Review of Dean Davis' The High King of Heaven on Amillennialism

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Dean Davis - The High King of Heaven:

Discovering the Master Key to the Great End Time Debate

The subtitle indeed is a bold claim, saying that in this book we will discover “the master key” to the End Time debate. I believe we indeed do discover the master key to the End Time debate.

This book is nothing like the others that I’ve read on Amillennialism (Kingdom Come, The Bible and the Future, The Case for Amillennialism), it dares to go and try to interpret the difficult texts in support of premillennialism. It is anti-premillennial as well as, but in lesser tone against Postmillennialism. This is all done in a tone of brotherly love. I enjoyed that aspect of the interaction.

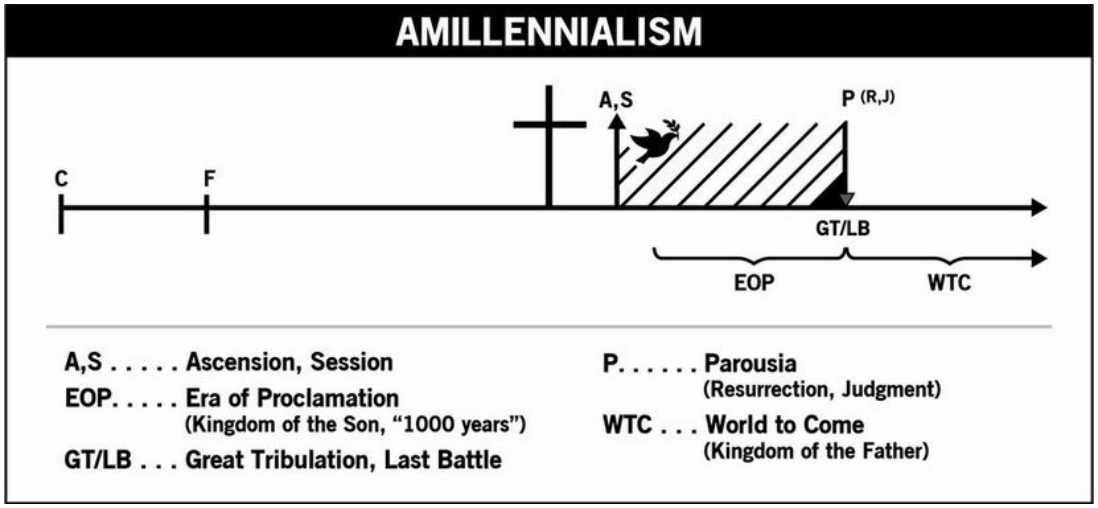
Amillennialism

This book lays out the classic view of Amillennialism which is Dean Davis[1] believes (as others also do) is the classic eschatology of Church History and the Reformation.

> The word amillennialism means no millennium. However, amillennarians do not deny the existence of a millennium, only that it begins after the Parousia and that it will last for a literal thousand years. Instead, they teach that the thousand years of Revelation 20 symbolize the present Era of Proclamation, during which time Christ reigns with (the departed spirits of) his saints in heaven. Amillennarians are, then, “present-millennarians.” Pages 23-24

Basically, Amillennialism teaches that the Millennium of Revelation 20 started from the cross and will end at the Second Coming of our Lord, spanning over 2 millennia up till now and is thus to be interpreted symbolically, rather than literally. The Millennium is the Gospel Era, or as Dean likes to call it, the Era of Proclamation.

This is a simple chart laying out the Amillennial vision of Salvation History.



The Kingdom of God

One of the very ups of this book was the extensive study of the Kingdom of God in the New and Old Testaments. My understanding of the Kingdom of God was really expanded.

A Definition of the Kingdom of God

Dean Davis defines the Kingdom of God as:

> *In essence, the Kingdom of God is the direct reign of God the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit, over his redeemed creatures; creatures who have been rescued from every spiritual and physical enemy, and restored to every spiritual and physical friend that God planned for them in the beginning. Also, the Kingdom is the blessed realm that this redemptive reign creates, and over which it forever rules. Page 65.*

This he does not merely assume, but ably goes to prove it from the Bible, here is a summary of his five points:

1. The Kingdom is the direct reign of God the Father (Mt 6:10)
2. The Kingdom is a sphere of wholeness and blessing (Mt 9:35; 10:7-8; 12:28)
3. The Kingdom is mediated by the Son of God (John 5:19, 30; 6:38; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10)
4. The Kingdom is effected by the Spirit of God (Mt 12:28; Acts 1:4-8)
5. The Kingdom is a realm beneath a reign (Mt 13:41-42; Rev 11:15)

Thereby is indeed the definition that he gives is justified and satisfactory.

The Two-Staged Kingdom

Amillennarians see the Kingdom of God coming in two stages, separated by the Parousia of our Lord:

1. The Kingdom of the Son (already, the present Era of Proclamation)
2. The Kingdom of the Father (not yet, the future World/Age to Come)

Now, the terminology used here is not meant to give the idea that the Son has no share in the second stage of the Kingdom or that the Father has no share in the first, but rather is taken from 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 where we learn that at the Coming of our Lord, the Lord Jesus will deliver His Kingdom, His consummated Kingdom to God the Father and will be subjected to Him. Thus, seeing a difference between the present Kingdom of the Son (which is to be delivered up to the Father) and the coming Kingdom of the Father (which is the eternal World to Come). This terminology is also supported by Matthew 13:41-43.

The two-staged Kingdom is seen from Jesus' own contrast of this present age and the age to come. Here is a table I made for myself:

Verse	This age	The age to come

Mt 12:32	…will not be forgiven, either in this age	or in the age to come (compare Mk 3:28-30)
Mk 10:30	…receive many times more in this time,	and in the age to come eternal life. (Lk 18:30)
Eph 1:21	…far above all rule and authority…not only in this age	But also in the one to come
Lk 20:34-36	The sons of this age marry…	but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection… neither marry… they cannot die anymore… equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection
1Cor 1:20	Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?	
1Cor 2:6	…although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away.	
2Cor 4:4	…god of this world (age) has blinded the minds of the unbelievers…	
Gal 1:4	who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age…	
1Tim 6:17, 19	As for the rich in this present age…	treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future…
Titus 2:12	training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age	

Not forgetting that Jesus already affirmed that the Kingdom came with Him, in the present age (Lk 17:21; Mk 1:15; Mt 12:28).

But this fact can also be seen from surveying some of Jesus' parables and simple Didactic (Gospels and Epistles) teaching about the Kingdom, rather than going to Revelation or Old Testament Prophecy which are obscure. Here Amillennialism makes good use of the Reformed Analogy of Faith interpretation which is thus defined in my confession:

> The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; and therefore when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched by other places that speak more clearly. 1689, 1:9[2]

The Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds (Mt 13:24-30, 36-48)

This is one of the many NT texts which illustrate the two-staged Kingdom of God.

First we are given the parable itself in Matthew 13:24-30, then we are also given the true interpretation of the parable in Matthew 13:36-48.

In this parable we learn of the side by side existence and out growing of two kingdoms: The Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan. Here we learn that both kingdoms will grow, but there will be a gathering and a burning of the weeds at the time of the harvest. In Matthew 13:49-40 we are told that the harvest is the end of the age, the end of the present age. Herein is the Second Coming of our Lord strongly implied. This was a stage of the kingdom wherein it is spiritual and existing side by side with the Kingdom of the Evil One.

In our Lord Jesus' explanation of the parable we get more insight of the Consummation. There we are told that when our Lord comes again, all sinners will be taken out of the world ("causes of sin") and thrown into hell, but the righteous will shine like the sun in the **Kingdom of their Father.**

This second stage of the Kingdom is called the Kingdom of the Father, but unlike the first stage of the Kingdom, it is without any trace of evil. This is the World to Come, this is the New Heavens and the New Earth.

Here I think we see clearly two stages of the Kingdom, the first wherein it is spiritual and side by side existing with the Kingdom of the Evil One, then second stage wherein all evil is removed and the cosmos is transformed.

The New Covenant Hermeneutic

This indeed is the Master Key. Here is the best portion of the book, this goes deep into the proper interpretation of Old Testament prophecies. This also builds upon the foundation laid previously of the two staged Kingdom and its people, the Israel of God and not Israel after the flesh. The people of the New Covenant, both Jew and Gentile believers in Christ.

The NCH is concerned chiefly with the interpretation of Old Testament Kingdom prophecies. These are prophecies like Ezekiel 36-37 and Jeremiah 31-33 where Israel is promised eschatological restoration. These are not simple kingdom prophecies or prophecies about the Messiah which did indeed come to pass very literally.

Part 3 of the book is dedicated to the interpretation of OTKP in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah using the New Covenant Hermeneutic.

Dean introduces us to 7 important principles for properly interpreting the Old Testament (Kingdom Prophecy).

1. Literal
    a. Regular OT narrative is to be taken literally. When the Bible speaks of Adam, Abraham, Noah and the Flood, these are literal, true and historical things.
2. Ethical
    a. The OT is a revelation of God's good pleasure and His will toward His creatures. Therein is contained His will of precept, what He commands and desires from us.
    b. "Thus, for the apostles, all OT indicatives contain imperatives—Gospel imperatives—that NT revelation alone can bring out into the full light of day." Page 230
3. Typological
    a. According to our Lord, the Scriptures testify of Him (Jn 5:39; Lk 24:25-27), thus we should be able to find Him (and His covenant people) in shadow and type (1Cor 15:45-47; Col 2:17; Heb 8:4-5; 9:11-12; 10:1)
4. Eschatological
    a. Having learned from explicit and clear NT teaching about the nature of the Kingdom of God and its twofold stages, we interpret OTKP according to it. We don't posit a time between the present age and the age to come otherwise known as the Millennial Kingdom for these OTKP to be fulfilled.
    b. They are to be fulfilled in the two stages of the Kingdom. 1) The Kingdom of the Son and 2) The Kingdom of the Father.
    c. Typology is inseparable here and OTKP is to be interpreted as speaking of the NT people of God, Jews and Gentiles.
5. Covenantal
    a. When we read of the New Covenant, restoration, giving of a new heart we believe that they're speaking of the New Covenant in Christ's blood, with the people of God, Jew and Gentile believers.
    b. There are two ways to read OTKP covenantally:

        i."The **contrasting** mode of **covenantal reading** is very valuable, since it highlights and magnifies the true greatness of the New Covenant, a greatness that consists in the fact that it is none other than the Eternal Covenant; the one true redemptive plan that God conceived in eternity past, veiled in OT times, and unveiled in these last days through his Son, so that now and forevermore, his people may worship him in spirit and truth (John 1:14, 17, 4:23-24)." Page 236

        ii.In the **Comparative Reading** we look for the inferiority of the Old Covenant as opposed to the New Covenant blessings.

1. Christological
    a. We see Christ and Him crucified. We look for types, shadows and prophecies about the Messiah and His work.
2. Ecclesiological
    a. We see OTKP fulfilled in the Israel of God (Gal 6:16) which is comprised of both Jews and

Gentiles. Everyone who is in the New Covenant (Rom 2:25-29; 9:6-7; 11 [one olive tree]; Eph 2:13-19; Phil 3:3; 1 Pet 2:4-11).

b. In this point we are in strong disagreement with Dispensationalists who teach the distinction and the two plans of God for the Church and Israel.

This table is of some help to show the unity of the Church and true spiritual Israel:

Israel	**Church**
Saints (Num 16:3; Deut 33:3)	Saints (Eph 1:1; Rom 1:7)
Elect (Deut 7:6-7; 14:2)	Elect (Col 3:12; Titus 1:1)
Beloved (Deut 7:7; 4:37)	Beloved (Col 3:12; 1 Thess 1:4)
Called (Isa 41:9; 43:1)	Called (Rom 1:6-7; 1 Cor 1:2)
Church (Ps 89:5; Mic 2:5 (LXX); Acts 7:38; Heb 2:12)	Church (Eph 1:22; Gal 1:13; Acts 20:28)
Flock (Ezek 34; Ps 77:20)	Flock (Luke 12:32; 1 Pet 5:2)
Holy Nation (Exod 19:5-6)	Holy Nation (1 Pet 2:9)
Kingdom of Priests (Exod 19:5-6)	Royal Priesthood (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6)
Peculiar Treasure (Exod 19:5-6)	Peculiar Treasure (1 Pet 2:9)
God's People (Hos 1:9, 10)	God's People (1 Pet 2:10)
Holy People (Deut 7:6)	Holy People (1 Pet 1:15-16)
People of Inheritance (Deut 4:20)	People of Inheritance (Eph 1:18)
God's Tabernacle in Israel (Lev 26:11)	God's Tabernacle in Church (John 1:14)
God walks among them (Lev 26:12)	God walks among them (2 Cor 6:16-18)
Twelve Patriarchs	Twelve Apostles
God married to them (Isa 54:5; Hos 2:19; Jer 3:14; 6:2; 31:32)	Christ married to them (Eph 5:22-23; 2 Cor 11:2)

Dean Davis leaves us with three principles for the interpretation of OTKP, and they are:

1. All OTKP's are fulfilled in the two-fold spiritual reign (Kingdom) of God instituted by Christ under the New Covenant, and must be interpreted accordingly.
2. To a greater or lesser degree, all OTKP's are covenantally conditioned, and must be interpreted accordingly.
3. All OTKP's are fulfilled in the Church, and must be interpreted accordingly.

Obviously, you may see some of those things as unreasonable, but I assure you they are not, that's why you need to get your hands on the book.

Dean demonstrates the accuracy of the New Covenant Hermeneutic by letting the NT interpret the OT. He deals with:

1. Acts 2:33-35 & Psalm 110
2. Acts 7:44-50 & Isaiah 66:1-2
3. Acts 13:46-47 & Isaiah 49:1-12
4. Acts 15:12-21 & Amos 9:11-12
5. Romans 9:19-26 & Hosea 2:14-23
6. Romans 10:12-13 & Joel 2:28-32
7. Rom. 11:25-27 & Isaiah 59:15-21
8. 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 & Isaiah 49:8
9. 2 Cor. 6:14-18 & Ezek. 37:26-28
10. Galatians 4:26-27 & Isaiah 54:1ff
11. Hebrews 8:1-13 & Jeremiah 31:31-34
12. 2 Peter 3:13 & Isaiah 65:17; 66:22

The interpretation and allusions of the NT of and to these texts indeed do demonstrate the accuracy of the New Covenant Hermeneutic.

Revelation 20 and the Structure of Revelation

Before coming to this difficult chapter we should have some idea of the structure of the Salvation History and the Kingdom of God learned from the Didactic New Testament (Gospels and Epistles), we should not radically change our view of the Kingdom and Salvation History based on a difficult and a passage in an obviously symbolic book.

The cycles

The first step to the belief that the Millennium is the Era of Proclamation is the understanding of structure of Revelation.

Dean Davis believes that the book of Revelation has 6 cycles beginning from the Cross and ending at the Consummation. These are:

1. Revelation 6-7 – The Six Seals
2. Revelation 8-11 – The Seven Trumpets
3. Revelation 12-14 – The Woman and the Dragon
4. Revelation 15-16 – The Seven Bowls
5. Revelation 17-19 – The fall of the Dragon's Helpers
6. Revelation 20 – The 1,000 Years

These cycles describe the entire Church Age from different angles and with intensification. There are aspects in each cycle which are still future.

Speaking of myself when I first got introduced to this way of looking at Revelation I think it was by pastor Voddie Bauchum's series on Revelation or Sam Storms' Kingdom Come the thing that caught me to this view were the repeated judgments which seem to me to be final and not temporary judgments. Further, the fact that the book was given to the seven church (and to the church universal) in the first century and that these things were "near" (Rev 1:3).

The Judgment in Revelation 6

> Rev 6:12 When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, Rev 6:13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. Rev 6:14 The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. Rev 6:15 Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, Rev 6:16 calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, Rev 6:17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

We have in Revelation 7 a beautiful picture of the Consummation.

The Judgment in Revelation 11

> Rev 11:15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." Rev 11:16 And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, Rev 11:17 saying, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. Rev 11:18 The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth." Rev 11:19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

Yet another beautiful picture of the Consummation and transformation (and glorification) of the world.

The judgment of God is spoken of as a past event, the **nations** were destroyed. The dead were judged. The slaves of God were rewarded.

The Judgment in Revelation 14

Rev 14:14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. Rev 14:15 And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, “Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.” Rev 14:16 So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped. Rev 14:17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Rev 14:18 And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, “Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe.” Rev 14:19 So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. Rev 14:20 And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

We have already seen the reference to the harvest in Matthew 13:24-30, 36-48 and the fact that it happens at the end of the age and also that it is the time of judgment.

The Judgment in Revelation 16

Rev 16:12 The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east. Rev 16:13 And I saw, coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs. Rev 16:14 For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. Rev 16:15 (“Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!”) Rev 16:16 And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. Rev 16:17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” Rev 16:18 And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. Rev 16:19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. Rev 16:20 And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. Rev 16:21 And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.

This has strong parallels with Revelation 20:7-10 where every orthodox interpreter agrees that it refers to the Last Battle.

It is done, there is nothing more. The judgments of God are finished, His wrath is fully poured out.

Let us not forget that Revelation 16 as a whole is dedicated to the judgment of God. Of special notice are verses 5-7:

Rev 16:5 And I heard the angel in charge of the waters say, “Just are you, O Holy One, **who is and who was**, for you brought these judgments. Rev 16:6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve!” Rev 16:7 And I heard the altar saying, “Yes, Lord God the Almighty, true and just are your judgments!”

Here the saints of the Most High look upon the judgments of God and He is praised for the judgments that He brought. Of important notice is the absence of “who is to come” in verse 5 and the past tense of “**brought** these judgments.” The rest of the chapter goes on to explain and show more pictures of this great final judgment.

The Judgment in Revelation 19

Rev 19:11 Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. Rev 19:12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. Rev 19:13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. Rev 19:14 And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. Rev 19:15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. Rev 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. Rev 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, “Come, gather for the great supper of God, Rev 19:18 to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and

great." Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. Rev 19:20 And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. Rev 19:21 And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

This is no doubt the clearest picture of the Second Coming of our Lord in the Revelation. This is not the battle prior to the Millennium. This is the final battle. This is the Last Battle between Christ and Satan.

The birds are to feed upon the flesh of all (reprobate) men (Rev 19:19), the beast and false prophet are thrown in to the lake of fire (Rev 19:20), if anyone escaped he would be slain by the sword of Christ's mouth and eaten by the birds (Rev 19:21). This is the total destruction of the wicked, there are no surviving wicked here.

The Interpretation of Revelation 20

If we are right about the structure of Revelation and the cycles, then this would have to be our final cycle. I will not go into great exegesis and stuff here, it is all provided in the book, go check it out, but I will lay a very basic case.

Before we start lets recognize the parallels that are with Rev 20:1-6 and Rev 12:9-11; 2Thess 2:1-12.

What the text says

People will find you crazy if you say that Satan is bound now, because they assume that it means the cessation of all evil. They are wrong. There is nothing in Revelation 20 which suggests that sin will stop, or most people will convert, indeed there is a great rebellion at the end of the Millennium, you wonder from whence did they come if most people in the Millennium were Christians.

The text specifically tells us in what aspect Satan is bound, lets no go beyond what the text says:

Rev 20:3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, **so that he might not deceive the nations any longer,** until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

The text says that he will not deceive the nations, not individual people, but the nations of the wicked world as a whole. It does not say that lawlessness will go away, it does not say the majority of people will repent, it does not say anything whatsoever about a restored kingdom to Israel. Satan is bound in one aspect specifically. I think it is best seen in what aspect he is bound when we see what happens after he is loosed.

Rev 20:7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison Rev 20:8 and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea.

When Satan is released, he will gather all nations against the people of God, the Church. This is what Satan now cannot do. He certainly is allowed by the sovereign hand of God to afflict the saints, but He is not allowed to gather the whole world against them and try to destroy them.

The coming of Christ did indeed bound Satan:

Matt 12:28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Matt 12:29 Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.

The fact that souls were being saved and the sick were being healed was a demonstration of the Lord Jesus binding Satan (strong man) and plundering his house (2Cor 4:4).

The binding of Satan is also seen in the fact that the New Covenant people of God are not only believing Jews, but also believing Gentiles. Israel in Old Testament times was the only nation which had the light of God. The other nations were

indeed deceived and blinded by Satan to worship idols, which are demons. But now, while Satan is being bound the nations are for us to conquer for Christ. It does not mean that all will receive the Gospel, but it does mean that God has His elect in every corner of the world (Rev 5:9).

The fact of the Gentiles coming to Christ (Jn 12:20-21) and the binding of Satan is seen from John 12.

> John 12:31 Now is the **judgment of this world**; now will **the ruler of this world be cast out.** John 12:32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

There is a direct parallel between John 12:31 and Rev 20:3 (also Rev 12:9) where Satan is being cast out.

Notice also the fact that because Satan is now bound, Christ will call all His people to Himself.

Therefore, it is a misreading of the text to assume the binding of Satan means rendering Satan incapable of doing anything.

The 1000 years

The next question is well, what about the 1000 years?

As all numbers in Revelation, they are to be interpreted symbolically.

10 is the number of completion, multiplied 3 times (the number of the Trinity, perfection). It is; the time where the Triune God works in Salvation History for His glory.

The 1000 years are a symbolic number of a very long time, from the Cross to the Parousia. The 1000 years is being looked on from the angle of Gospel proclamation and success, because Satan is bound we can go for the nations.

Other times we read in Revelation about 3,5 years, these are the time of persecution and they also represent the entire Era of Proclamation. Now you may, say come on. How can this be? Well, it depends from which angle we look at it. The 1000 years is great and huge number in the context of the binding of Satan and thus going for the nations. Gospel success.

But the 3,5 years are the time of persecution. 3,5 is a broken seven. 7 is the number of completeness and perfection. 3,5 is imperfect time of the persecution from the world. 3,5 years is also how long the Woman is to be nourished, time reminds us of Elisha when he in the wilderness in utter dependence on God (James 5:17; 1Kings 18). It also reminds us of the Jewish persecution in the time of the Maccabees and Antiochus Epiphanes IV.

Both 3,5 and 1000 years represent the Church Era, but it depends from which angle we look at it. If we look at it from the angle of persecution, it seems of imperfect and incomplete. But if we look at the 1000 years in the context of Satan's binding it seems so huge and assures us of Gospel success. Let us not forget that many, if not all the disciples expected our Lord to return soon. 1000 is a huge number.

The First Resurrection

There are two possible explanations for this. It is either regeneration or the entrance of the saints to heaven (Dean's view). I favor the regeneration view because it has direct statements from Scripture and especially from John to confirm this, but I still have some questions which the "entrance to heaven" view answers. I'm challenged by Dean's view, it seems indeed to fit. [Edit: as of 25-04-2015 I have changed my view of the first resurrection to Dean's. I believe the first resurrection refers to the believers' entrance into the Intermediate State.]

Dean's view say that the first resurrection is not a physical resurrection, indeed the consistent teaching of the NT is that of one general resurrection at the Parousia. The first resurrection refers to the believers' entrance to heaven and reigning there with Christ.

There are two groups who are reigning with Christ:

1. The martyrs
    a. the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God
2. Born again believers
    a. those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands

The regeneration view sees support in John 5.

> John 5:25 “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

Here regeneration is seen as a resurrection from the dead. Resurrection from deadness in sin.

This is further confirmed in the many ways that Paul refers to our old self and regeneration:

> Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, Eph 2:5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by grace you have been saved— Eph 2:6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph 2:7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Here is it of special importance because in a certain and real (because the Bible affirms it) sense we are already seated in heaven (on thrones?) and are reining. In what way? Reining in life (Rom 5:17) and against sin.

The new life is connected with resurrection in Ephesians 5 also:

> Eph 5:13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, Eph 5:14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

I think both views have good support and there remains questions to be asked about each (and more research and re-checking for me).

This is indeed not meant to be an exhaustive exposition of Revelation 20 and answering objection, but that’s exactly the reason why you should get the book and study it for yourself. [In re-reading on the subject of the First Resurrection from Sam Storms[3], Anthony Hoekema[4], Meredith G. Kline, I now believe that it refers to the entrance of believers into Intermediate State rather than regeneration.)

The Consummation

As seen in the chart above the Amillennial view of the End is pretty simple:

1. One visible and glorious coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. One general resurrection of all humanity.
3. One final judgment and reward of the righteous and the wicked.

Or, better said by Dean Davis. We expect:

1. The Last Battle
    - The final clash between God and Satan, Christ and the Antichrist, the Church and the World
2. The Parousia
    - The visible and glorious coming of the King of kings and the Lord of lords
3. The Resurrection
    - This is the one and final general resurrection of all men from Adam onward. Both just and unjust, righteous and wicked, elect and reprobate.
4. The Last Judgment
    - Here is the general judgment of all men and angels. Those who are in Christ will receive their reward and be welcomed into the Kingdom of their Father. Those of the wicked both men and angels will be thrown into the lake of fire and will receive proper retribution.
5. The Restoration of all Things or the Regeneration

    - This is the restoration, renewal, recreation, transformation, glorification of the present cosmos into the New Heavens and the New Earth (Acts 3:21; Mt 19:28)
6. The Delivering Up of the Kingdom
    - This will be done after the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God will create the New Heavens and the New Earth and deliver them to His Father.

Of special importance was this for me, although it was established through the whole book that we should expect one resurrection, judgment and Parousia, but now Dean goes more deeply and deals with related texts and shows that they indeed support basic Amillennial eschatology.

The One Second Coming

There is one and only one glorious and visible coming of our blessed Lord Jesus.

There are three words used in the NT when speaking of the Second Coming that are describing different aspects of the Second Coming.

1. παρουσία (Parousia)[5]
    1. presence
    2. the coming, arrival, advent
        1. the future visible return from heaven of Jesus, to raise the dead, hold the last judgment, and set up formally and gloriously the kingdom of God
1. ἀποκάλυψις (Apokalupsis)[6]
    1. laying bear, making naked
    2. a disclosure of truth, instruction
        1. concerning things before unknown
        2. used of events by which things or states or persons hitherto withdrawn from view are made visible to all
    3. manifestation, appearance
1. ἐπιφάνεια (Epiphaneia)[7]
    1. an appearing, appearance

It is of importance to notice the way that the Bible many times speaks of **THE** coming of our Lord.

- "**The coming** of the Son of Man" (Mt. 24:27, 37, 39)
- "…establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at **the coming** of our Lord Jesus with all his saints." (1Thess 3:13)
- "…we who are alive, who are left until **the coming** of the Lord…" (1Thess 4:15)
- "…may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at **the coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1Thess 5:23)
- "Now concerning **the coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him…" (2Thess 2:1)
- "Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord… for the coming of the Lord is at hand." (Jas 5:7-8)
- "… as you wait for **the revealing** of our Lord Jesus Christ," (1Cor 1:7)
- "… tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at **the revelation** of Jesus Christ." (1Pet 1:7)
- "… set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at **the revelation** of Jesus Christ." (1Pet 1:13)
- "…bring to nothing by **the appearance** of his coming (τῇ ἐπιφανείᾳ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ)." (2Thess 2:8)
- "to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until **the appearing** of our Lord Jesus Christ," (1Tim 6:14)
- "waiting for our blessed hope, **the appearing** of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus

Christ," (Titus 2:13)

This, aside from the simple NT teaching of the singular coming of Christ points strongly to a singular and final coming of Christ (duh!). Though Premillennarians have more than one coming, both historic and Dispensational, and that's one of the reasons Amillennarians find their system to be flawed.

The One Resurrection

Here we run again against Premillennialism which posits more than one resurrection. Amillennialism teaches one general resurrection at the consummation of (salvation) history.

This is seen from clear, literal and straightforward teaching. We don't go to Revelation 20 and speculate what might the first resurrection mean, no, we first form our doctrine from the clear passages then go and examine the hard ones in light of the easy ones (Analogy of Faith).

In John 5:28-29 we have a clear affirmation of the general resurrection at the same time. A resurrection to condemnation and a resurrection to life.

> John 5:28 Do not marvel at this, for **an hour** is coming when **all who are in the tombs** will hear his voice John 5:29 and come out, those who have done good to the **resurrection of life**, and those who have done evil to the **resurrection of judgment**.

This will happen in an hour and it will happen to all who are in the tombs. The passage is straightforward.

Paul was in trial for his belief in a single resurrection of the just and the wicked.

> Acts 24:15 having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be **a resurrection** of both the **just** and the **unjust**.

Not multiple resurrections, not one before the Millennium and one after (Premillennarians are not agreed upon what happens to the Millennium saints after they die, whether they are resurrected immediately or wait for the general resurrection).

Sometimes we are told of the resurrection of the just (Lk 14:14), but this does not mean that it will be separate from the general resurrection of the dead (Mt 22:31; Acts 24:21), rather the text is focusing on one aspect of the general resurrection.

The resurrection of both the just and unjust is united, let's not separate it!

Let's also in passing note that what is usually called the Rapture which is supposed to snatch the Church from out of the world before the Great Tribulation for Amillennarians happens at the Parousia of our Lord just like Paul said.

The Thessalonian church was concerned about the condition of beloved ones who have died before the coming of the Lord. Paul comforts them that they will meet them at the time of the coming of the Lord.

> 1Thess 4:14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 1Thess 4:15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 1Thess 4:16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 1Thess 4:17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 1Thess 4:18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

According to this verse the scenario will be like this:

1. The Lord Comes from heaven – finally, visibly, gloriously
2. Dead believers will rise in glorified bodies
3. Alive believers at the Parousia will be transformed and caught up to the Lord

I have tried to show the singular coming of our Lord, it will not be divided into stages or what not. There will not be a coming

with and a coming for His saints. These are one.

There are no passages supporting this supposed pre-tribulational rapture, they're not there. Only if you presuppose them, you will find out of context references that you will read the pretrib rapture into.

The context is the Second Coming of our King. This is further proven by what Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10. Remember, chapter and verse divisions are not inspired, people would have read the whole letter as one unit and "chapter." The subject is the Second Coming of our Lord.

This teaching is further confirmed in 1 Corinthians 15:23-24, 50-58. The "Rapture" is the transformation and the meeting of the Bride with her Husband which happens at the Parousia. It is not a separate event.

The One Judgment

John 5:28-29 was cited above for the general resurrection, but it is also applicable of the final and general judgment of all saints and sinners, men and angels.

Paul says that all of us will appear before God (Rom 14:10; 2Cor 5:10), the wicked to be condemned and those made righteous by the blood of the Lamb to hear: Well done, good and faithful slave.

It is also of importance to note the way the Bible speaks of a singular judgment. We look in vain and distort the clear teaching of the Bible if we teach multiple judgments for the righteous and the wicked.

- **The judgment** (Mt 12:41-42; Lk 10:14; Rom 2:2-3; 2Pet 2:4)
- **The day of judgment** (Mt 12:36-37; 2Pet 2:9; 3:7; 1Jn 4:17)
- **A Day** (Acts 17:31)
- **That day** (Rom 2:16; 1Thess 5:1-10)
- **The judgment of the great day** (Jude 1:6)
- **the great day of God the Almighty** (Rev 16:14)

Matthew 25 is an important text on the singular judgment of both the righteous and the wicked.

The Day of the LORD

The Day of the Lord includes both the Parousia, Resurrection and Judgment this is seen from this table that I made from Dean Davis' Appendix 8: New Testament Texts Touching on the Parousia/Consummation.

Verse	Scripture
Judgment of the wicked	
Mt 7:22-23	On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord…I never knew you; depart from me…
Jn 12:48	…the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.
2Pet 3:10	heavens will pass away…and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.
Mk 8:38	…ashamed of me…the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes…
General Judgment and Reward	
Rom 2:5-6, 16	…day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed…He will render to each one according to his works:…on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.
1Cor 3:13	each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.
Mt 13:30	Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"
Mt 13:49	…at the end of the age…separate the evil from the righteous
Mt 25:32, 46	Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another…And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
Mt 13:47-50	…sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad. So it will be at the end of the age… angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous…
2Cor 5:10	For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

1Cor 4:5	…do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.
Rapture, Resurrection, Judgment, Restoration	
1Cor 15:23-28	…at his coming those who belong to Christ…Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power…death…
1Cor 15:50-58	…flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God…a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet…dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed…this mortal body must put on immortality…"Death is swallowed up in victory."…
Mt 13:37-43	…The harvest is the end of the age…weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age…Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father…
General Resurrection	
Jn 5:28-29	…an hour is coming…resurrection of life…resurrection of judgment.
Acts 24:15	…there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.
Dan 12:2	….sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
Jn 11:24	…"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."
Day of Salvation for the Elect	
Jn 6:39	…raise it up on the last day. (vv 40, 44, 54)
1Cor 1:8	who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
1Cor 5:5	you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.
2Tim 4:8	…crown of righteousness…will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

The One Cosmic Regeneration

This is the restoration, renewal and re-creation. We are not going back to Eden, but we're going to a much better place than Eden, we will not be able to sin anymore!

Important texts about this are: Acsts 3:21; Rom 8:18-25; 2Pet 3; Heb 12:25-29.

Disagreements

My biggest disagreement with the excellent work of Dean Davis is especially his interpretation of Daniel 7, 9 and the Olivet Discourse. But the most with Daniel. There was no discussion of Antiochus Epiphanes IV, as if he had nothing to do with Daniel. He takes a futuristic approach and departs from the traditional First Advent Interpretation of Daniel 9:24-27 to a radical interpretation.

He takes a blended prophecy approach to the Olivet Discourse. Believers that most of the signs did indeed occur in the first century, but lays very little stress on those. Insists that Matthew 24:29-31 is referring to the visible Parousia of our Lord, but I believe that Sam Storms made a very compelling case (at least for me) for the partial-preterist interpretation of Matt 24:1-35.

Fun and eschatologically irrelevant disagreement is his Westminster Federalism on the covenants, haha.

Conclusion

This is a great work, definitely a comprehensive book on eschatology going head to head with the difficult passages used to argue for premillennialism and offering an amillennial interpretation which Christ and Church centered and within the two-staged Kingdom model.

I have learned many things and I will no doubt be going back to the book and re-reading and re-checking some portions.

Go get it for yourself, I believe you will be challenged in your views.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Soli Deo Gloria

Footnotes

1. ^ *Visit his blog where he has a lot of good stuff, audio teachings, charts, diagrams on Amillennialism at https://amillennialism.wordpress.com*
2. ^ *See my commentary on chapter 1 of the Second London Baptist Confession of 1689. https://www.thecalvinist.net/post/1689-Baptist-Confession-Chapter-1:-Of-The-Holy-Scriptures/1020*
3. ^ *Kingdom Come: The Amillennial Alternative, pages 451-465.*
4. ^ *The Bible and the Future, pages 229-238*
5. ^ *Joseph Henry Thayer's Greek Definitions, G3952*
6. ^ *Joseph Henry Thayer's Greek Definitions, G602*
7. ^ *Joseph Henry Thayer's Greek Definitions, G2015*