

The Millennium

What is it?

What is the Millennium?

- The word millennium means “one thousand years” (from Lat. millennium “thousand years”). The term comes from Revelation 20:4–5, where it says that certain people “came to life, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.”
- Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House, 2004), 1109.

What is the Millennium?

- This expression, taken from Latin words, means 1,000 years. The Bible passage that mentions the “thousand years” is Rev. 20:1–7, where the word appears six times.
- Doros Zachariades, “Millennium,” ed. Chad Brand et al., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1127.

What is the Millennium?

- Revelation 20:1-3 (HCSB) Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven with the key to the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for 1,000 years. 3 He threw him into the abyss, closed it, and put a seal on it so that he would no longer deceive the nations until the 1,000 years were completed. After that, he must be released for a short time.

What is the Millennium?

- Revelation 20:4-5 (HCSB) 4 Then I saw thrones, and people seated on them who were given authority to judge. I also saw the people who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of God's word, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and who had not accepted the mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with the Messiah for 1,000 years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the 1,000 years were completed. This is the first resurrection.

What is the Millennium?

- Throughout the history of the church there have been three major views on the time and nature of this “millennium.”
- Amillennialism
- Premillennialism
- Postmillennialism

Amillennialism

- The word Amillennialism means “no 1000 years.” It takes the millennium as symbolic rather than a literal 1000 years.
- According to this position the passage in Revelation 20:1–10 describes the present church age. (According to this view, we are in the Millennium right now)
- This is an age in which Satan’s influence over the nations has been greatly reduced so that the gospel can be preached to the whole world.
- Those who are said to be reigning with Christ for the thousand years are Christians who have died and are already reigning with Christ in heaven.

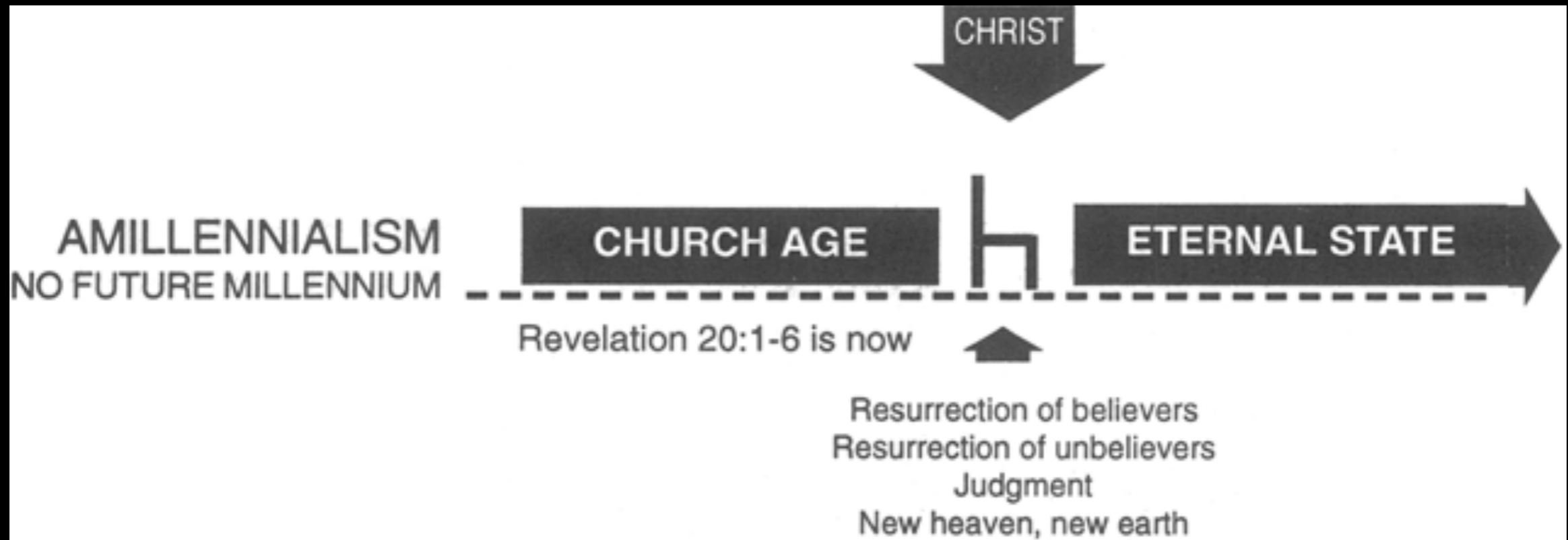
Amillennialism

- Christ's reign in the millennium, according to this view, is not a bodily reign here on earth but rather the heavenly reign he spoke of when he said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matt. 28:18).
- This view is called "amillennial" because it maintains that there is no future millennium yet to come. Since amillennialists believe that Revelation 20 is now being fulfilled in the church age, they hold that the "millennium" described there is currently happening. The exact duration of the church age cannot be known, and the expression "thousand years" is simply a figure of speech for a long period of time in which God's perfect purposes will be accomplished.

Amillennialism

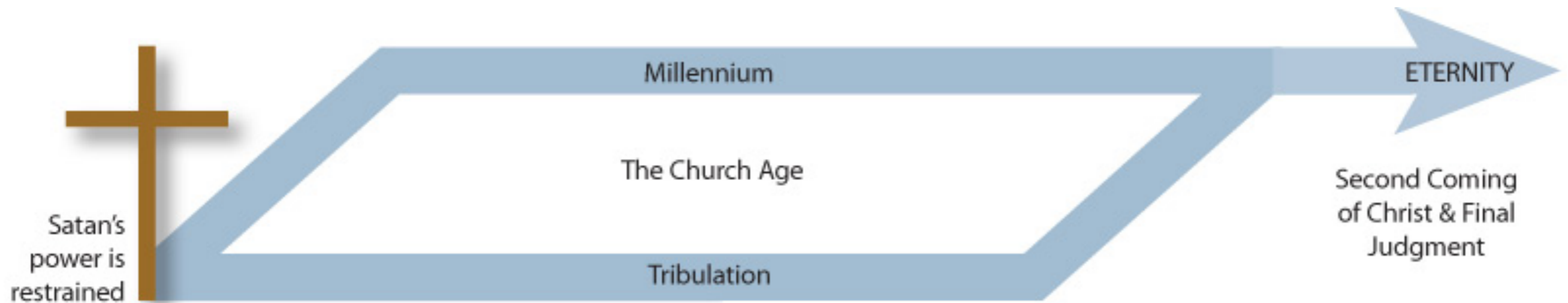
- According to this position, the present church age will continue until the time of Christ's return. When Christ returns, there will be a resurrection of both believers and unbelievers. The bodies of believers will rise to be reunited with their spirits and enter into full enjoyment of heaven forever. Unbelievers will be raised to face the final judgment and eternal condemnation. Believers will also stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10), but this judgment will only determine degrees of reward in heaven, for only unbelievers will be condemned eternally. At this time also the new heavens and new earth will begin. Immediately after the final judgment, the eternal state will commence and continue forever.

Amillennialism



Amillennialism:

(A-Millennial: “No millennium”) The “thousand years” is not (“a-”) a future, earthly reign. For the amillennialist, the millennium symbolizes the present and ongoing reign of Jesus with his people. It is a spiritual reign that extends from the ascension of Jesus to his glorious return. Amillennialists tend to take a unified perspective on the relationship between Israel and the church.

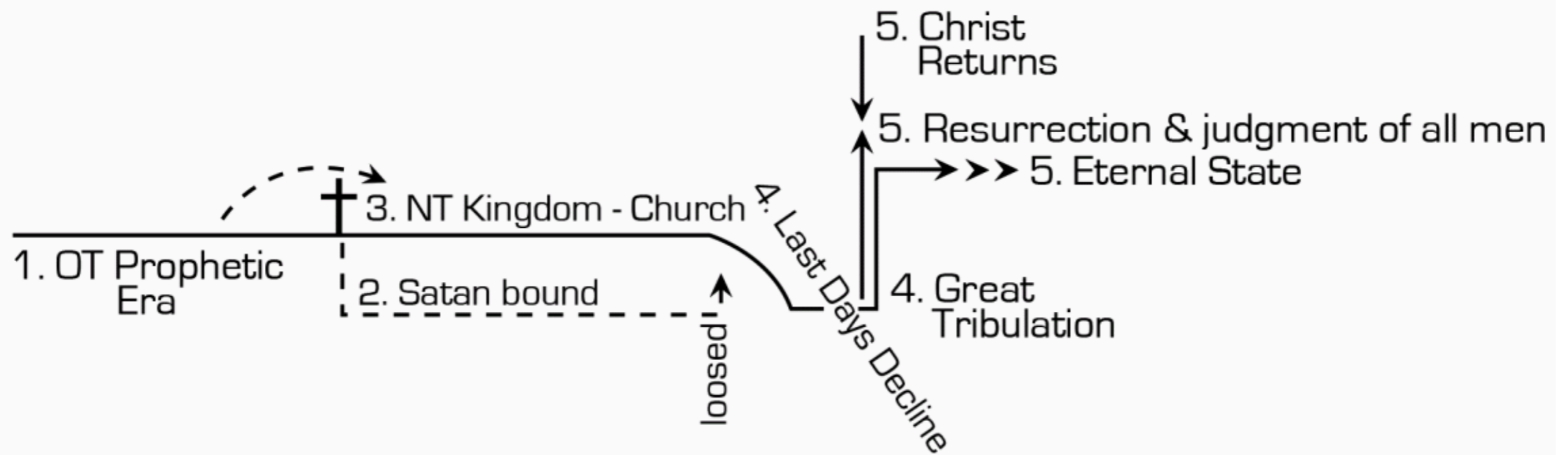


Amillennialism



Designed by J. Dennison Jr.
Typeset by Clarence E. Veld

AMILLENNIALISM



Amillennialism (Final Points)

- This was the predominant view of the early church through the church Father Origin (300 AD) to the early 1800's.
- This view is held today by many Conservative Christians and is seeing a great resurgence in Baptist Churches.
- Seeing as figurative the 1000 year number in apocalyptic literature is an acceptable possibility in the field of Biblical Interpretation.
- Popular authors that hold to the Amillennial view include R.C. Sproul, and Tom Schreiner.

Historic Pre-millennialism

- The prefix “pre-” means “before,” and the “premillennial” position says that Christ will come back before the millennium.
- According to this viewpoint, the present church age will continue until, as it nears the end, a time of great tribulation and suffering comes on the earth.

Historic Pre-millennialism

- After that time of tribulation at the end of the church age, Christ will return to earth to establish a millennial kingdom. When he comes back, believers who have died will be raised from the dead, their bodies will be reunited with their spirits, and these believers will reign with Christ on earth for one thousand years.

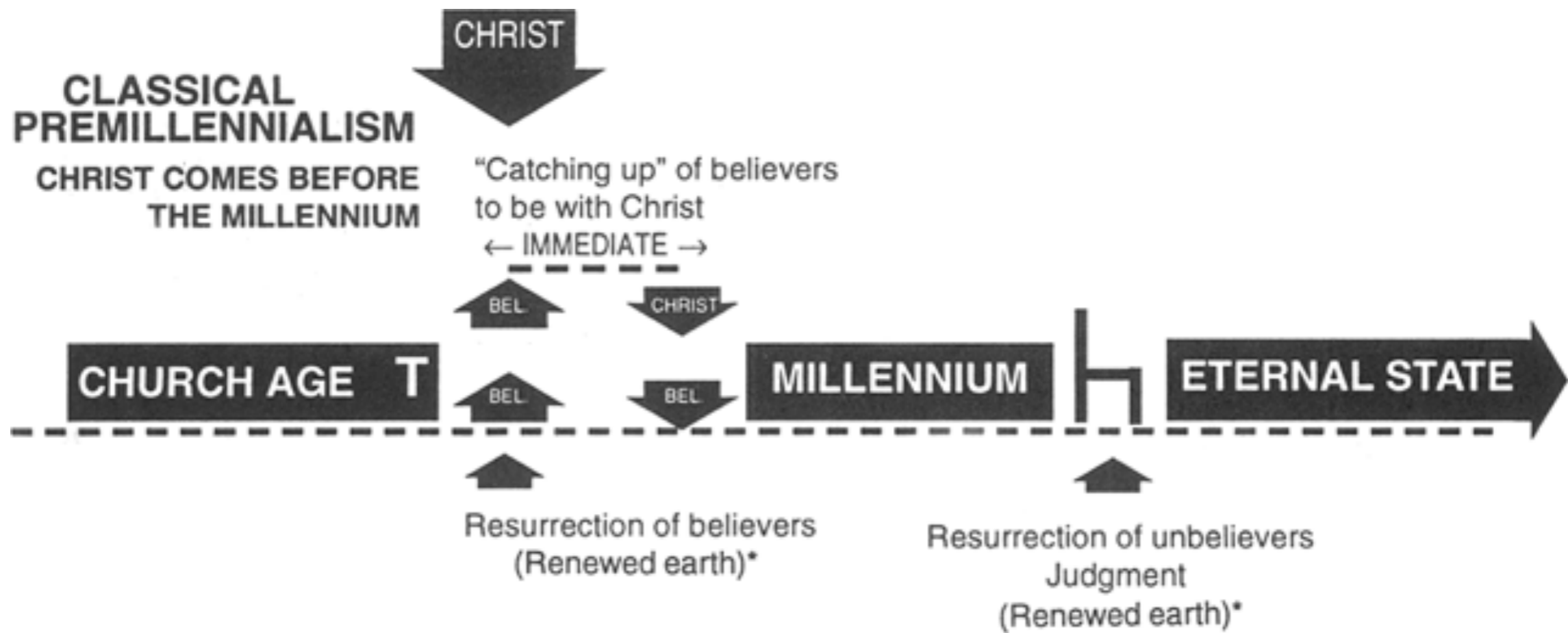
Historic Pre-millennialism

- During this time, Christ will be physically present on the earth in his resurrected body, and will reign as King over the entire earth. The believers who have been raised from the dead, and those who were on earth when Christ returns, will receive glorified resurrection bodies that will never die, and in these resurrection bodies they will live on the earth and reign with Christ.
- Of the unbelievers who remain on earth, many (but not all) will turn to Christ and be saved. Jesus will reign in perfect righteousness and there will be peace throughout the earth.

Historic Pre-millennialism

- At the beginning of this time Satan will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit so that he will have no influence on the earth during the millennium (Rev. 20:1–3).
- at the end of the thousand years Satan will be loosed from the bottomless pit and will join forces with many unbelievers who have submitted outwardly to Christ's reign but have inwardly been seething in rebellion against him. Satan will gather these rebellious people for battle against Christ, but they will be decisively defeated. Christ will then raise from the dead all the unbelievers who have died throughout history, and they will stand before him for final judgment. After the final judgment has occurred, believers will enter into the eternal state.

Historic Pre-millennialism

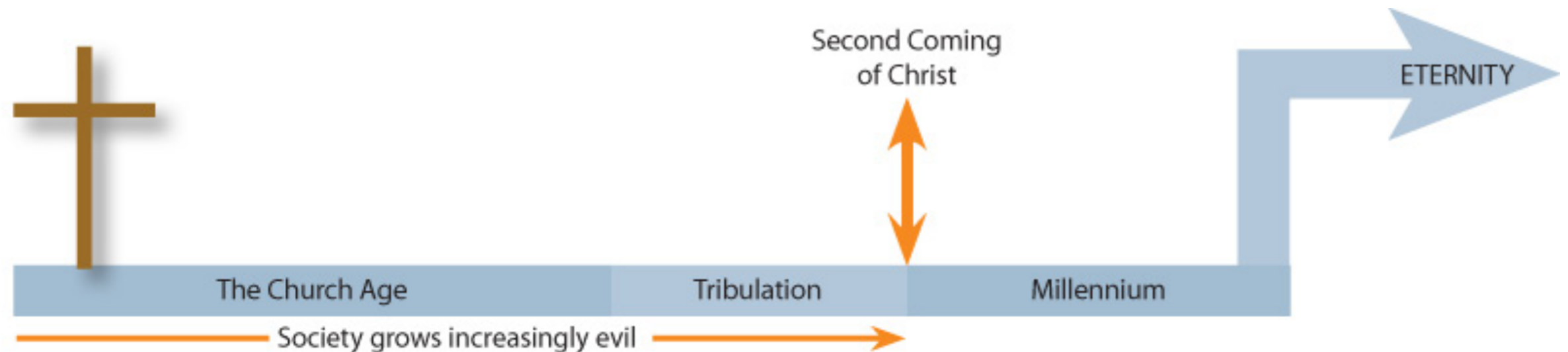


*Classical Premillennialists differ over whether the renewed earth will begin in the millennium or the external state.

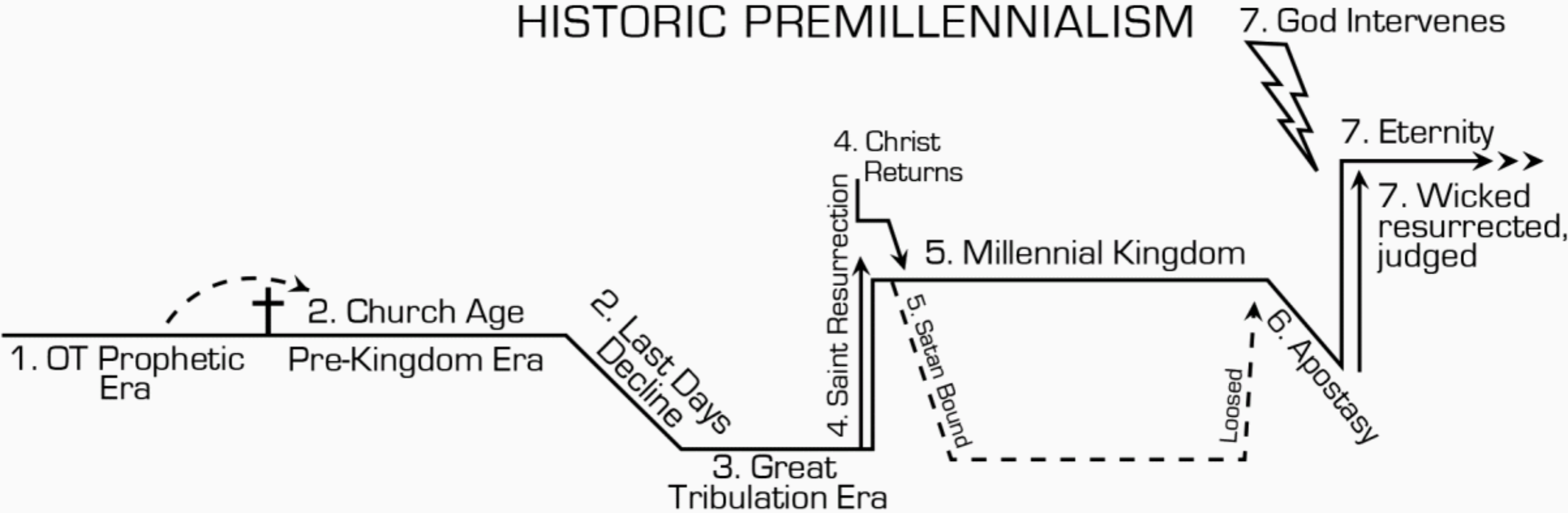
Historic Pre-millennialism

Kingdom Came and is Yet to Come—and Christians Will Still Be on Earth When the Kingdom Is Consummated

Jesus will return to earth *before* (“pre-“) the millennium described in [Revelation 20](#), after a time of tribulation. Christians endure the time of tribulation. Historical premillennialists tend to take a unified perspective on the relationship between Israel and the church.



HISTORIC PREMILLENNIALISM



Historic Pre-millennialism

Final Notes

- This was the strongest view held by many in the early church during the first 300 years. (Ireneaus)
- Today, this view is held by such notable Christian leaders as John McArthur, Al Mohler, and Danny Akin.

Dispensationalism


- Dispensationalism is a religious interpretive system for the Bible. It considers biblical history as divided by God into dispensations, defined periods or ages to which God has allotted distinctive administrative principles. According to dispensationalism, each age of God's plan is thus administered in a certain way, and humanity is held responsible as a steward during that time.
- While there are many suggested “dispensational ages” offered for scripture, the major ones are the Old Testament

The Dispensations

"The eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord"
Eph. 3:11

ETERNAL COUNSELS

ETERNAL REST

<p>CREATION OF MAN with CHOICE</p> <p>Ability to freely choose and say 'No' to God - but not permission to</p> <p>"Every tree...thou mayest freely eat: But..."</p>	<p>CIVILIZATION INHERITS CONSCIENCE</p> <p>Agents of moral responsibility</p> <p>"Work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience..."</p> <p>"And they knew they were naked"</p>	<p>COMMISSION TO GOVERN</p> <p>Capital punishment to protect man, for he alone is in the image of God</p> <p>"by man shall his blood be shed"</p>	<p>COVENANT PROMISES TO ABRAHAM & HIS SEED</p> <p>"God gave it to Abraham by promise" -</p> <p>"I will bless" -Personal -National -International</p>	<p>COMMANDS: GIVING OF THE LAW</p> <p>"I will give thee ... a law, and commandments" Israel: "We will do" - or "cursing"</p>	<p>CHURCH GIVEN SPIRIT OF GRACE</p>  <p>"the dispensation of... grace of God"</p>	<p>CHRIST RETURNS</p> <p>"shall He set upon the throne" - earth</p>
<p>FREE WILL - "Whosoever will . . . Let him take . . . freely"</p>						
<p>CONSCIENCE - "Their conscience also bearing witness"</p>						
<p>GOVERNMENT - "The minister of God" to punish evil</p>						
<p>LAW - "By the law is the knowledge of sin"</p>						
<p>PROMISE - "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed"</p>						
<p>GRACE - "By grace are ye saved"</p>						
<p>KINGDOM - "We shall reign"</p>						

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7

Dispensation
New Responsibility Dispensed by God
Man's Failure
God's Judgment
God's Grace to Continue

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FREE WILL Gen.1:26-3:24	CONSCIENCE Gen.3:7-8:22	GOVERNMENT Gen.9:1-11:32	PROMISE Gen.12:1-Ex.18	LAW Ex.19-John	GRACE Acts-Rev.19	KINGDOM Rev.20
Ability to Choose	Knowledge of Good & Evil	Authority to Prosecute / To Scatter Out	Covenant of Blessing - to Seed	Covenant of Commandments	Gospel of Salvation: Remission - Spirit	Rule of Justice
Chose to Disobey	Thought Evil Continually	Exalted Man, Not God /Unified	Enslaved Promised Seed	Broke Word in Book & Body	Legalized & Liberalized Grace	Attacks City of God
Death & Separation	Flood & Destruction	Babel: Languages Confusion	Plagues & Death of Firstborn	Destruction of Nation & Temple	7 Seals of World Judgment	Fire from Heaven
Covering for Shame	Noah & Ark	People Scattered	Passover Blood	2nd Temple & Gospel to Jew First	Some Saved from All Nations	Creates New Earth

**New Heaven
New Jerusalem
New Earth**
Rev.21-22

Dispensational Pre-millennialism

- According to this position, Christ will return not only before the millennium (Christ's return is premillennial), but also it will occur before the great tribulation (Christ's return is pretribulational). This position is similar to the classical premillennial position mentioned above, but with one important difference: it will add another return of Christ before his return to reign on earth in the millennium. This return is thought to be a secret return of Christ to take believers out of the world. (This is called the "Rapture")

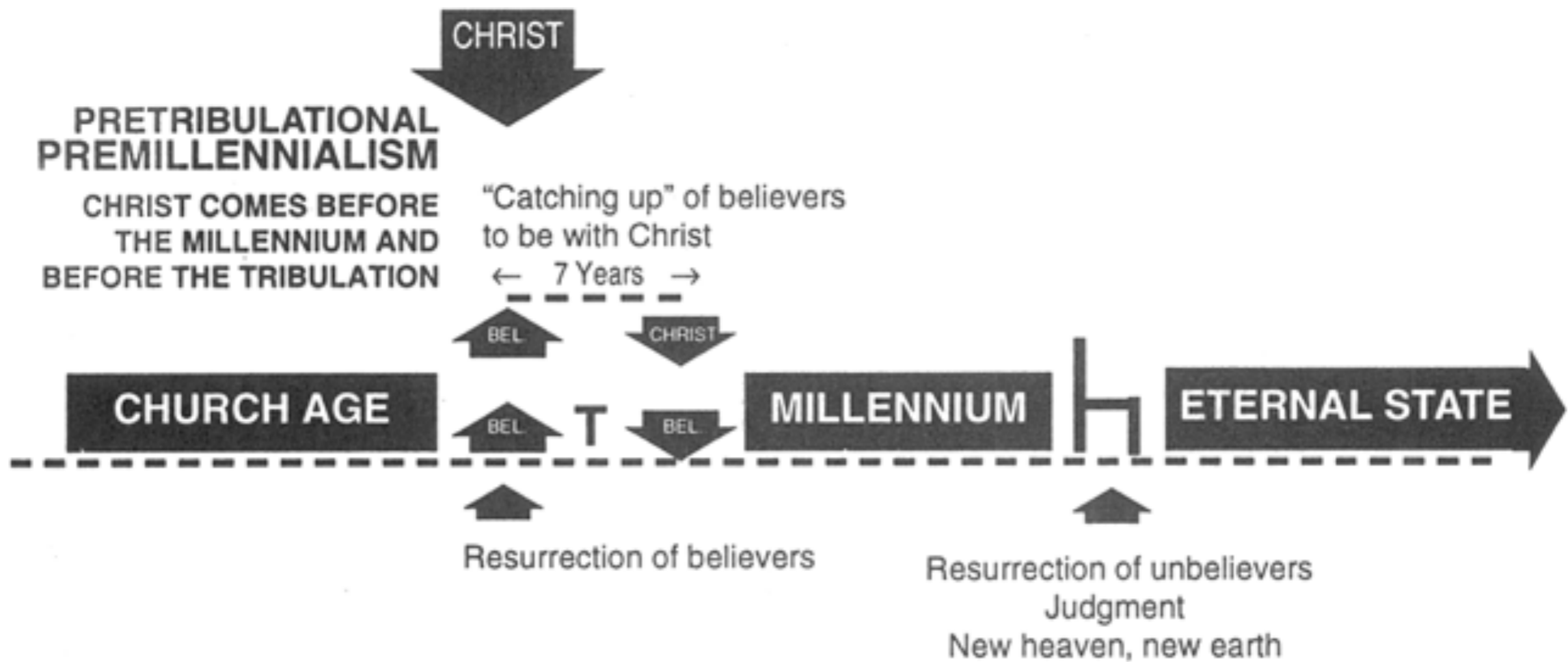
Dispensational Pre-millennialism

- According to this view, the church age will continue until, suddenly, unexpectedly, and secretly, Christ will return part way to earth, and then will call believers to himself: “The dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thess. 4:16–17). Christ will then return to heaven with the believers who have been removed from the earth. When that happens, there will be a great tribulation on the earth for a period of seven years.

Dispensational Pre-millennialism

- During this seven-year period of tribulation, many of the signs that were predicted to precede Christ's return will be fulfilled. The great ingathering of the fullness of the Jewish people will occur, as they trust Christ as their Messiah. In the midst of great suffering there will also be much effective evangelism, especially carried out by the new Jewish Christians. At the end of the tribulation, Christ will then come back with his saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years. After this millennial period there will be a rebellion, resulting in the final defeat of Satan and his forces, and then will come the resurrection of unbelievers, the last judgment, and the beginning of the eternal state.

Dispensational Pre-millennialism



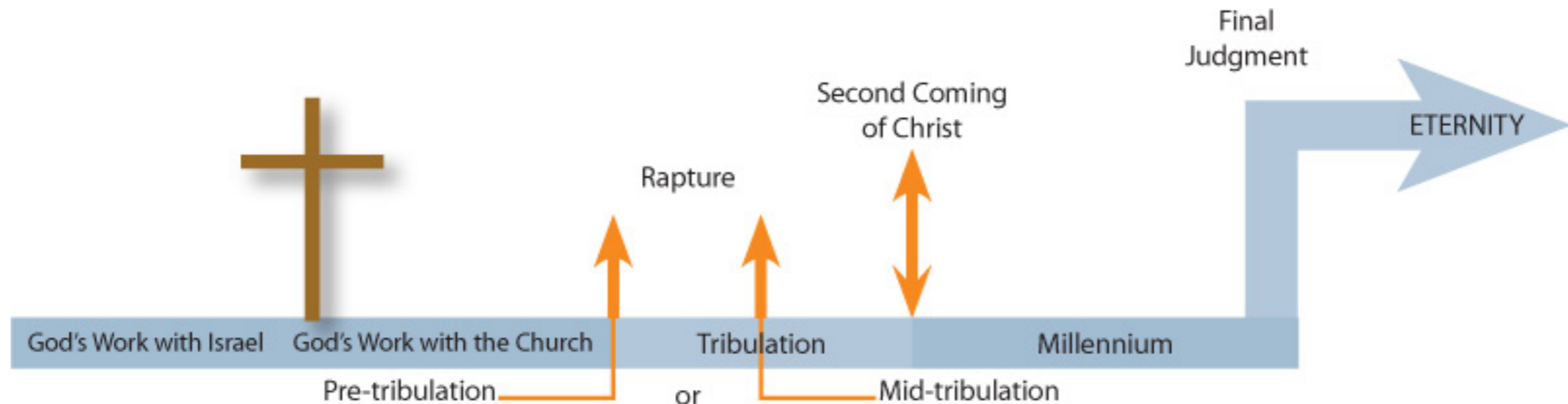
Dispensational Pre-millennialism

Jesus will return to earth before the millennium.

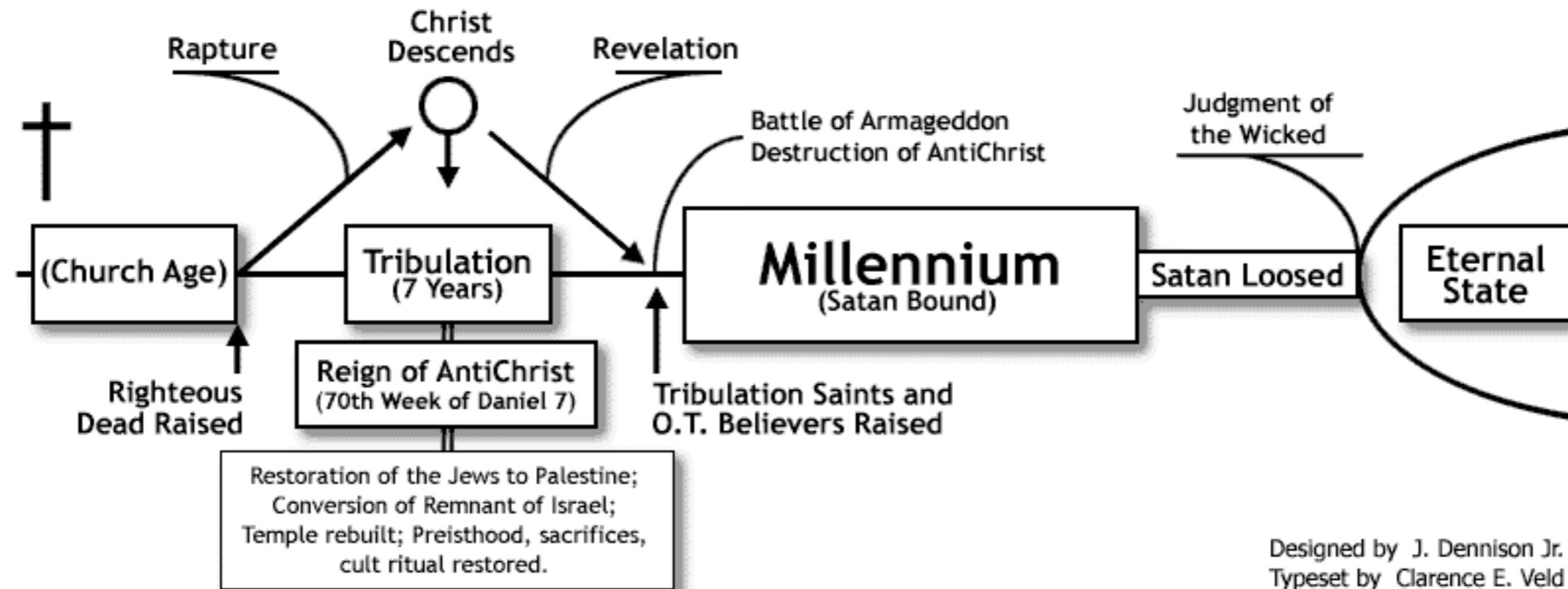
Kingdom Is Yet to Come—

But, Before the Kingdom Comes, Christians Will Leave the World Behind (Left Behind books!)

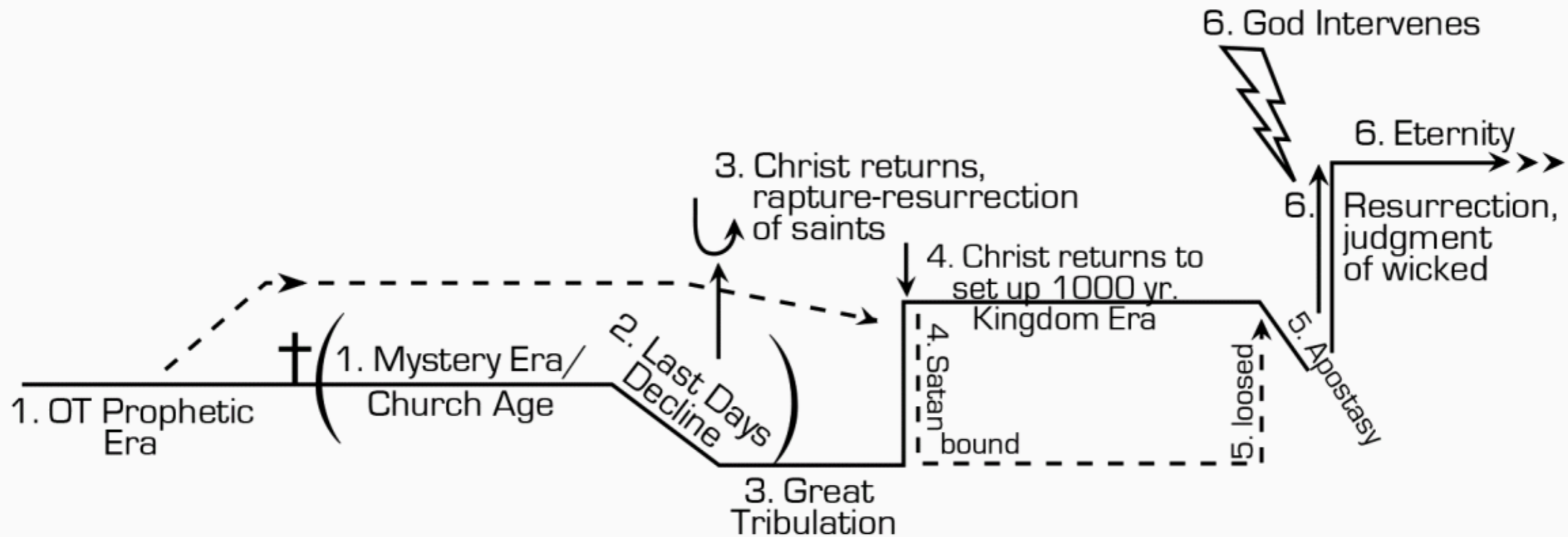
Before Jesus returns to establish his millennial kingdom, seven years of “tribulation” will afflict the earth. Most dispensational premillennialists expect Christians to be “raptured” from the world before the tribulation. A few dispensationalists do, however, expect God to remove Christians from earth partway through the tribulation. Dispensationalists see Israel and the church as two separate groups for whom God has two separate plans. During the great tribulation, God will renew his work with the earthly nation of Israel.



Dispensational Pre-millennialism

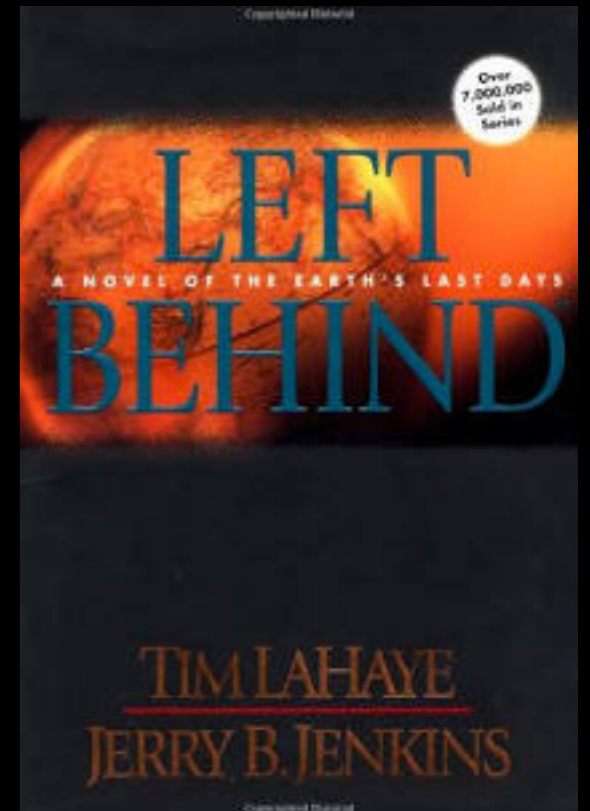


DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIALISM



Dispensational Pre-millennialism Final Notes

- This is the most popular view in American Evangelicalism. This view was popularized in the mass culture by the “Left Behind” books.
- This is the only view that includes the “Rapture.”
- This view became popular in the early 1800’s by a man named John Darby. It was further popularized by the C.I. Scofield Study Bible and spread in our day through Dallas Theological Seminary.
- Today, this view is held by David Jeremiah, Tim LaHaye, and Chuck Swindoll.



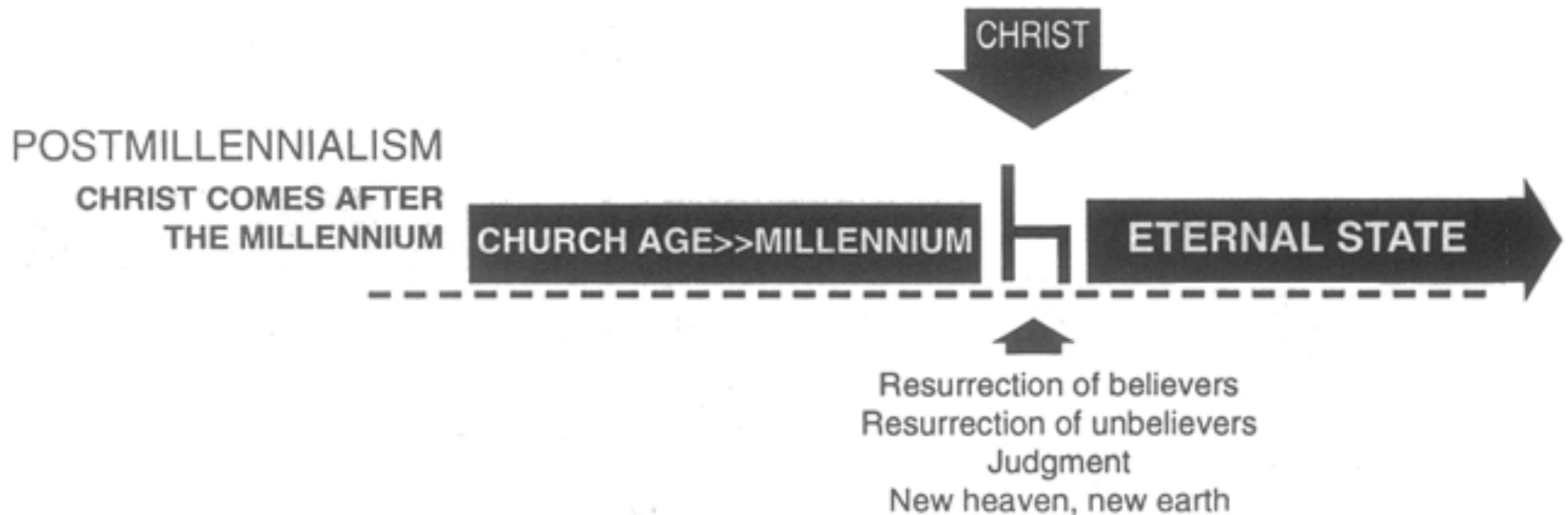
Post-millennialism

- The prefix post- means “after.” According to this view, Christ will return after the millennium.
- According to this view, the progress of the gospel and the growth of the church will gradually increase, so that a larger and larger proportion of the world’s population will be Christians. As a result, there will be significant Christian influences on society, society will more and more function according to God’s standards, and gradually a “millennial age” of peace and righteousness will occur on the earth. This “millennium” will last for a long period of time (not necessarily a literal one thousand years), and finally, at the end of this period, Christ will return to earth believers and unbelievers will be raised, the final judgment will occur, and there will be a new heaven and new earth. We will then enter into the eternal state.

Post-millennialism

- The primary characteristic of postmillennialism is that it is very optimistic about the power of the gospel to change lives and bring about much good in the world. Belief in postmillennialism tends to increase in times when the church is experiencing great revival, when there is an absence of war and international conflict, and when it appears that great progress is being made in overcoming the evil and suffering in the world.

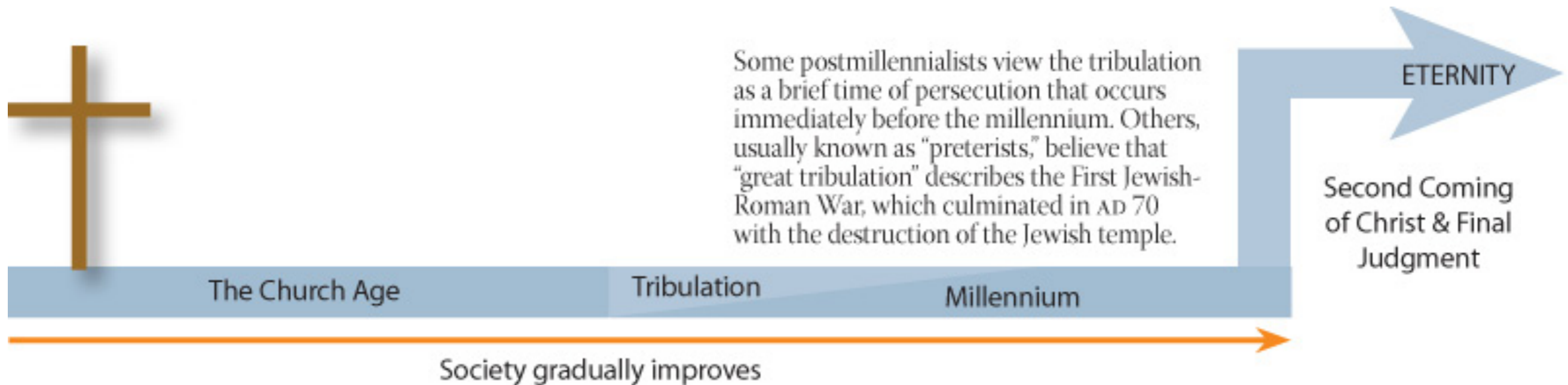
Post-millennialism



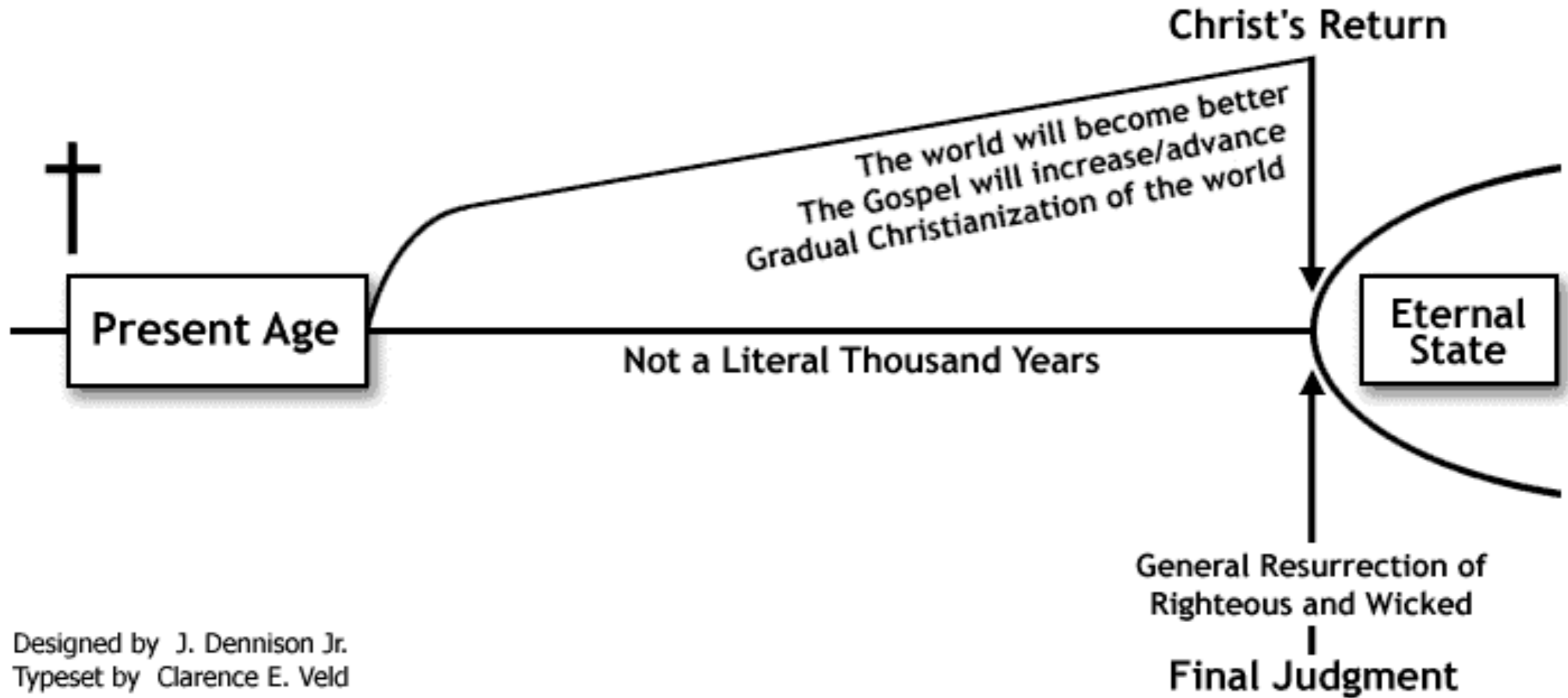
Postmillennialism

Kingdom Came and is Yet to Come—but Jesus Won't Return Until the Millennial Kingdom Is Complete: Postmillennialism: (Post-Millennial: "After the millennium")

Jesus will return to earth *after* ("post-") a millennium when the overwhelming majority of persons throughout the world embrace the gospel. This millennium may last exactly one thousand years, or "thousand years" may symbolize an extended era of gospel peace. In either case, Jesus will not be physically present on the earth during the millennium; he reigns spiritually through the spread of his gospel around the globe. Postmillennialists see a unified relationship between Israel and the church.

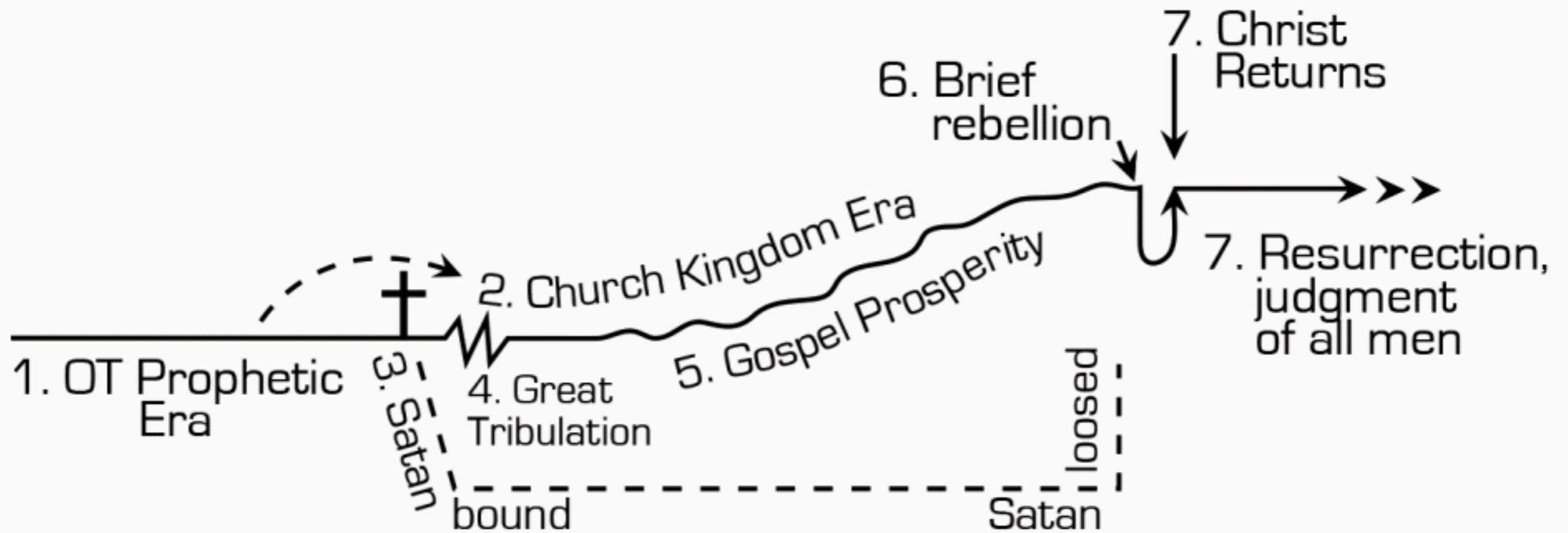


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POSTMILLENNIALISM



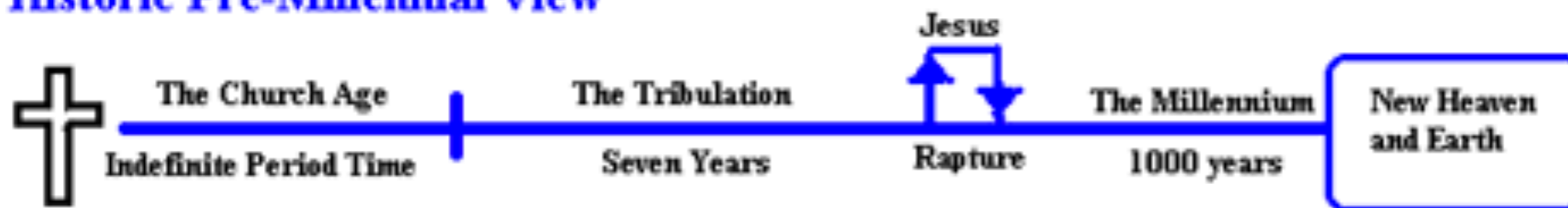
Post-millennialism

Final Notes

- This is the most positive view of the End Times. Things will get better and Christ will step onto a mostly redeemed earth.
- Post-Millennialism is a minority view of the end times.

END TIME VIEWPOINTS

Historic Pre-Millennial View



Amillennial View



Postmillennial View



Modern Premillennial View

