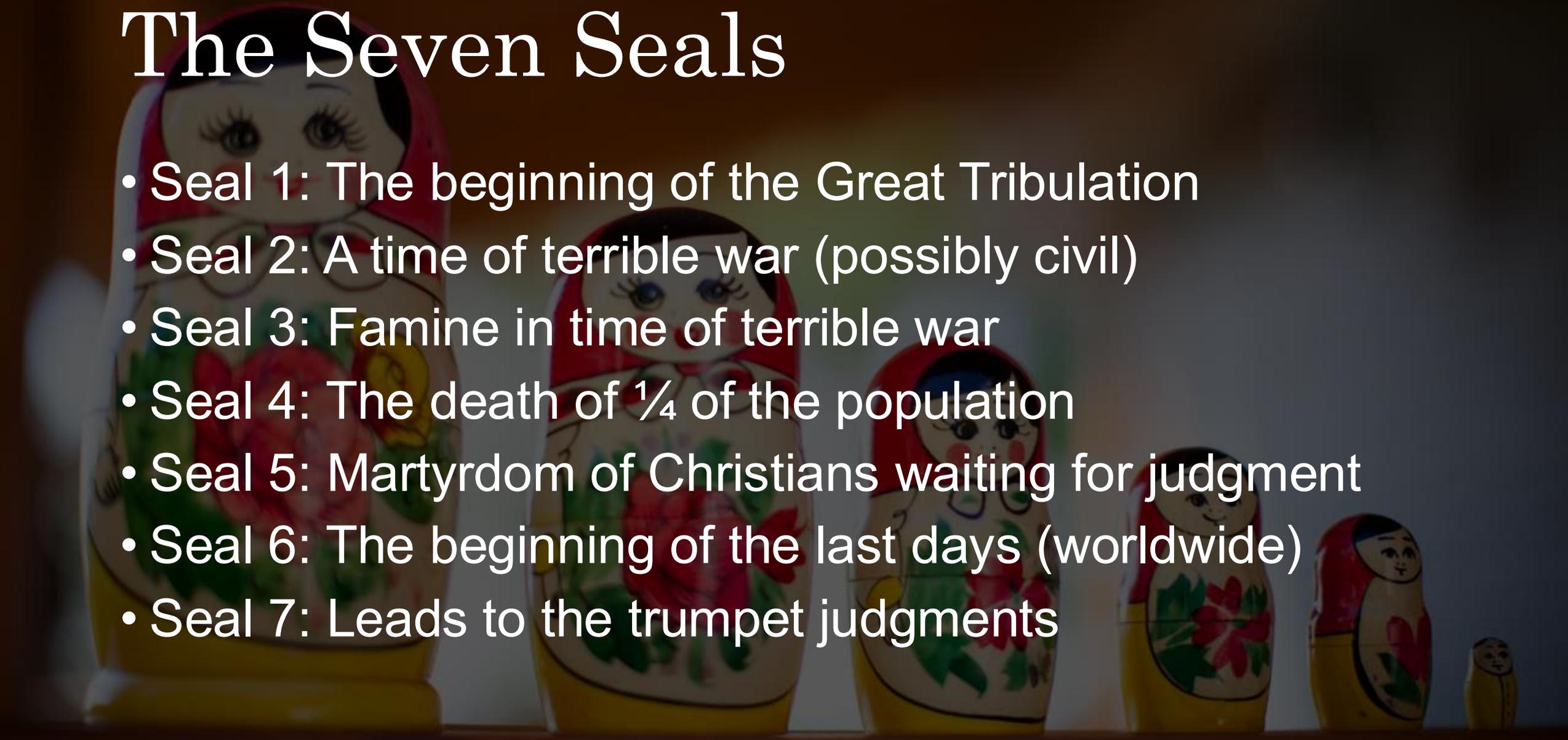
Revelation 6:12-17

¹² I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, ¹³ and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. ¹⁴ The heavens receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. ¹⁶ They called to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us^[f] from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷ For the great day of their^[g] wrath has come, and who can withstand it?”

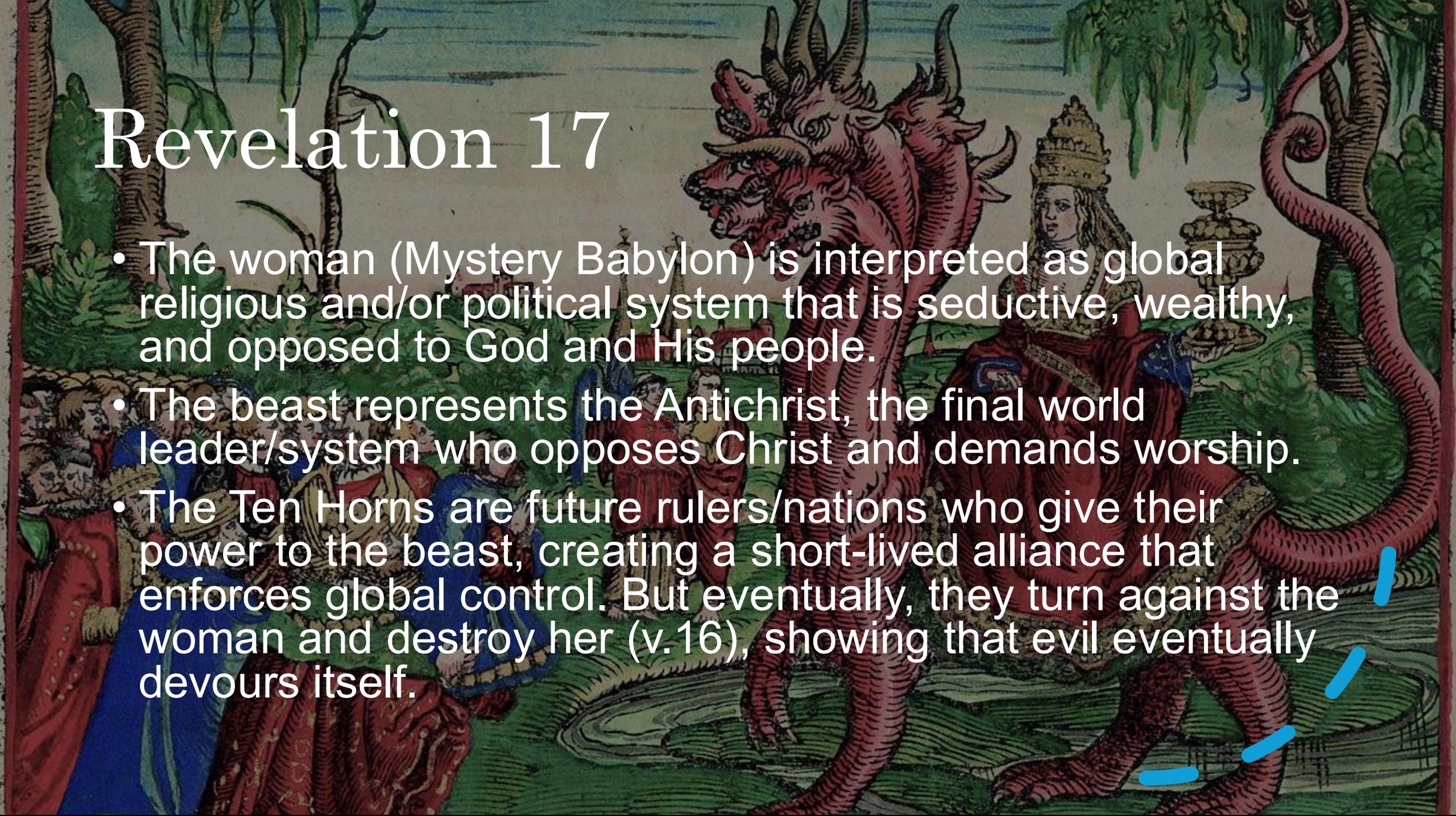
The Seven Seals

- Seal 1: The beginning of the Great Tribulation
- Seal 2: A time of terrible war (possibly civil)
- Seal 3: Famine in time of terrible war
- Seal 4: The death of $\frac{1}{4}$ of the population
- Seal 5: Martyrdom of Christians waiting for judgment
- Seal 6: The beginning of the last days (worldwide)
- Seal 7: Leads to the trumpet judgments



Revelation 17

- The woman (Mystery Babylon) is interpreted as global religious and/or political system that is seductive, wealthy, and opposed to God and His people.
- The beast represents the Antichrist, the final world leader/system who opposes Christ and demands worship.
- The Ten Horns are future rulers/nations who give their power to the beast, creating a short-lived alliance that enforces global control. But eventually, they turn against the woman and destroy her (v.16), showing that evil eventually devours itself.



Discussion

- Which approach do you tend to take with the book of Revelation? Preterist, futurist, something else?
- Why do you think that is your default?

Revelation 20: The Millennium

Amillennialism

Does not mean no millennium

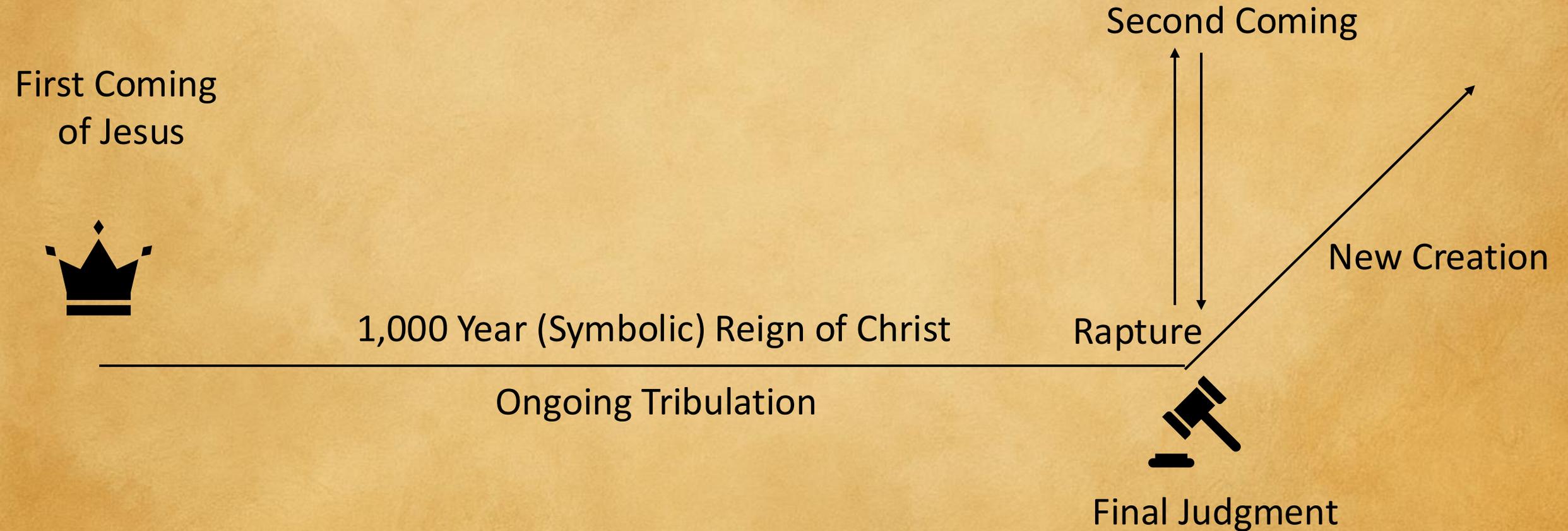
Means current millenium

Revelation 20:1-6

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³ He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

⁴ I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They^[a] had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Amillennialism



Summary: The thousand year reign of Christ *is* the Church age that takes place from the time of Christ’s ascension to the right hand of the Father until Christ returns in glory. Amillennialism (a- meaning “no”) gets its name from being the only view that does not believe that the millennium is a literal thousand years.



Satan is bound

So he cannot deceive the NATIONS

Souls Come to Life

- This is not a bodily resurrection of believers in heaven where they reign with Christ.
- There will only be one bodily resurrection, and it is before judgment.

Christ is Reigning Right Now

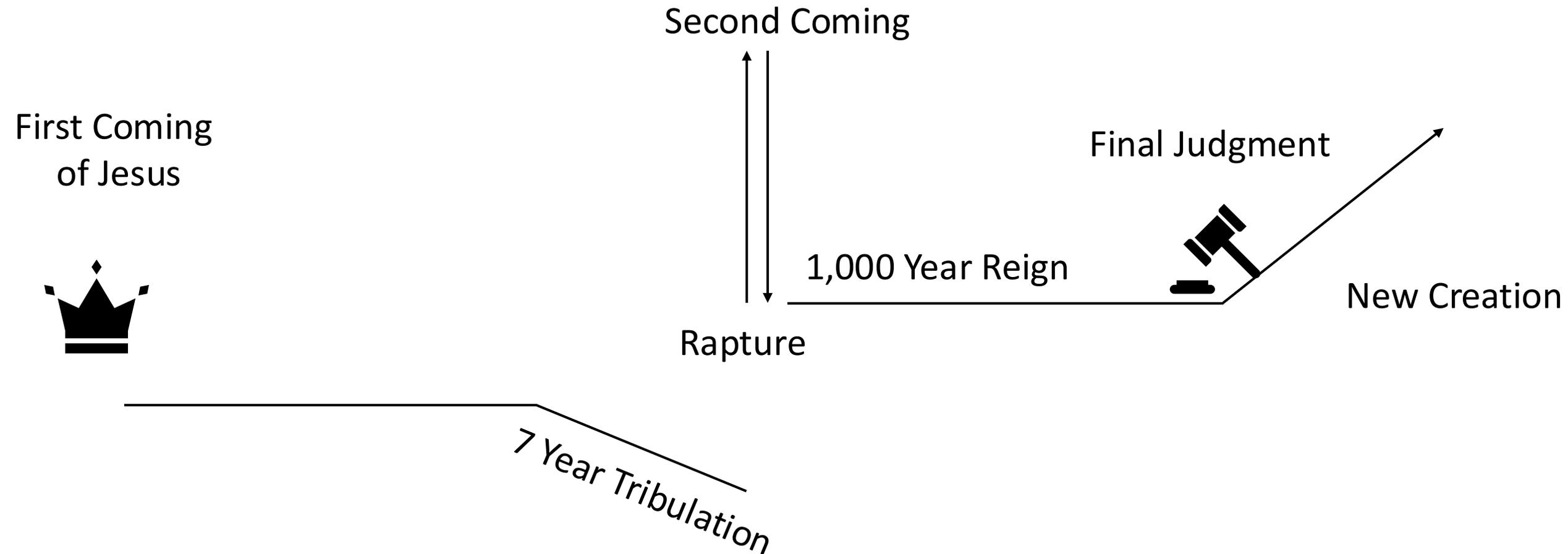
- Amillennialism focusses on the fact the Christ ascended to the right hand of the Father and his reign started then.

Historic Premillennialism

Revelation 20

- **Verses 1-6** - Satan bound for 1,000 years and the righteous resurrected.
- **Verses 7-10** - Release of Satan for one final deception and battle
- **Verses 11-15** – Then the Final Judgment takes place.

Historic Premillennialism



Summary: Christ will return after a seven-year Tribulation and before His (literal) thousand year reign. Christians will remain on earth and serve as faithful witnesses during the Tribulation. In this view, the “rapture” occurs at the end of the Tribulation (at the moment of Jesus’s return), and functions as a welcoming party.

Advantages

Straightforward approach to Revelation 20.

Dominant view of the earliest Christians.

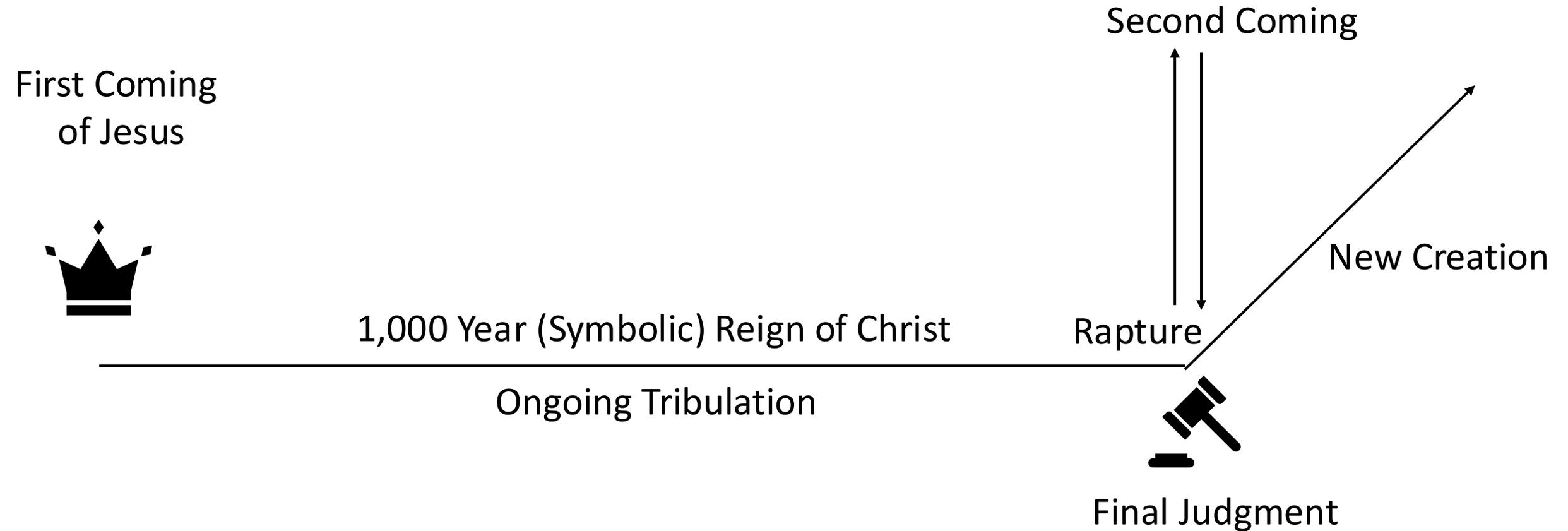
Disadvantages

Unbelievers and resurrected believers existing side by side sounds very strange.

Everywhere else in Scripture the Resurrection and Final Judgment are looked to as *one* final event—not two separate resurrections.



Amillennialism



Summary: The thousand year reign of Christ *is* the Church age that takes place from the time of Christ’s ascension to the right hand of the Father until Christ returns in glory. Amillennialism (a- meaning “no”) gets its name from being the only view that does not believe that the millennium is a literal thousand years.

Advantages

Have the easiest time speaking about the Kingdom of God being present currently.

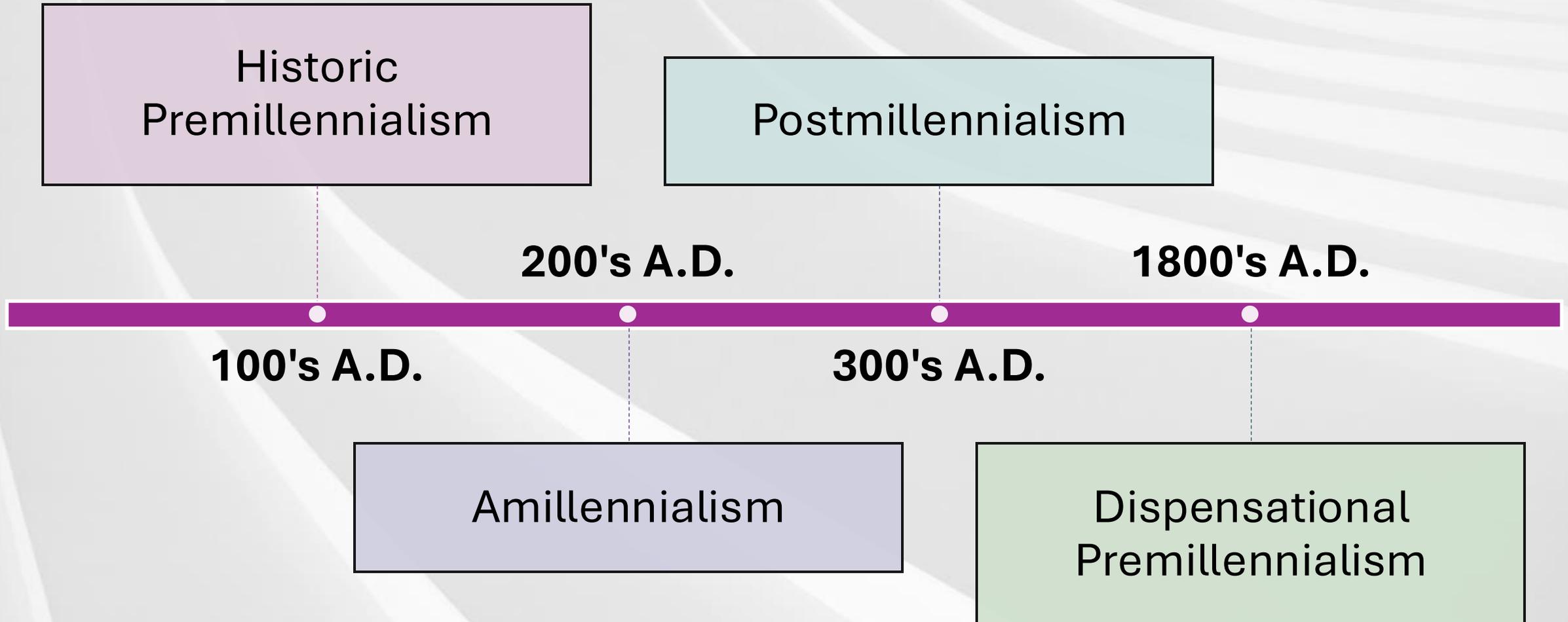
Anyone can be an Amillennial (Historicist, Preterist, Idealist, or Futurist)

Disadvantages

They have the most spiritual and non-literal view of the millennium. Not a literal thousand years.

Amillennials believe that Satan is bound, but that it is not a full restriction of power.

Emergence of Views on the Millennium



A close-up, low-angle shot of a human hand reaching upwards, palm facing up. The hand is positioned in the lower foreground, with fingers slightly spread. The background is a soft-focus landscape under a bright, glowing sun, likely at sunrise or sunset. A faint rainbow is visible in the sky, arching across the middle ground. The overall color palette is warm, dominated by yellows, oranges, and soft blues, creating a sense of hope and aspiration.

Our Ultimate Hope

God's Place is Among His People

Revelation 21:1-8

Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

God's Place Among His People

⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

⁶ He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. ⁸ But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

The New Eden

Revelation 22:1-5 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Revelation 22:12-14 ¹² “Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

¹⁴ “Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

Anticipation

Revelation 22:20-21

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.”

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen.

A lion and a lamb are shown resting on a bed of white, fluffy clouds. The lion is on the left, looking directly at the viewer with a calm expression. The lamb is on the right, also looking forward. The background is a deep blue sky with more clouds. The overall tone is peaceful and symbolic.

Revelation

DON'T GIVE IN, JESUS WILL WIN!