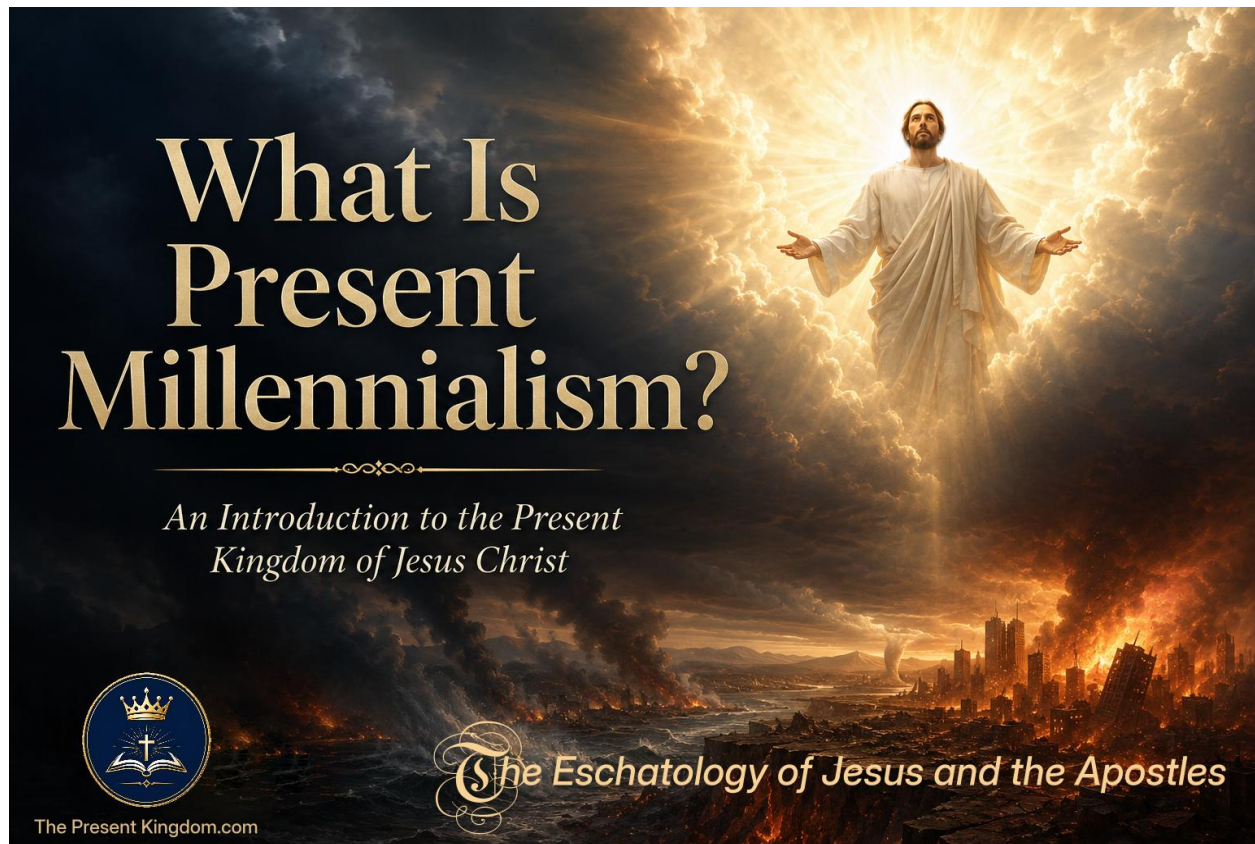




*“The kingdom of God cometh not with observation... for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” — Luke 17:20-21*

Restoring Oneness Apostolic Truth  
In the Last Days

Comprehensive Study Guide Series

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# What Is Present Millennialism?

## An Introduction to the Present Kingdom of Jesus Christ

Present Millennialism teaches that when Jesus came, the kingdom came, and His symbolic thousand-year reign began on the earth through His Church. There is no future earthly thousand-year millennium after the second coming of Christ. There is no pre-tribulation rapture. This is not Preterism. This is Present Millennialism, which teaches that the future still holds the second coming of Jesus Christ, the visible bodily resurrection of the saints, the final judgment, and the end of the world — all in one climactic event, as clearly depicted by Jesus and the apostles. This is the true Apostolic eschatology.

The central issue is simple: Scripture does not teach a future earthly millennium after Jesus comes. Scripture teaches that Christ reigns now, that His people reign with Him now, and that when He comes again, the resurrection, judgment, and end will occur together. The modern doctrine of a future earthly thousand-year reign separates what Jesus and the apostles joined together. It places another age after the coming of Christ when the New Testament repeatedly teaches that His coming brings the resurrection, judgment, and final consummation.

This is not speculation, nor is it a piecemeal fabrication assembled from disconnected passages, as is so often the case with pre-tribulation rapture theology and dispensational premillennialism. This is the eschatological framework that aligns with the plain teaching of Jesus, the prophets, and the apostles. When those passages are brought together rather than isolated from one another, the evidence is overwhelming.

The strength of the case lies in its consistency. The straightforward statements of Scripture reinforce one another across the biblical record, and there is not a single clear passage that overturns the resulting framework. By contrast, dispensationalism is often defended through vague or misapplied texts, such as “we are not appointed to wrath,” removed from their larger context, along with non-scriptural slogans such as, “Jesus would never bash His bride.”

That latter claim becomes especially difficult to sustain when compared with the actual history of Christ’s people. The apostles suffered. The early church suffered. The martyrs suffered. For nearly two thousand years, believers have endured persecution, imprisonment, torture, and death for the name of Christ. The idea that the church must therefore be removed before suffering can come upon the world is not established by the biblical or historical records. It is contradicted by them.

**Visual Roadmap:** This infographic summarizes the apostolic sequence taught by Jesus, Paul, Peter, and Revelation: Christ reigns now, the saints reign with Him now, and at His visible coming the resurrection, the gathering of the Church, the final judgment, and the end of the world converge in one climactic event.



# 1. The Kingdom Came When the King Came

Jesus did not come preaching that the kingdom was thousands of years away. He came preaching, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15). The kingdom was not postponed because Israel rejected Him. The kingdom came with the coming of the King.

Jesus said, “If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you” (Luke 11:20). He also said, “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation... for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:20–21). This shows that the kingdom is not primarily a future earthly political empire centered in Jerusalem. It is the present reign of Christ by the Spirit among His people.

After His resurrection, Jesus declared, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18). He did not say all power would be given to Him after a future tribulation. He already reigns. Peter preached that God raised Christ from the dead and set Him at His own right hand, making Him both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:30–36). Paul said Christ “must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet” (1 Corinthians 15:25). That reign is happening now.

The Jews of Jesus’ day demanded to know when the kingdom would come, while the King Himself was standing in front of them and the kingdom was already present. They were looking for an earthly political kingdom, and because of that expectation they failed to recognize the kingdom that was already among them.

## 1.1 The church is making the same mistake today

Instead of recognizing the present kingdom, many believers are looking for a series of future apocalyptic events divided into phases, stages, dispensations, raptures, tribulations, appearing, touching-downs, not touching-downs, and millennial programs. Yet the consistent testimony of Scripture is far simpler: **the church is the kingdom, and this present kingdom continues until Jesus returns the second time, accompanied by the resurrection, the judgment, and the end of the world.**

That continuity is found throughout the eschatological teaching of Jesus, the prophets, and the apostles. There is no competing system among them, no contradictory sequence, and no argument over multiple versions of the end. They repeatedly teach the same basic framework, often in multiple passages, and those passages fit together with remarkable consistency.

Modern eschatology, by contrast, has produced confusion upon confusion. There are multiple competing versions of the rapture, disagreements over when it occurs, disagreements over who participates in it, and equally extensive divisions over the millennium, its timing, its nature, a rebuilt temple, return to animal sacrifice, and what believers are supposedly going to be doing during it.

Yet Scripture never gives us a detailed program describing our duties during some future thousand-year earthly kingdom. The reason is simple: **the millennium is now**. Our calling is already defined. Our authority is already given. Our mission is already underway. The church already possesses the Holy Ghost, already has access to the power of God, and is already called to reign with Christ in the present age.

The irony is that many Christians are waiting for a future period in which they expect to possess greater authority, greater power, and a greater role in the kingdom, while Scripture presents the church as possessing its kingdom calling now.

The Jews missed the kingdom because they were waiting for the wrong kind of kingdom.

The church should be careful not to make the same mistake.

### 1.2 The insurmountable expectations of a future, literal earthly reign of Christ and His saints

Revelation says that at the end of the thousand years, Satan gathers the nations of the whole world against **“the camp of the saints”** and **“the beloved city”**:

“And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city...”

— Revelation 20:9

If the thousand years are understood as a future period in which Jesus is physically reigning on the earth in visible glory, with resurrected saints ruling beside Him, then the scene becomes extraordinarily difficult to explain. Are we really to imagine that after a thousand years of Christ personally ruling the nations, humanity gathers its armies with guns, tanks, missiles, and modern weapons and attempts a military assault against the glorified Christ and resurrected saints?

That is not merely difficult to picture; it exposes a major tension in the future-millennium interpretation.

But if the thousand years symbolize the present reign of Christ and His saints, the passage becomes coherent. The church is presently the camp of the saints. Christ presently reigns. Satan’s final release produces a worldwide assault against the true people of God during the Great Tribulation, and that conflict reaches its climax immediately before the final judgment at the second coming of Christ and the end of the world.

The text then flows naturally: **present reign → final global opposition to the saints → divine intervention → judgment → end of the cosmos**.

That sequence requires no future earthly kingdom followed by the almost surreal spectacle of mortal armies attempting to overthrow the visibly reigning, glorified Christ.

## 2. Revelation 20 and the Misread Millennium

The monumental mistake begins when people read Revelation 20 as though it overrides the large volume of clear teaching of Jesus and the apostles. But Revelation 20 does not say what many claim it says. Most notably, it does not say that the 1000-year reign is in the future or that it begins after His second coming. Those ideas are brought into the passage; they are not stated in the text.

Revelation 20 speaks of souls reigning with Christ for a thousand years. Yet again, the passage does not describe Christ returning to earth, rebuilding a temple, restoring animal sacrifices, and reigning from Jerusalem for one literal thousand-year period after His coming. These concepts are foreign to the text and must be imposed upon the Scripture to force a man-made agenda.

In fact, Revelation 20 places the resurrection and final judgment after the thousand years, not before them. The passage says, “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection” (Revelation 20:5). There has been no previous rapture or bodily resurrection of the saints before this point in the passage — that resurrection does not occur until the thousand years are finished. Then Revelation says of those who have part in the first resurrection, “they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (Revelation 20:6). But Revelation has already declared that Christ “hath made us kings and priests unto God” (Revelation 1:6), and again, “hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:10). This is the key: the people who reign as kings and priests in Revelation 20 are the same people Revelation says have already been made kings and priests. Therefore, the thousand-year reign of the kings and priests is not a future earthly millennium after the second coming; it is the present reign of Christ with His people in the present kingdom. Later, after the thousand years, the dead stand before God and are judged (Revelation 20:11–15). This fits perfectly with Present Millennialism: the millennium is the present reign of Christ, and after this present age comes the resurrection and judgment.

Most people reject this because they have already been taught that the millennium must be a future earthly kingdom. But that future-earthly-millennium interpretation is not stated in Scripture. Revelation 20 does not say that the second coming *begins* the millennium. It does not say the millennium begins *after* the Great Tribulation. It does not say that the saints are bodily resurrected to live on earth for one thousand years before the final judgment. It does not say that the world continues for another age after Christ returns. It says the saints reign with Christ for a thousand years, and Revelation has already identified the saints as kings and priests. The doctrine of a future earthly millennium is built by forcing assumptions into the text, while Present Millennialism simply allows Revelation to interpret Revelation and then harmonizes it with the plain teaching of Jesus and the apostles.

Revelation does say the saints live and reign with Christ for a thousand years. But it does not say this reign begins after the Great Tribulation, and it does not say that each individual saint personally lives on earth for the full duration of the thousand years. The proper interpretation, in light of the Gospels, the Epistles, and Revelation itself, is that the Church reigns with Christ throughout the symbolic thousand years. In a symbolic book, the thousand years represent the present kingdom age — from the first coming of Christ until His second coming. Individual saints live, labor, overcome, die, and enter into rest, but the Church continues reigning with Christ as kings and priests throughout this present millennial reign.

### 3. Jesus Placed the Resurrection at the Last Day

Jesus Himself repeatedly placed the resurrection at the last day. In John 6, He says it **four times**:

“I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:39).

“I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:40).

“I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:44).

“I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:54).

This is not a promise given to one divided class of believers while another class is raised earlier. Jesus said, “every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and **I will raise him up at the last day**” (John 6:40). That includes all believers. It includes **everyone who believes on Christ**. Jesus did not divide the saints into separate resurrection groups scattered across an end-time timeline. He gave one resurrection promise to those who believe on Him: “I will raise him up at the last day.”

Jesus did not say He would raise the saints one thousand years before the last day. He did not say He would raise one group before tribulation, another group later, and then continue history into a future earthly millennium. He did not say He would raise believers, reign on earth for a thousand years, and then bring the last day afterward. He said the resurrection is at the last day.

Martha understood this correctly when she said of Lazarus, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (John 11:24). Jesus did not correct her doctrine. He revealed Himself as the resurrection and the life. Her statement confirms the Jewish and biblical expectation that the bodily resurrection belongs to the last day, not to the beginning of a future earthly millennium. The resurrection hope belongs to all who believe, and Jesus placed that resurrection at the last day.

In the future-millennium system, the “last day” resurrection happens **365,000 days** before the last day Jesus said it would happen. Nor can this resurrection be divided into separate resurrections, because Jesus said that “every one” who believes on Him would be raised up “at the last day” (John 6:40).

## 4. The Wheat and the Tares: The Harvest Is the End of the World

Jesus also taught the timing of the final separation in the parable of the wheat and the tares. In Matthew 13, the wheat and tares grow together until the harvest. Jesus then explains plainly, “The harvest is the end of the world” (Matthew 13:39).

At that time, the Son of man sends forth His angels, the wicked are gathered out and cast into a furnace of fire, and the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of their Father (Matthew 13:40–43). This is final judgment language. Jesus does not describe a secret removal of the Church, followed by years of tribulation, followed by a future millennium, followed by another rebellion and another judgment. He places the final separation **at the end of the world**.

The righteous and wicked remain together until the harvest. The harvest is the end of the world. That is the doctrine of Jesus.

## 5. Matthew 24 and 25: One Coming, One Gathering, One Judgment

Matthew 24 and 25 form one connected discourse. The disciples asked Jesus directly, “What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (Matthew 24:3). Jesus answered that question—directly. He did not describe His coming, insert a thousand-year earthly interlude, and then describe the end of the world later. That gap is not in the text. The disciples asked about His coming and the end of the world, and Jesus gave one connected answer concerning tribulation, His coming, the gathering of His elect, watchfulness, His coming as a thief, and the final separation of the righteous and wicked as the present creation comes to an end.

### Why Luke 21 Is So Often Avoided

Luke’s account of the Olivet Discourse and the Second Coming adds a statement that is devastating to the idea of a future prophetic age after the coming of Christ. Jesus said, “For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled” (Luke 21:22). That is not small language. Jesus does not say these are partial days of vengeance, or that some things will be fulfilled while another thousand-year earthly program remains afterward. He says these are the days of vengeance, “that all things which are written may be fulfilled.” In the same discourse, He speaks of distress, signs in the heavens, the powers of heaven being shaken, and the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory (Luke 21:25–27). Luke is not pointing the Church toward a secret escape, then seven more years, then a future earthly kingdom. He is pointing to the climactic fulfillment of the prophetic witness.

This also harmonizes perfectly with Revelation. In Revelation 10, the timing is expressly connected to the seventh trumpet: “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished” (Revelation 10:7). Only after that trumpet setting is established does the declaration “that there should be time no longer” (Revelation 10:6) carry its proper force. It is not a loose statement that can be detached and applied to any moment in history. It belongs to the finishing of the mystery of God at the seventh trumpet. That is the same kind of finality Jesus gives in Luke 21. Luke says “all things which are written” are fulfilled. Revelation says the mystery of God is finished and there is time no longer. Neither passage leaves room for a future thousand-year prophetic program after the coming of Christ.

Then, when the seventh angel sounds in Revelation 11, the scene confirms this same order. The kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, His wrath comes, the time of the dead arrives, the dead are judged, the saints are rewarded, and those who destroy the earth are destroyed (Revelation 11:15–18). That is not the beginning of seven more years. That is not the beginning of a future earthly millennium. That is the final trumpet, the finishing of the mystery of God, the fulfillment of the prophetic witness, the judgment of the dead, the reward of the saints, and the destruction of the wicked.

This is why Luke 21 is so damaging to the popular system. If “all things which are written” are fulfilled in connection with these days of vengeance and the coming of the Son of man, then the coming of Christ is not the beginning of another prophetic age on earth. It is the fulfillment toward which the prophets were pointing. Jesus then tells His people, “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” (Luke 21:28). The Church is not told to look for a secret rapture before the real crisis, nor to look for an earthly kingdom after the end. The Church is told to watch, endure, and lift up its head because redemption draws nigh at the appearing of the Son of man. Luke’s testimony agrees with Revelation: when the final trumpet sounds, the mystery of God is finished, the dead are judged, the saints are rewarded, and the end has come.

## 6. Why Matthew 24 Cannot Be Used for an Early Rapture or a Future Earthly Kingdom

Regardless whether someone believes in a pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation, or post-tribulation rapture, Matthew 24 is devastating to any system that turns the so-called rapture into the beginning of another prophetic age on earth. It is also worth noting that many teachers quote Matthew 24 when discussing the rapture because Matthew 24 contains the very language people commonly associate with the rapture: “the one shall be taken, and the other left.” (vv. 40-41) But that language is not floating by itself. Jesus ties it directly to the days of Noah and to the coming of the Son of man. (vv. 37-39)

This is significant because Matthew 24 does not allow the “taken and left” passage to be moved seven years before the second coming, as the pre-tribulation system requires. Nor does Matthew 24 allow for the Second Coming to turn into the beginning of a future thousand-year earthly kingdom. In both cases, the passage is being forced to carry a timeline Jesus never gave. The text presents ordinary life continuing until the day of His coming, sudden separation, judgment, and the end of the world as it continues in chapter 25 — not an early rapture before His coming, and not another earthly age after His coming.

Jesus defines the timing and nature of that separation by placing it beside Noah’s flood. In Noah’s day, ordinary life continued until the day judgment came. They were eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage “until the day that Noe entered into the ark,” and they “knew not until the flood came, and took them all away.” Then Jesus says, “so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matthew 24:38–39).

That context is not vague. The “one taken and one left” language immediately follows Jesus’ comparison to Noah. The pattern is unmistakable: ordinary life continues, the appointed day arrives, the righteous are preserved, the wicked are overtaken in judgment, and the old world is brought to its end. Noah entered the ark, and the flood came. This was not a partial judgment after which the judged world continued as before. It was the end of that world in judgment.

Therefore, when Jesus says, “Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left” (Matthew 24:40), He is not describing a secret escape years before the end. He is describing the final separation connected to His coming. The same passage that rapture teachers often use actually places the separation in the day when the Son of man comes, just as the flood came in Noah’s day. That does not support a rapture that begins another prophetic age. It supports the coming of Christ as the climactic end.

This is why Matthew 24 is so damaging to the premillennial rapture framework. It does not allow the “taken and left” language to be separated from judgment, from Noah, from the coming of the Son of man, or from the end. Men may try to insert seven years before His coming, or a thousand years after His coming, but Matthew 24 itself does not place either interval there. The passage presents ordinary life, sudden separation, and judgment at the coming of Christ.

That context harmonizes with Matthew 25, John 5, John 6, 1 Thessalonians 4–5, 2 Thessalonians 1, 1 Corinthians 15, 2 Peter 3, and Revelation 11. Scripture consistently places the coming of Christ, the gathering of the righteous, the judgment of the wicked, and the end of the world together. Matthew 24 is often quoted as a rapture passage, but when its own context is allowed to speak, the conclusion is unavoidable: the rapture is not years before the end. It is the end.

This exposes a major fallacy in much of modern eschatology. Men insert a thousand years into the Olivet Discourse where Jesus never placed it, forcing an entire future earthly age between His coming and the final judgment. But Jesus was asked about His coming and the end of the world, and He answered with one climactic sequence, not a coming followed by another thousand years of earthly history.

This forced, man-made thousand-year insertion into a text where no such interval exists is an egregious error. It overturns the entire eschatological sequence given by Christ, separates what Jesus joined together, and creates an entire doctrine built not from the words of the text, but from assumptions imposed upon it. By inserting a future millennium between the coming of Christ and the final judgment, men have turned the order of Scripture upside down and produced a man-made doctrine devoid of clear scriptural truth.

In Matthew 24, after the tribulation, the sign of the Son of man appears, the tribes of the earth mourn, and they see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Then He sends His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they gather His elect (Matthew 24:29–31). This is not a secret event. It is public, visible, glorious, and climactic.

Jesus continues the same discourse into Matthew 25. The wise and foolish virgins are separated when the bridegroom comes. The servants are judged when the lord returns. Then Jesus gives the unmistakable connection: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him,” then He sits upon the throne of His glory, the nations are gathered before Him, and He separates them as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31–46). The righteous enter life eternal, and the wicked go into everlasting punishment.

This is the same coming. This is the same climactic event. The second coming, the gathering of the elect, the resurrection hope, and the final judgment are not scattered across a future thousand-year timeline. They converge at the end. Any doctrine that inserts a future millennium between Christ’s coming and the final judgment must bring that interlude from somewhere outside the Olivet Discourse, because Jesus did not place it there.

The so-called ‘rapture’ is not the beginning of seven more years of tribulation and a future thousand-year kingdom on earth. It is the end of the earth. The end of the cosmos. The end of this creation.

## 8. Apostolic Witnesses

Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 15 is one of the clearest apostolic witnesses against a future earthly millennium after the resurrection. He begins by grounding the resurrection hope in Christ’s own resurrection: “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20). He then explains, “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead” (1 Corinthians 15:21). The subject is bodily resurrection, not merely spiritual renewal or symbolic victory.

Then Paul gives the order plainly: “Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. Then cometh the end” (1 Corinthians 15:23–24). That is the apostolic sequence. Christ rose first. Those who belong to Christ are raised at His coming. Then comes the end. Paul does not say, “then comes seven more years,” or “then comes a future earthly thousand-year kingdom.” He says, “Then cometh the end.”

The order is not complicated:

Christ rises first.

Those who belong to Christ are raised at His coming.

Then comes the end.

Paul does not place a future thousand-year earthly reign between the resurrection of the saints and the end. He says the resurrection of the saints happens at Christ’s coming, and then comes the end. He then explains that Christ must reign until all enemies are put under His feet, and “the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Corinthians 15:25–26).

Death is destroyed at the resurrection. Therefore, if death is destroyed at Christ’s coming, there cannot be another thousand years of mortal history, rebellion, death, and judgment after that coming. The resurrection is not the beginning of a new earthly age. It is the defeat of death and the entrance into the final consummation.

Paul’s teaching in 1 Thessalonians 4 also agrees with this order, speaking in the context of the resurrection. The Lord Himself descends from heaven, the dead in Christ rise first, and the living saints are caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17). This is the resurrection and gathering of the saints at the coming of the Lord.

But those who use 1 Thessalonians 4 as a pre-tribulation rapture proof text often stop reading before Paul finishes the thought. The next words continue directly into 1 Thessalonians 5, where Paul says, “of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you,” because “the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night” (1 Thessalonians 5:1–2). This is the same coming just described in chapter 4. It is not a secret escape seven years before the end. Paul immediately connects the descent of the Lord, the resurrection of the dead in Christ, and the catching away of the saints with the day of the Lord coming as a thief, bringing sudden destruction upon the wicked (1 Thessalonians 5:3). The pre-tribulation doctrine divides Paul’s thought where Paul did not divide it, turning the resurrection and gathering of the saints into the beginning of an end-time sequence, when Paul’s continuation shows it belongs to the climactic day of the Lord.

In 2 Thessalonians 1, Paul says that when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven, He comes “in flaming fire taking vengeance” and is glorified in His saints (2 Thessalonians 1:7–10). Again, the revelation of Christ brings both judgment upon the wicked and glory for the saints.

## 9. Peter Confirms the Next Apocalyptic Event: The Day of the Lord

Peter gives one of the most powerful closing witnesses to the Apostolic order of the end. He does not teach a secret rapture, followed by seven more years, followed by a future earthly thousand-year kingdom, followed by another final rebellion, followed by another final judgment. Peter teaches that the next great apocalyptic event facing the Church is the coming day of the Lord.

Peter writes, “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?” (2 Peter 3:3–4). This is a major statement. The scoffers are not mocking a rapture that already happened. They are not speaking after the Church has disappeared from the earth. They are mocking the promised coming of the Lord because no final apocalyptic event has yet occurred. Their question is, “Where is the promise of his coming?” That question only makes sense if the coming of Christ is still the great event expected by the Church.

This destroys the idea that Peter is pointing beyond some earlier secret rapture. Peter is speaking to the saints and warning them what will happen in the last days. Scoffers will arise before the coming of Christ, denying or mocking the promise of His coming. Peter does not answer them by saying, “First there will be a secret rapture, then seven years, then a millennium.” He answers by pointing directly to the day of the Lord.

Peter could have said, “In the last days shall come billions of people living in fear, knowing they have missed the rapture.” But he did not. He said scoffers would come saying, “Where is the promise of his coming?” That means the Church in the last days is still waiting for the promised coming of Christ. The issue is not whether the saints missed an earlier secret rapture; the issue is that unbelieving men will mock the fact that His visible coming has not yet occurred. Peter points the Church forward to the coming day of the Lord, not backward to a rapture that already happened.

Furthermore, the future-millennium view creates another serious problem. If there had already been a rapture, followed by the visible return of Christ, followed by Jesus reigning bodily from Jerusalem for one thousand years, it is highly unlikely that the nations would somehow rise up a thousand years later to attack Him and His people as though no apocalyptic proof had ever occurred. That reading makes the end of Revelation 20 almost absurd. But Present Millennialism makes perfect sense of the passage. At the end of the thousand years, Satan is loosed, the nations are deceived, and they come against “the camp of the saints” (Revelation 20:9). This is not a rebellion after a future earthly millennium. It is the final assault against the Church at the end of Christ’s present millennial reign — the final tribulation before the visible coming of Christ, the destruction of the wicked, the resurrection, the judgment, and the end of the world.

Peter then ties this future judgment to the judgment of the old world by water. The world that then was perished in the flood, but “the heavens and the earth, which are now,” are “reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (2 Peter 3:7). The present heavens and earth are not reserved for a future earthly millennium after Christ comes. They are reserved unto fire. They are awaiting the day of judgment.

There is also no denying that Peter describes the final cosmic judgment, in which the heavens pass away and the earth is burned up, as “**the day of the Lord**” coming “*as a thief in the night.*”

That language directly mirrors Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5, which is not a separate subject from chapter 4 but the continuation of the same discussion. Chapter 4 describes the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead in Christ. Chapter 5 continues immediately with:

“For yourselves know perfectly that the **day of the Lord** so cometh as a *thief in the night.*”

Jesus uses the same imagery in Matthew 24 when describing His coming:

“If the goodman of the house had known in what watch the *thief would come...*”

Once again, the passages align naturally.

The wheat and the tares are gathered at the end of the age. The resurrection occurs at the last day. Paul says the dead are raised at Christ’s coming and “**then cometh the end.**” Peter places the destruction of the present heavens and earth at the day of the Lord, which comes as a thief. Paul uses the same thief language immediately after the passage commonly called the rapture. Jesus uses the same imagery for His own coming.

### 9.1 Scripture itself connects the framework

We do not have to strain to force these passages into one sequence. **Scripture itself does that. The continuity is built into the architecture of the text.** Jesus, Peter, and Paul are not describing unrelated end-time events separated by years or dispensational stages. They are describing the same climactic coming of Christ from different angles: **His return, the resurrection, the destruction of the present order, and the judgment at the end.**

Peter confirms Paul’s order. When the day of the Lord comes as a thief, Peter does not describe the beginning of seven more years. He does not describe the beginning of a future thousand-year reign on earth. He says, “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise,” “the elements shall melt with fervent heat,” and “the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10). This is not the beginning of another earthly age. This is the end of the present world.

That is why Peter asks, “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be?” (2 Peter 3:11). He is speaking to the present-day Church. He is telling the saints how to live in view of the coming destruction of the present heavens and earth.

He does not tell them to expect a secret escape before the real day of the Lord. He does not tell them to look for a future Jewish millennium after Christ returns. He tells them to look for “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13).

This also explains why Peter says, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise” (2 Peter 3:9). What promise? The promise of His coming. The scoffers asked, “Where is the promise of his coming?” Peter answers that the Lord is not slack, but longsuffering, giving space for repentance before the day of judgment arrives. The delay is not because another hidden prophetic program must happen first. The delay is the mercy and longsuffering of God before the final day comes.

Therefore, Peter’s witness is devastating to the modern rapture system. The Church is waiting for the coming of the Lord. The scoffers mock the promise of His coming. Paul says the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night. Peter says the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night. And when that thief comes, the heavens pass away, the elements melt, the earth is burned up, judgment falls, and the saints look for the new heavens and new earth.

The so-called rapture is not the beginning of seven more years and a future thousand-year kingdom on earth. It is the resurrection and gathering of the saints at Christ’s coming. And when Christ comes, the day of the Lord arrives. The present world is dissolved. The wicked are judged. The saints are glorified. The new heavens and new earth follow.

This is the Apostolic order. Christ is reigning now. The Church is living now in the last days before His appearing. The next great apocalyptic event is not a secret rapture, not the start of a future tribulation program, and not the beginning of a future earthly millennium. The next great apocalyptic event is the visible coming of Jesus Christ, the resurrection and gathering of His people, the judgment of the wicked, and the end of the world.

Peter makes the same point again in his first epistle when he writes to the Church, “**But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer**” (1 Peter 4:7). This is not the language of a secret rapture followed by seven more years, nor is it the language of a future earthly millennium after the coming of Christ. Peter is warning the present Church to live soberly, watchfully, and prayerfully because the next great apocalyptic event in view is the end of all things. He does not tell the saints to expect an early escape, then another prophetic age, then another kingdom later. He tells them that the end is at hand. The Church is therefore called to spiritual urgency, not prophetic complacency. Peter’s doctrine agrees perfectly with Paul and with Jesus: Christ is reigning now, the saints must watch now, and the next climactic event is the visible coming of the Lord, the judgment of the wicked, and the end of the present world.

For those who would argue that Peter’s Day of the Lord lasts for a 1000 years, he said the day of the Lord will **come** as a thief in the night when the world passes away. Meaning the day begins with the end of the world (*not ends 1000 years later with the end of the world as some claim.*)

*A visual sequence of Peter's teaching in 2 Peter 3, showing the Day of the Lord coming as a thief, followed by the passing away of the present heavens and earth and the arrival of the new creation.*

## 2 PETER 3: THE NEXT APOCALYPTIC EVENT

*Peter's sequence: mockers first, then the Day of the Lord, then the passing away of heaven and earth, then the new creation*

|                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>1</b> IN THE LAST DAYS MOCKERS WILL COME</p>     | <p>2 Peter 3:3-4</p> <p>"There shall come in the last days scoffers... saying, Where is the promise of his coming?"</p>                                                                                       | <p><b>KEY NOTE</b></p> <p>Peter says the mockers argue that the expected coming has not yet happened.</p>                                                        |
| <p><b>2</b> ALL THINGS CONTINUE AS THEY WERE</p>       | <p>2 Peter 3:4</p> <p>"...for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."</p>                                                                        | <p><b>KEY NOTE</b></p> <p>Their argument assumes there has been no rapture, no second coming, and no world-ending event.</p>                                     |
| <p><b>3</b> THE DAY OF THE LORD COMES AS A THIEF</p>  | <p>2 Peter 3:10</p> <p>"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night..."</p> <p><b>COMPARE JESUS:</b><br/>Matthew 24:43-44</p>                                                                   | <p><b>KEY NOTE</b></p> <p>Peter gives the church one great coming event to watch for: the Day of the Lord.</p>                                                   |
| <p><b>4</b> HEAVEN AND EARTH PASS AWAY</p>           | <p>2 Peter 3:10</p> <p>"...in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."</p> | <p><b>KEY NOTE</b></p> <p>When the Lord comes as a thief, the next apocalyptic event is not a secret disappearance but the passing away of heaven and earth.</p> |
| <p><b>5</b> THEN THE NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH</p>    | <p>2 Peter 3:13</p> <p>"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."</p>                                                                 | <p><b>KEY NOTE</b></p> <p>Peter's sequence ends with the new creation after the old heavens and earth pass away.</p>                                             |

### PETER'S SEQUENTIAL ARGUMENT



Mockers in the last days → All things continue → Day of the Lord comes as a thief → Heavens and earth pass away → New heavens and new earth

Peter presents the Day of the Lord as the next world-shaking event the church should expect.

**KEY SCRIPTURES:** 2 Peter 3:3-4, 10, 13 • Matthew 24:43-44

## 10. Why This Matters

This matters because doctrine shapes expectation, and expectation shapes how the Church lives. If the saints are taught to look for an early escape before the trouble Jesus and the apostles said the Church would face, they may be unprepared for endurance, faithfulness, persecution, deception, and the final testing of this present age. And if they are taught to look for a future earthly kingdom where they will finally reign with power later, they may miss the authority, responsibility, and work Christ has already given His Church now. Revelation says He “hath made us kings and priests unto God” (Revelation 1:6). The kingdom is not waiting for another age to begin. Christ is reigning now, and His people are called to serve, labor, overcome, and bear witness in His present kingdom now.

This was the same mistake many of the Jews made when Jesus came. They were looking for an earthly kingdom while the King Himself stood before them, looking them in the eyes. They missed the kingdom because they were expecting the wrong kind of kingdom. The Church must not repeat that error by looking past the present reign of Christ toward another earthly kingdom that Scripture does not promise. Present Millennialism does not produce complacency; it produces urgency. We are not waiting for escape, and we are not waiting for a future age before we do the work of God. The King is reigning now. The kingdom is present now. The harvest is now. And the Church must be found faithful, working, watching, preaching, enduring, and overcoming until the day Christ appears and the end comes.

## Conclusion: The Apostolic Model

Present Millennialism teaches the simple apostolic order: Christ came, the kingdom came, and the symbolic millennium began with His present reign through His Church. Christ is reigning now. His people reign with Him now. The Church is His present kingdom witness in the earth.

The future still holds the visible bodily resurrection of the saints, the second coming of Christ, the final judgment, and the end of the world. But these are not separated by a future earthly thousand-year Jewish age. They come together at the end, in one great climactic appearing of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 20 must be read in harmony with Jesus and the apostles, not used to overthrow them. Paul said the resurrection comes at Christ’s coming, and then comes the end. Jesus said the resurrection is at the last day. Jesus said the harvest is the end of the world. Jesus placed His coming, the gathering of His people, and final judgment together.

This is not Preterism.

This is not Premillennialism.

This is not dispensationalism.

This is Present Millennialism: the present kingdom of Jesus Christ and the true Apostolic eschatology.

**Note:** The visual sequences shown in this study are not merely charts; they describe the order repeatedly taught by Jesus, Paul, and Peter: Christ reigns now, the saints reign with Him now, and at His coming the resurrection, judgment, and end of the world converge in one final event.

**Also available on our website** is an appendix of non-exhaustive supporting scriptures for this study entitled “An Introduction to Present Millennialism—Appendix A.” These scriptures are in addition to the scriptures and passages used in this study. The sheer volume is staggering.