

Session 4

March 6, 2011

Augustine: Father of Amillennialism

- 354 - Born in North Africa, Christian Mother, pagan father
- 371 – Studied in Carthage, became involved in immoral living..
- 373 – 383 Taught in Carthage
- 383 – Moved to Rome
- 384 – Taught rhetoric in Milan
- 386 – Converted to Christianity



It may shock some to realize that Augustine was not only premillennial in his early eschatology, but he was also dispensational.

Augustine's Dispensations

1. Adam
2. Noah
3. Abraham
4. David
5. Exile
6. Church
7. Millennial Kingdom

Allegorical Interpretation

Augustine took the view that the Biblical text should not be interpreted as properly literal, but rather as metaphorical, if it contradicts what we know from science and our God-given reason.

The mediaeval Catholic church built its system of eschatology on Augustinian amillennialism, where the Christ rules the earth spiritually through his triumphant church

(wikipedia. Augustine; 10/7/2010).

- Book XX:7 outlines Augustine's interpretation of Revelation 20:1-6, which speaks of the binding of Satan, the resurrection of the dead and the Millennium. Augustine's interpretation of the Millennium is most astounding and pleasing! He considered that, with Christ's first coming, the biblical Millennium, where the Church "will reign with [Christ] for the thousand years", was, in fact, *now*.
- *"After this present age God will rest, as it were, on the seventh day; and he will cause us, who are the seventh day, to find our rest in him."*¹² (*City of God; 22.0.5*)

Reasons for Augustine's Allegorical Views

- Behavior of Donatists
- Millennial Hysteria Approaching the year 500AD
- The influence of Tychonius – he adopted 7 rules of allegorical interpretation.

Replacement Theology

- **Supersessionism** and **replacement theology** or **fulfillment theology** are Christian interpretations of New Testament claims, viewing God's relationship with Christians as being either the "replacement" or "fulfillment" or "completion" of the promise made to the Jews (or Israelites) and Jewish Proselytes.

Anti-Semitism



Early Christians also found in the Old Testament prophecies which seemed to indicate that God's original covenant with the Jews would be expanded to include also the Gentiles. Thus the Church Fathers tend to emphasize that the Church is the new "spiritual" Israel, completing or replacing the earthly Israel which was but its prototype. In modern times, this view would come to be called "Supersessionism".

For you, brothers, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, ¹⁵**who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out.** They displease God and are hostile to all men ¹⁶in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last.

(1 Thessalonians 2:14-16)