



# *The Millennium*

Understanding viewpoints

Vern Sheridan Poythress, Ph.D., Th.D.





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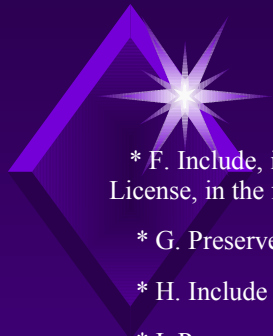
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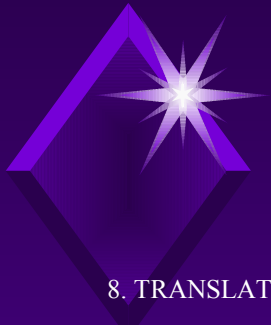
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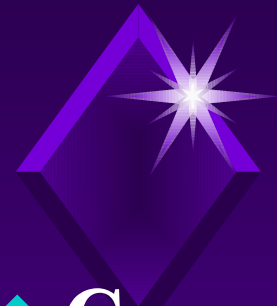
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# *Progression of 7 Cycles*

## ◆ Commission

1. 7 seals: scouts

## ◆ Prosecution of war

2. 7 trumpets: effects on earth

3. 7 symbolic accounts: characters

4. 7 bowls: more effects on earth

## ◆ Elimination of evil

5. 7 messages about Babylon: seductress

6. white horse: power source

7. white throne: all evil

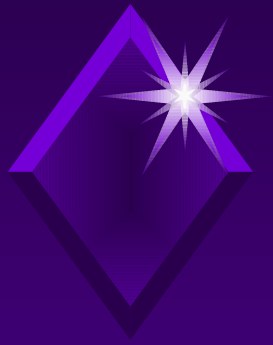
culmination





## *A. Millennial Positions*

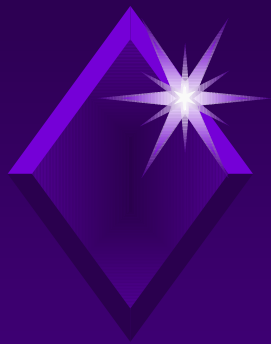




## *The Issues*

- ◆ Dispute just on Rev 20?
- ◆ Ignoring wrong views?
- ◆ Central issue?
- ◆ Involving many texts
- ◆ No, some biblical texts appear to support each position.
- ◆ Fulfillment of OT prophecy





# *OT Eschatological Prophecy*

Isaiah 65:17-25

When is it fulfilled?



Today

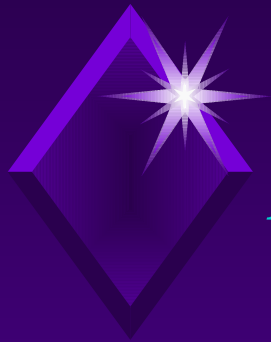
Consummation

? Another  
Time?

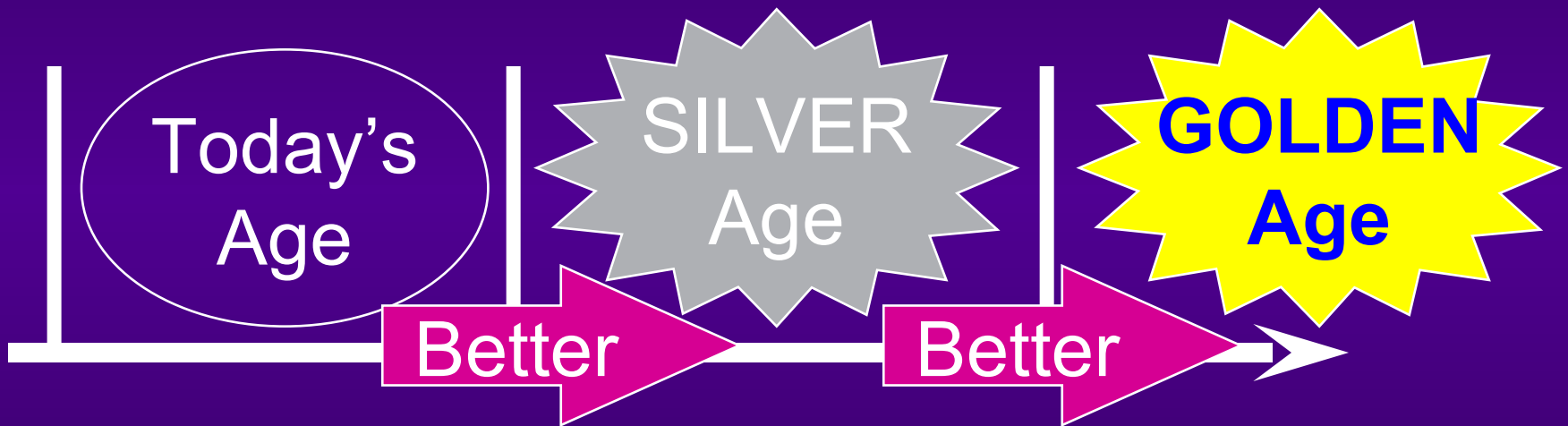
A big, tough  
question.







# *A Silver Age*







# *Dating the Silver Age*



Today's  
Age

SILVER  
Age

**GOLDEN  
Age**

**Dating 1**

**Dating 2**



First Coming



Second  
Coming





# *Origin of Term “Millennium”*

Rev. 20:2-7



1000 years



millennium



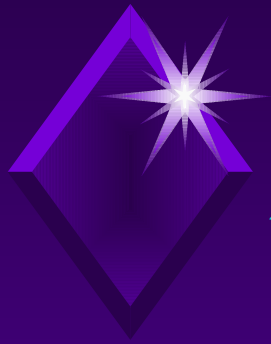
silver age



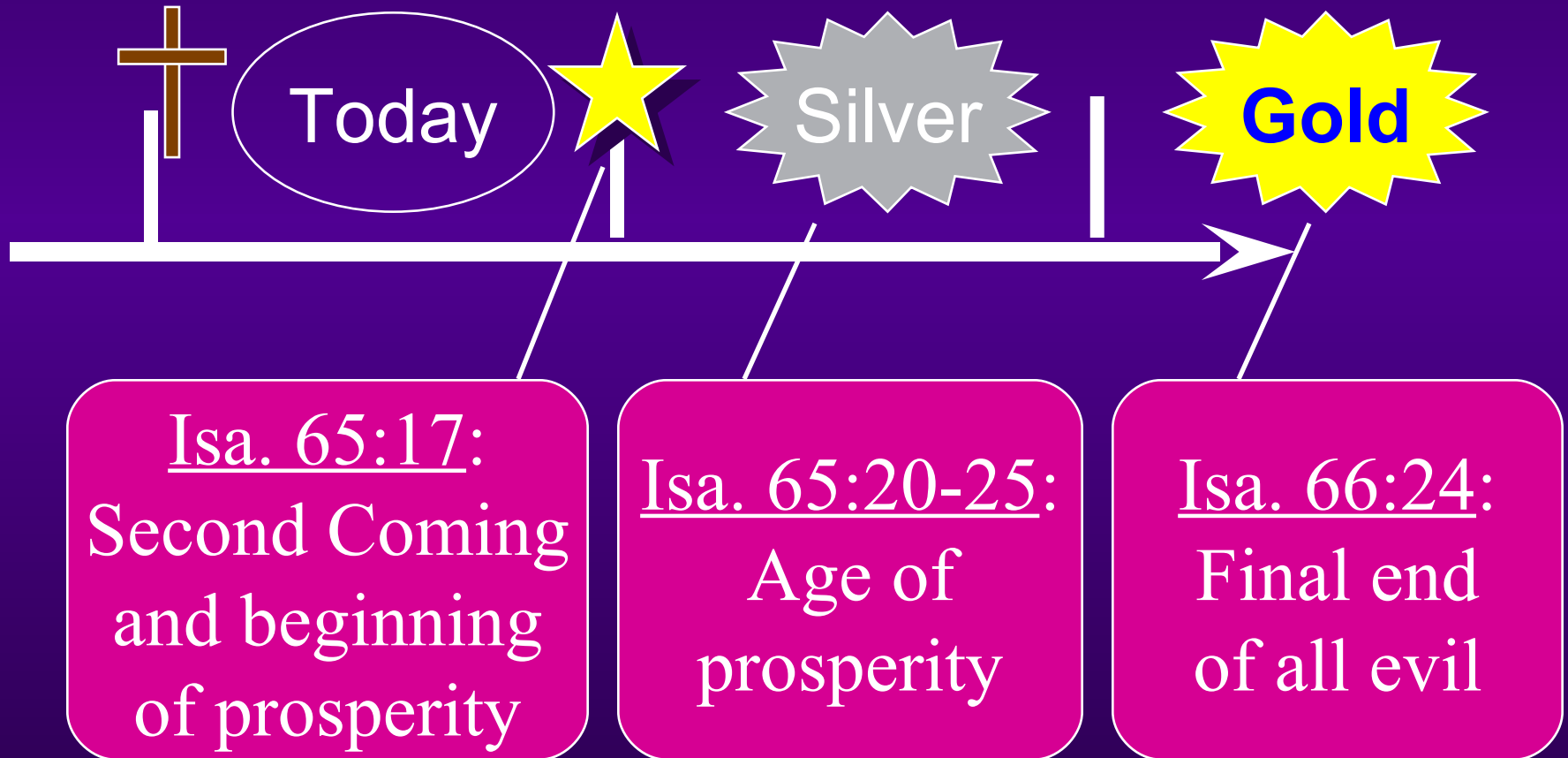
date Coming

- ◆ Rev 20:2-7 speaks of “1000 years.”
- ◆ “1000 years” in Latin is “millennium.”
- ◆ The 1000 years may be a silver age.
- ◆ Premillennial indicates the Second Coming is before Silver.

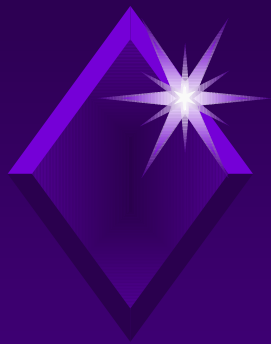




# *Premillennialism*







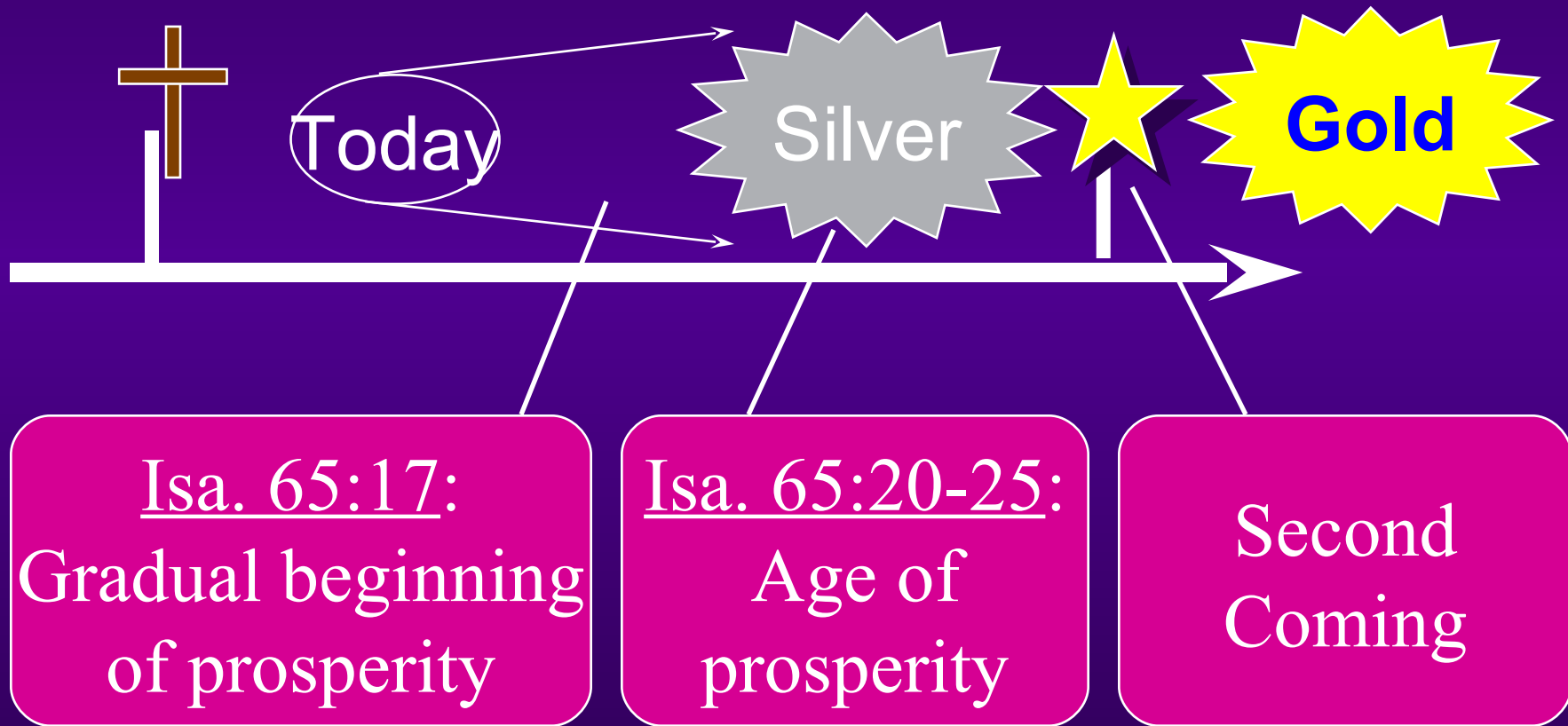
# *Support for Premillennialism*



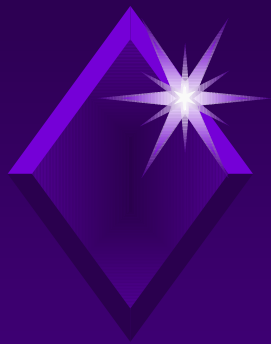




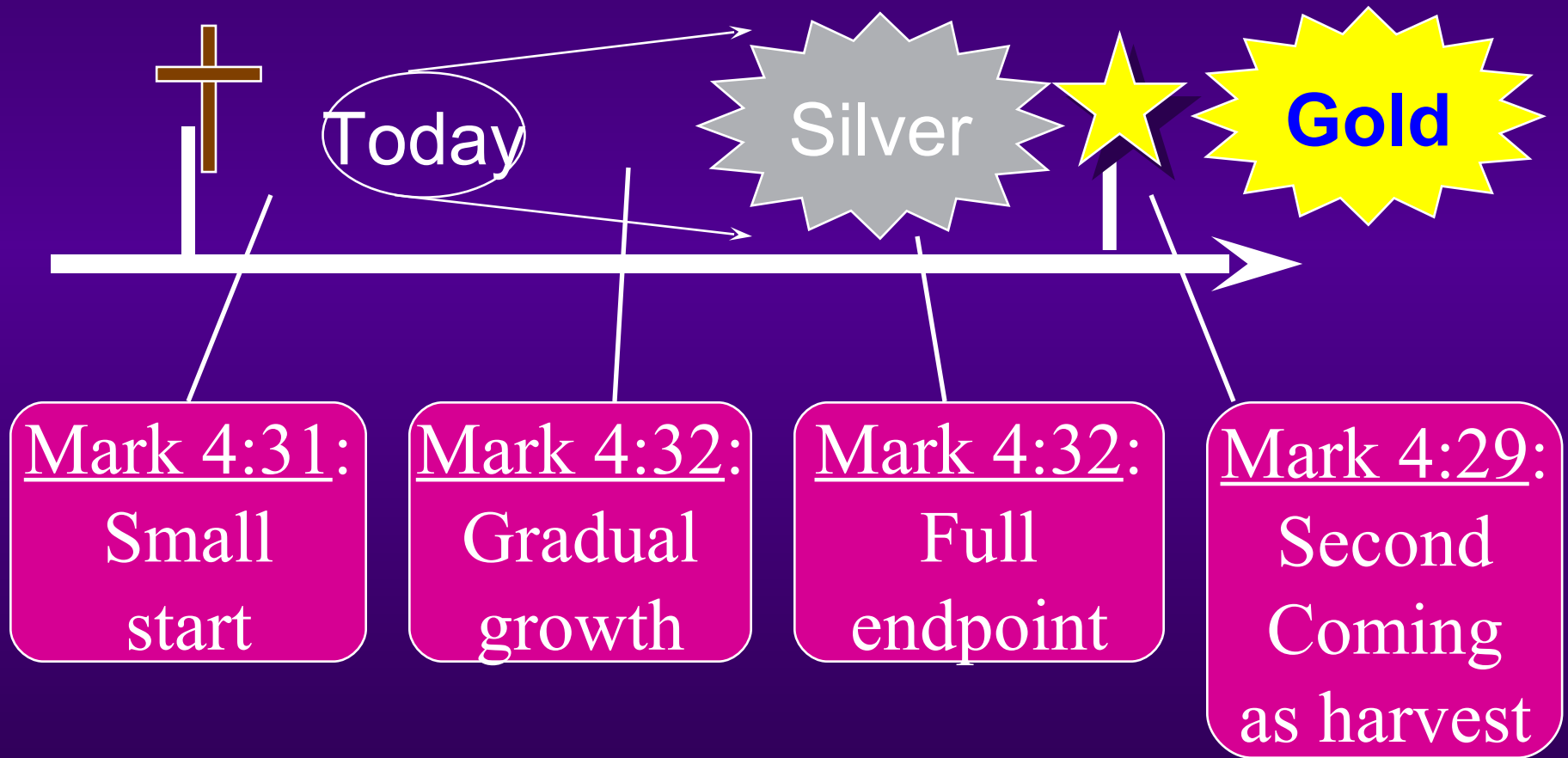
# *Postmillennialism*







# *Support for Postmillennialism*







*No Silver Age*

Today's  
Age

= Age of Triumph  
of Faith

**GOLDEN  
Age**

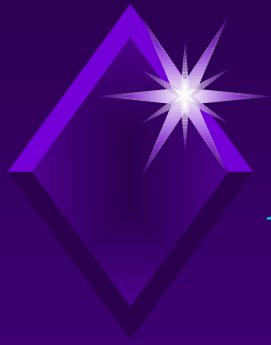


First Coming



Second  
Coming





# *Amillennialism*



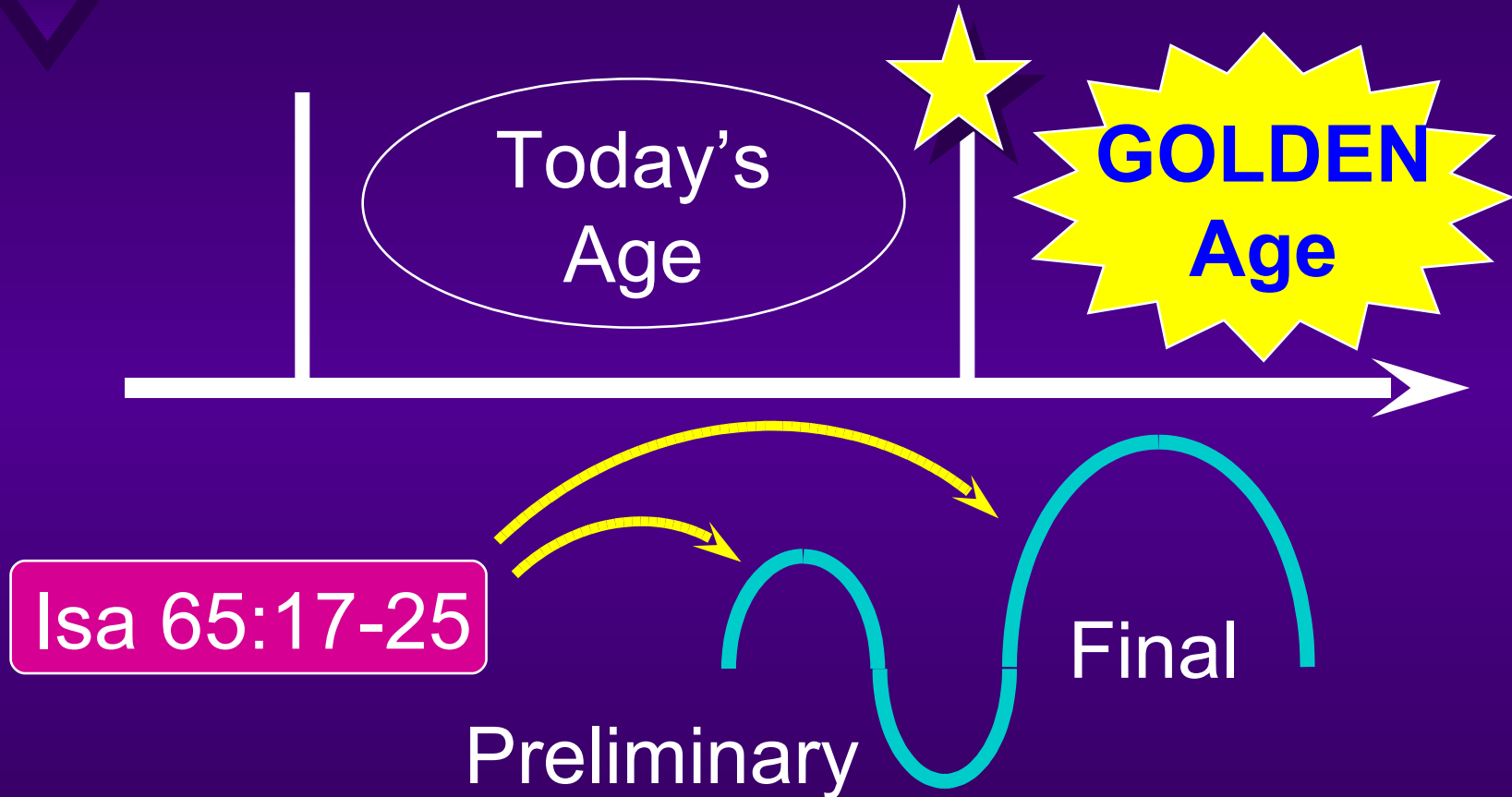
Simple.







# *Two-Stage Fulfillment*

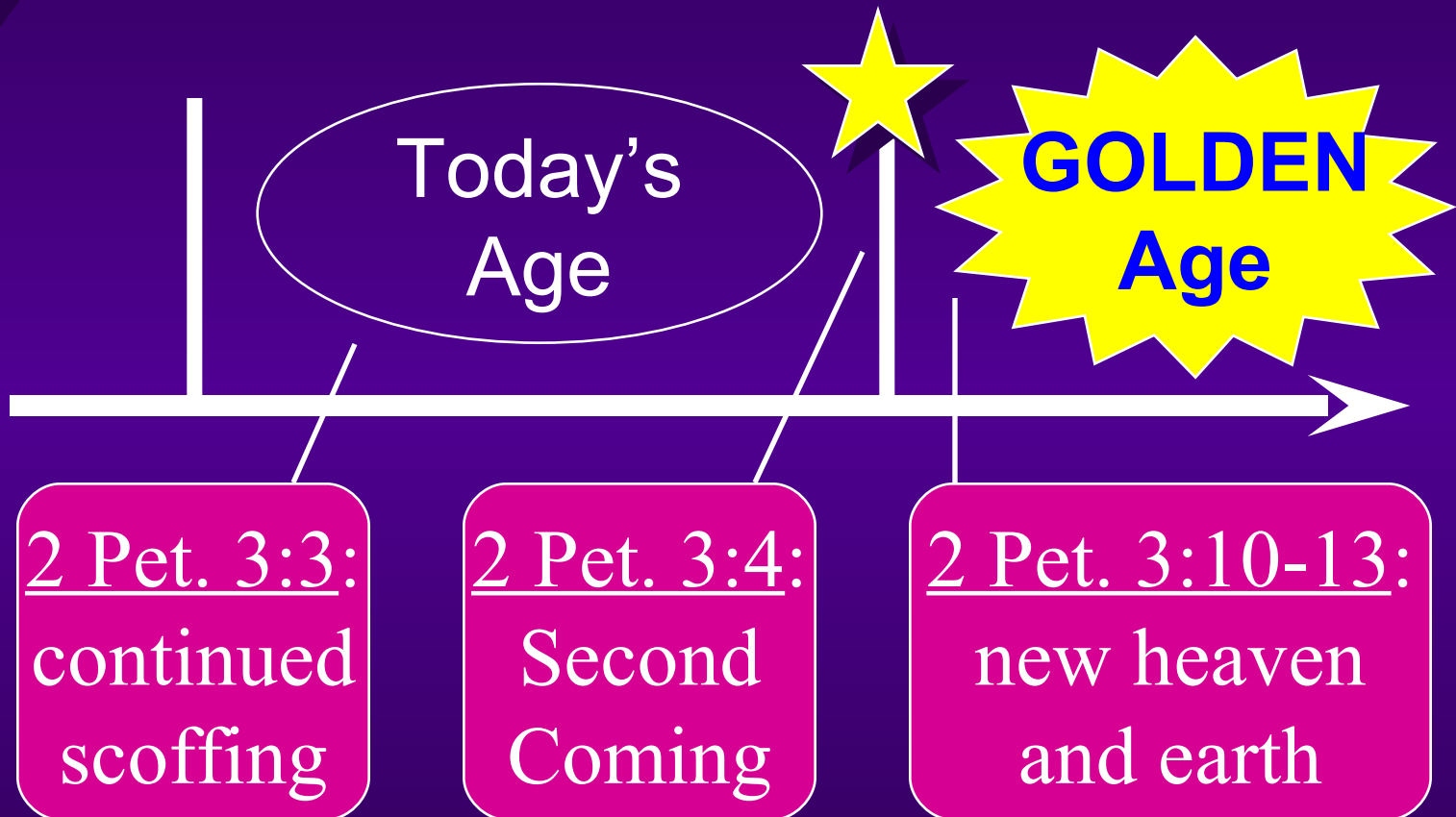


Isa. 65:17, “new heaven and new earth,”  
already points to the golden age.

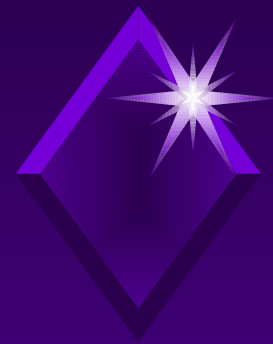




# *Support for Amillennialism*







# *Millennial Positions*

◆ Premil



◆ Postmil



◆ Amil







# *Two Premillennialisms*

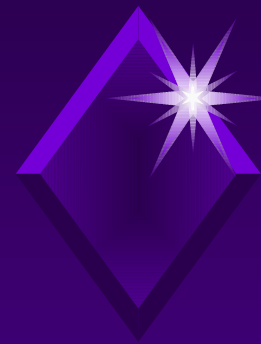
- ◆ **Classic premillennialism**



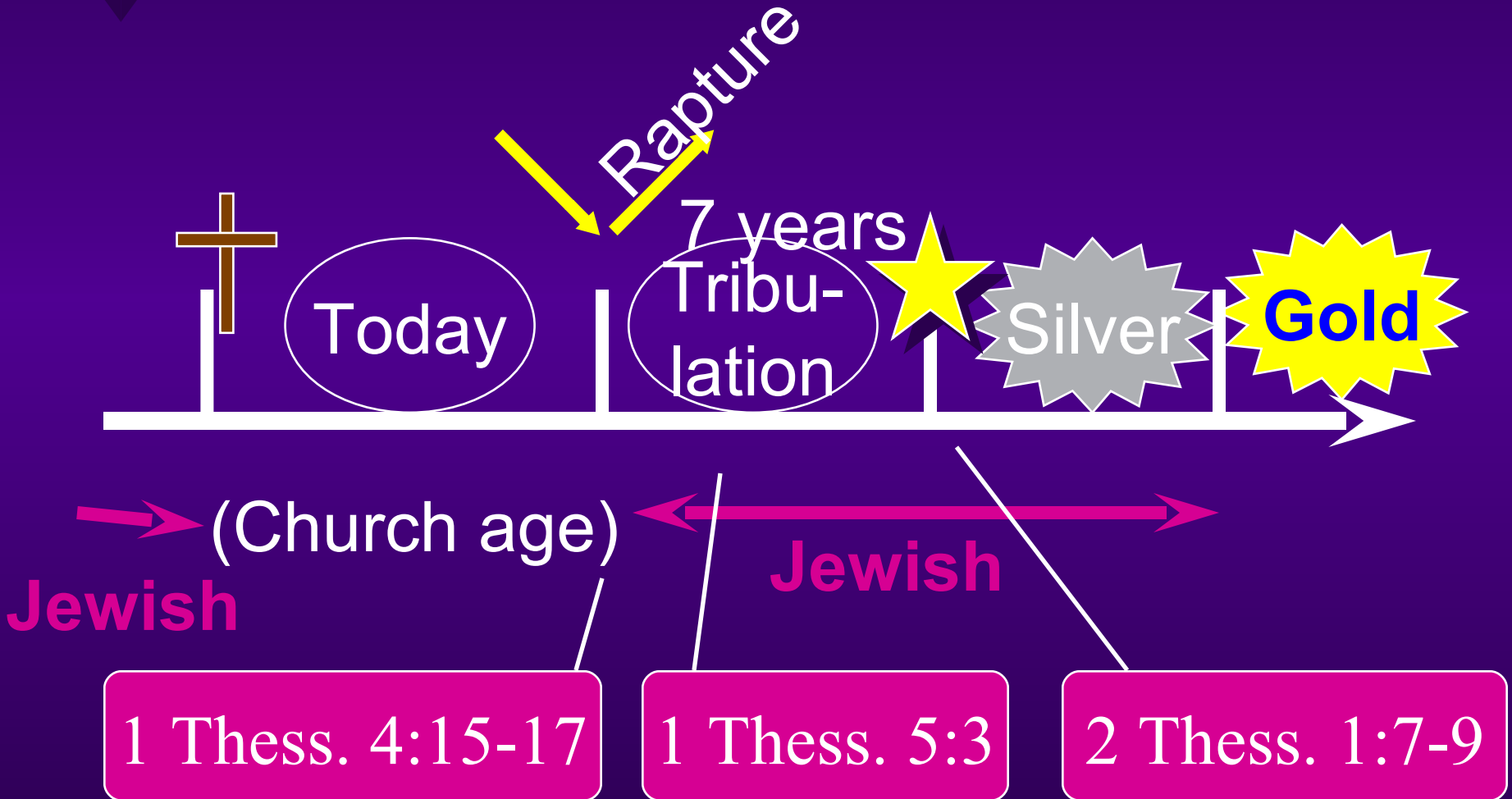
- ◆ **Dispensational premillennialism**







# *Dispensational Premillennialism*







# *Agreements and Disagreements*

- ◆ Christ will appear
- ◆ He will reign
- ◆ A new world
- ◆ What is next after his appearing?
- ◆ What is just before his appearing?
- ◆ Order of events
- ◆ Three main positions: premillennialism, postmillennialism, amillennialism

Some things  
are sure.

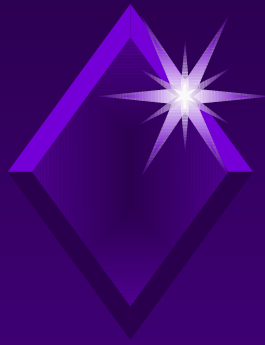




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## *B. Evaluating Millennial Positions*





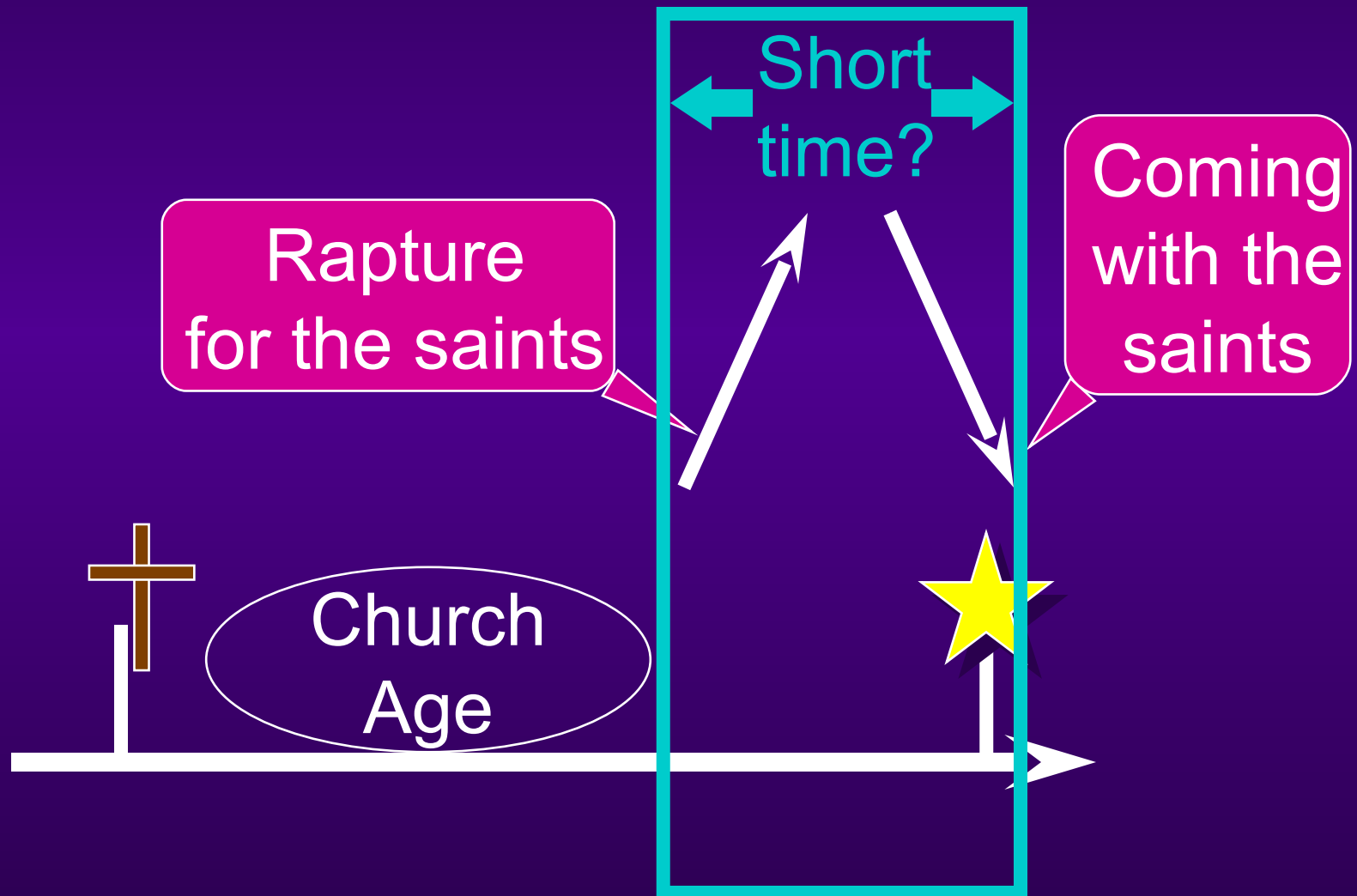
# *Strongest Arguments for the Millennial Positions*

- ◆ Premil
- ◆ Postmil
- ◆ Amil
- ◆ Zechariah 14
- ◆ Parables of growth
- ◆ 2 Thessalonians 1





# *Unified Second Coming?*







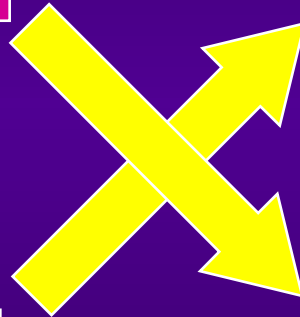
## *Reversal in 2 Thess 1:6-7*

Unbelievers  
bring trouble

Believers  
have relief

Believers  
are troubled

Unbelievers  
are troubled



Symmetric





# *Simultaneous Comfort and Trouble*

Comfort  
for saints

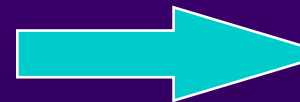
Trouble  
for troublers



When the Lord Jesus  
is revealed (1:7).



**Simultaneous**







# *Meaning of Comfort and Trouble*

Comfort  
for saints

Trouble  
for troublers

||

||

Rapture  
of saints

Destruction  
(hell), v. 9



**Simultaneous**







# *Dual Destinies in 2 Thess 1*

Unbelievers  
bring trouble

Believers  
have relief

◆ = Resur-  
rection glory

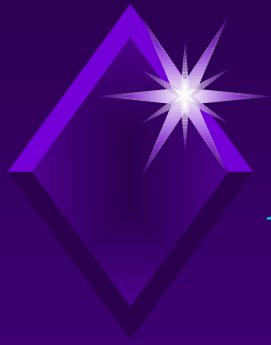


Believers  
are troubled

Unbelievers  
are troubled

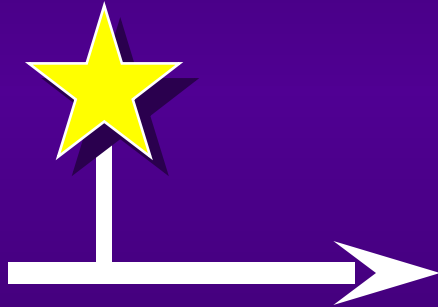
◆ = Punish-  
ment in hell





# *A Third Group in 2 Thess 1?*

Believers  
have relief



Unbelievers  
are troubled

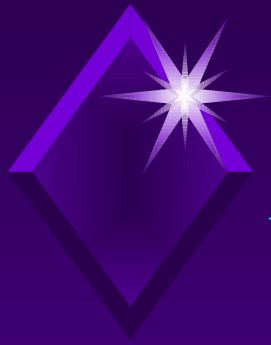
◆ = Resurrection  
glory



Who will populate  
a millennium??

◆ = Punishment in  
hell





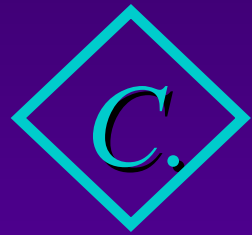
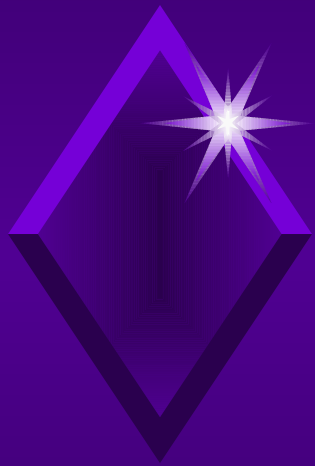
## *Lessons from the Positions*

- ◆ Premil
- ◆ Christ is larger than now;  
long for Second Coming
- ◆ Postmil
- ◆ Christ reigns now; therefore  
we are optimistic.
- ◆ Amil
- ◆ Christ reigns now.

They all  
sound good.







*Revelation 20:1-10*





# *Favorite Passages for Millennium*

## Premillennialists:

Rev. 20:1-10  
as favorite

It appears to  
describe a  
silver age.

## Amillennialists:

John 5:28-29;  
2 Pet. 3:7  
as favorite

General judgment  
moves from this age  
directly to golden age.





## *Premil points from Rev. 20:1-10*

- ◆ Chronological order (from 19:11 to 20:15)
- ◆ The first resurrection (20:4-6)
- ◆ Binding of Satan (20:2)
- ◆ Straightforward reading

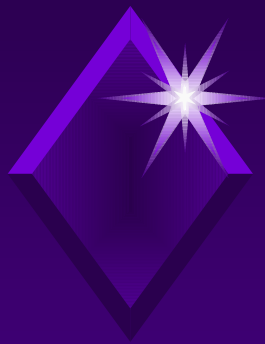




## *Reply to Premil Points*

- ◆ **Chronology**
- ◆ **First resurrection**
- ◆ **Binding of Satan**
- ◆ **Straightforward**
- ◆ **Recapitulation**
- ◆ **Disembodied existence (20:4; cf. Rev. 6:9)?**
- ◆ **Not material chain.**  
See Rev. 12:7-9, Luke 10:18, 11:20-22; Jude 6.
- ◆ **Already/ yet-to-come**





# *Already and Yet to Come for Rev 20*

## **Already**

## **Yet to Come**

### ◆ **Prophecy**

**Down  
payment**

**Full  
inheritance**

### ◆ **19:11-21**

**War now**

**Final war**

### ◆ **Binding**

**Luke 10:18;  
11:20-22**

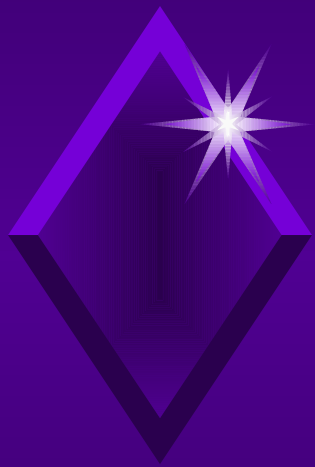
**Future  
triumph**

### ◆ **New life**

**Regeneration  
Col. 3:1;  
Eph. 2:5-6**

**Bodily  
resurrection**

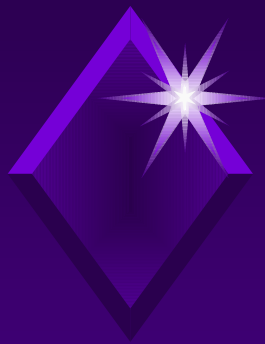




# *D. Chronological Order*

in Rev. 19:11-20:15





# *Premils' View of Order of Events*

19:11-21

Last  
battle;  
Second  
Coming

20:1-10

Reign of  
1000  
years

20:11-15

Last  
Judgment

21:1-22:5

New  
World

Events in  
succession

Events in  
succession



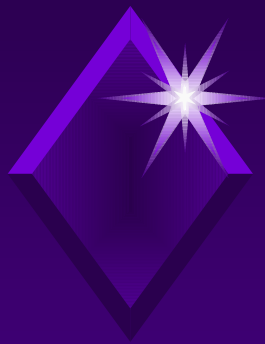


# *Premillennialism*

1000 years  
= millennium







# *View 20:1-10 as Recapitulation*

19:11-21

Last  
battle;  
Second  
Coming

20:1-6

20:7-10

1000  
years

Last  
Battle

20:11-15

Last  
Judgment

21:1-22:5

New  
World

Cycling through the  
same period





# *Manner of Recapitulation*

last  
battle

19:11-21

1000 years  
triumph by faith

last  
battle

20:1-6, 7-10



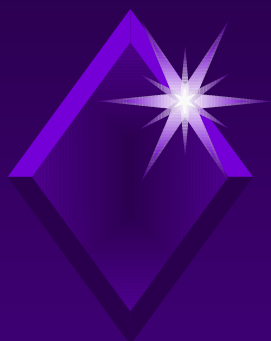
Today



Gold



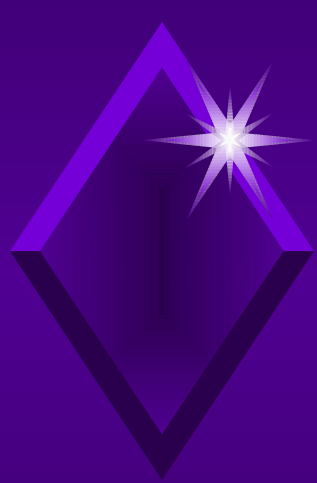




## *Evidence for Recapitulation in Rev. 20*

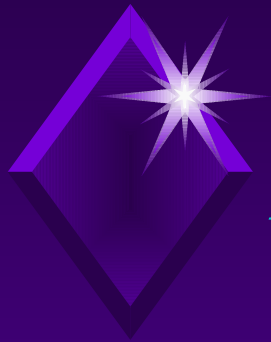
- ◆ Nations of 20:3 perished in 19:19-21.
- ◆ Vanishing sky in 6:14 same as 20:11.
- ◆ In 15:1 the bowls include all wrath, thus including the wrath of 20:9-10.
- ◆ The final battle occurs in 16:14,16; 17:13-14; 19:19-21; 20:7-10.
- ◆ Imagery from Ezekiel 38-39 occurs in both 19:11-21 and 20:7-10.





*The First Resurrection*





## *Is First Resurrection of Body?*

- ◆ Other places in the New Testament use the word “resurrection” for bodily resurrection.
- ◆ It is a remedy for martyrs (20:4).
- ◆ Many say, “Context does not tell us that this use is figurative.”

But let's look at the context.



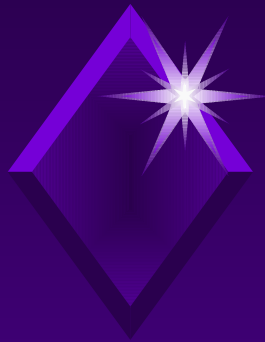


## *First and Last*

**Rev 20-22 concerns first and last things:**

- ◆ New heaven and earth are last.
- ◆ 22:1-5 returns us to Eden.
- ◆ 19:5-8 returns to an Edenic marriage.
- ◆ “First” and “second” in 20:1-15 match this theme.
- ◆ “Second death” in 20:14-15 is last.





# *First and Second in Rev* *20:1-10*

## First death

- ◆ **First is Preliminary:**
  - ◆ Luke 18:30; Matt 12:32
- ◆ **Bodily death**

## Second death

- ◆ **Second is Final:**
  - ◆ 1 Cor 15:45; Heb 9:28
- ◆ **Spiritual**
- ◆ **With bodily resurrection**





## *Contrasts in Rev 20:1-10*

Prelim-  
inary:

First death

Body

First  
resurrection

?

Final:

Second death

Spiritual

Second  
resurrection

Body

Paradoxical: with  
bodily resurrection





# *The First Resurrection*

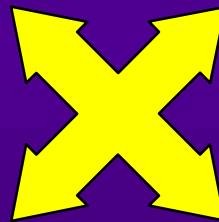
First death

Body

Second death

Spiritual

Paradoxical: with  
bodily resurrection



First resurrection

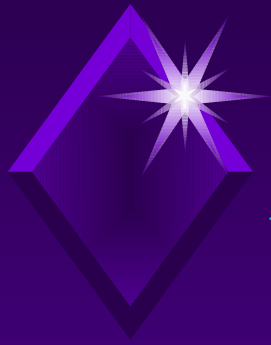
Spiritual

Paradoxical: with  
bodily death

Second  
resurrection

Body





# *Klinian Symmetries*

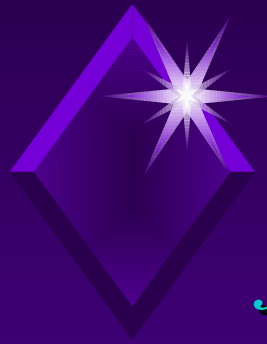
The Righteous have:

- ◆ One death
- ◆ Two  
resurrections

The Wicked have:

- ◆ Two deaths
- ◆ One resurrection





## *Practical Question for Rev 20:1-10*

- ◆ **Martyrdom threatens the church.**
- ◆ **Persecutors eliminate martyrs.**
- ◆ **Do persecutors win?**



We need  
reassurance.





## *Exhortation from Rev 20:1-10*

- ◆ Christ is the pattern.
- ◆ Martyrdom leads to victorious resurrection.
- ◆ Rev 20:1-10 applies the pattern to Christians.
- ◆ Message: victory through perseverance in Christ.

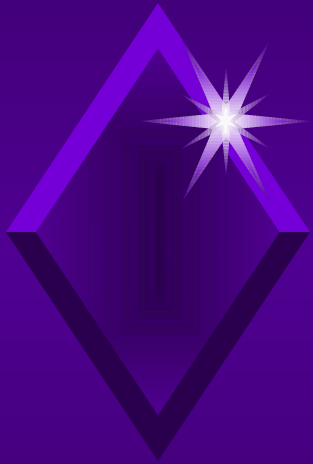
Christ  
raised



Christians  
raised

◆ in Christ





## *F. Other Issues*

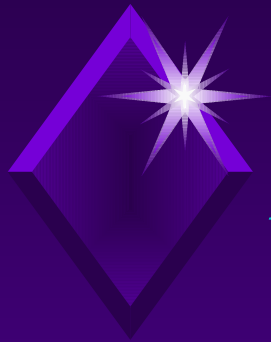




## *Binding of Satan*

- ◆ Satan is a spirit being; “binding” not physical.
- ◆ Jesus’ work limits (“binds”) Satan: Luke 10:18; 11:22; John 12:31; Rev. 12:9.
- ◆ “Binding” keeps Satan from deceiving the nations.
- ◆ Christ frees the nations from Satan’s deceit, Matt. 28:18-20.





## *Do You Read Rev. As Literal?*

- ◆ John literally saw what he says he saw.
- ◆ But what he saw was visionary, symbolical. The Beast symbolizes persecuting power.
- ◆ To read literally what is intended symbolically does not really honor the Author.





# *G. Attitudes*

- ◆ God is more interested in major biblical teachings.
- ◆ “The haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the pride of men shall be brought low; and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day,” Isa 2:17.



God is  
wiser than I.