

## The Millennium

The subject of the millennium is not something new or recent. Many of the early church historical writers, such as Edward Gibbon, J.C.I. Gieseler, Henry C. Sheldon, Philip Schaff and Adolph Harnack, declared that premillennialism (initially called chilliasm) was the first major millennial view of the church and that it was the predominant view of orthodox believers from the first to the third centuries.

### Basis For The Belief

When the angel appeared to Mary and explained to her, she was going to have a baby, conceived of the Holy Spirit, Mary was told what his name would be. Then the angel stated, *“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him **the throne** of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”* Luke 1:32-33

Before Christ was born, it was proclaimed that he would have a literal kingdom, which, until now, has not occurred. David’s throne was here on earth, at Jerusalem, which will be the place where Christ will reign.

Jesus alluded to such, when He said, *“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”* Rev. 3:21.

At the present time, the Father, is allowing the Son to share in his throne, reigning with the Father. But as the scriptures will further reveal, Christ will have a literal throne of his own, in the future. *“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a **rod of iron**:... Rev. 19:15*

At the present time neither Christ nor the Father is ruling with a rod of iron; that is, with firmness and strictness. *“And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he (the overcomer) shall rule them with a **rod of iron**:...”* Rev. 2:26-27 *“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a **thousand years**.”* Rev. 20:4

Just as the Father is allowing Christ to share his throne, Christ will allow the faithful to share his throne. Apparently we will carry out the desire (and orders, as it were) of Christ to the people. This reference also gives us the length or duration of that reign. The word “*millennium*” means a thousand years.

### Time And Location Of Kingdom

It is important to understand when this kingdom begins and where it will be established. *“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, **then** shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.”* Matt. 25:31. *“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;”* 2 Tim. 4:1

It is quite evident, from the information these two scriptures give us, Christ is coming and that his physical kingdom begins when he comes to judge the quick (living) and the dead. A kingdom that will exist here on earth.

### **The Purpose Of Christ Kingdom**

It is easy from a causal reading of scripture, to get the impression, when Jesus comes, that is the end and the eternal kingdom begins at that time. But reading carefully, we are able to determine Jesus coming ushers in another age and everything is not complete yet. God has other plans. Let us search further.

*“And hast made us unto our God **kings and priests**: and we shall **reign on the earth**”* Rev. 5:10. A king is a ruler. A priest is a teacher. So there must be a purpose for rulers and teachers during this period of time. “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you that ye which have followed me, **in the regeneration** when the Son of man shall **sit in the throne of his glory**, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, **judging the twelve tribes of Israel**. Matt. 19:28. Now an immortal person has already been judged. This is telling us there will be mortal people here during this time and they will need to be dealt with. Notice it says, “during the time He is sitting on His throne, not at the time of His coming.” *“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days **Juda shall be saved**, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHT-EOUSNESS.”* Jer. 23-5-6. Apparently God is not finished with Israel yet. It seems he has a work that will be performed upon them during this time period. Are we left to wonder? In Romans the eleventh chapter, Paul shows a great concern for Israel. He says, God has not cast away his people (verses 1-2). Then in verse 7, Paul explains, *“What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the **rest were blinded.**”*

Then Paul goes on and explains how those who rejected Christ were broken off from the olive tree and the Gentile was grafted in. The Gentile took the place of Israel, in being the messengers of God to the world. But Paul reminds the Gentile (verses 20-22) not to be high minded but fear. For in verse 23, he again tells the Gentile, *“For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be **grafted into their own olive tree?**”*

Paul is explaining verses 1 and 2, that God had not forsaken or cast away his people. Let us read on. *“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, let ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, **until** the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.”* Paul is still explaining what is going to happen in the future. This blindness (to Israel) was not to be forever, but for a time and that time was to last only through the time allowed to the Gentiles. Notice further... *“And so **all Israel** shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion **the deliverer**, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”* Paul here is talking about a future time (*there shall*), not about the past. It says “all Israel shall be saved.”

Does this mean all Israel will receive immortality when Jesus comes? No. It means they will accept him as the Messiah. Remember the words of Jesus to Peter in Matthew 19:28, the twelve apostles *“...would sit on twelve thrones, **in the regeneration** judging the twelve*

tribes of Israel.” Yes, God will remove the blindness from their eyes, they will recognize him as the Messiah they rejected, but they will have to prove themselves worthy by the life they live. Just as today, one accepts the Lord, and is saved, we have to prove ourselves by our daily life. Notice verse 27 of Romans 11, “*For this is **my covenant** (my agreement) unto them, when I shall **take away their sins**.* It cannot be denied, but Paul is talking about the future.

Where did Paul get this insight? Was it just a sudden revelation? Paul was well acquainted with the **covenant** that God made with Israel. Turn to Jeremiah 31:31-34. “*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a **new covenant** with the of Israel, and with the house of Judah:...But this shall be the covenant I will make with the house of Israel; **After those days**, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: **for they shall all know me**, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

There are two special things these verses tell us. First, the time period: Paul does not say, “**after these days**, (Leitical period)” but **after those days**. After the Gentile period that Paul spoke about in Romans 11:25. Also, Jeremiah said, “all Israel would know him”. When Jesus was here, did all Israel accept him? Barely a handful acknowledged him as the Messiah. But they will when he comes the second time and they will be one of the main natural people here during the millennial period. Paul also acknowledges Jeremiah prophecy of God’s covenant to Israel in Hebrews 8:8-10. Again, he acknowledges the time period as “after those days,” and Paul is referring to a future time, not something that had happened.

The prophet Zechariah supports both Jeremiah and Paul’s thoughts, for when one reads, Zechariah 12:9-11, he supports the same thought concerning Israel. “*And it shall come to pass in the day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the **spirit of grace** and of supplications: and they shall look **upon me** whom they have pierced, and they shall **mourn for him**, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. **In that day** shall there be a great mourning (conversion) **in Jerusalem...**”*

What about the Gentile? Will there be any Gentiles (as natural people) here during the millennial reign? There is only one reference that gives any indication of Gentiles being a part of this period. This is found in Isaiah 66:15, 19. “*For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, ...And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations,... to the isles afar off, that have **not heard my fame**, neither have **seen my glory**: and they shall declare my glory **among the Gentiles**.* These Gentiles do not know there is a God. They are not individuals that know there is a God and do nothing about it. Also, they are people who are living when Jesus comes. There is no scripture, that indicates anyone, whether Jew or Gentile, is resurrected and taught about the ways of God. It is only those living at the time of the Lords return.

Further evidence there will be natural people here during the millennial reign, is found in Isaiah 65:17, 20. “*For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind... There shall be no more thence an **infant** of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall **die** and hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.*

This explains there will be births and deaths, during the millennial period. It is only

natural people who give birth and die. The rest of the chapter explains the peace that will exist in the land, even among the animals. Even the animals will no longer eat one another.

The prophet Isaiah gives more information in chapter 2:2-4, "*And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain (government) of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth **the law**, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And **he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.***"

Now there are at least three things in these verses that show there will be natural people here during the millennial reign. First there is a need for "law". Law is not needed for the immortal beings, but the sinners (1 Tim. 1:9). Secondly, the Lord will "judge among the nations." Then thirdly, he will rebuke many people." All three things stated here reveal it not yet time for the eternal kingdom, wherein only dwells holiness.

### **END OF MILLENNIUM**

Revelation 20:1-6, explains to us what happens at the beginning of the Millennial reign. How that Satan is bound, how the faithful will reign with Christ, and explains this is the "first resurrection," that the "wicked remain in the graves" until everything is complete.

Then beginning with verse 7, Satan is loosed to go about his deceptive work again. He goes out to "*deceive the nations **which are** in the four quarters of the earth...*" Notice it says "the nations which are". These people are not resurrected people. They are people that exist, alive, when Satan is turned loose. The second resurrection has not taken place yet. Then the later part of the verse it speaks of "Gog and Magog." This is not the same "Gog and Magog" we find mentioned in Ezekiel. In the old scripture the names refer to a "northern kingdom."

The words being used here simply refer to the "unchristian, the unfaithful." And evidently, during the millennial reign, even with Satan bound, the carnal nature of man, the rebellious nature, comes to the surface and refuses to obey the Lord. Verse 9 says, Satan rounds them up, brings them against the holy city. That is when "fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them." Satan and the wicked are burnt up in the lake of fire.

Then in verse 12, it says, "*And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the **books were open**: and another **book was open**, which is the **book of life**: and the dead were judged out of those things which were **written in the books**, according to their works.*"

We need to look at this verse very carefully. We need to divide the books and book. According to John 12:48, "*the word*" will judge us in the last day. So the "books" mentioned here could be none other than the books of the bible or God's Word. The "book of Life" list the names of the faithful. The book of life is mentioned from the time of Moses.

The book of life also indicates there will be natural people during the millennial reign. When Jesus comes he judges "*...the quick (living) and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom* (1 Tim. 4:1)." To do that, he has to open the "book of life" at that time in order to give the faithful immortality. So at the end of the millennial reign, there is a need for it to be opened again, for during the reign, the names of the faithful are written in it.

Then in verse 13, at the conclusion, there is a general resurrection, the faithful (during

the reign) to the resurrection of life, the wicked, from the beginning of time, to the resurrection of damnation. Verse 14, supports this, also, this will be the second resurrection. Verse 15, is the conclusion, and what happens then?

Paul in 1 Cor. 15:24-26, sums it up for us. *“Then cometh **the end**, when he (Christ) shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even **the Father**; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he **must reign**, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death... And when all things shall be subdued unto him, **then shall the son also himself be subject unto him** that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”*

Christ work is complete. His work being completed, he then turns the kingdom over to his Father and becomes subject to him, as well as the rest of us. Then the eternal kingdom begins. What we will be doing during that time, we are not told.

Yes, Christ will have a throne, will reign for one thousand years. May we remain faithful, so we can have the privilege of helping him during that time.