

Valley Bible Church – Adult Class

Living in Light of His Return: The Millennial Kingdom, Parts I & II

Adult SS ~ August 2 & 9, 2015

Introduction:

What do you think is the main theme of all Scripture?

Consider “the Kingdom of God.” All of redemptive history channels its way through time and creation, coursing between heaven and earth in order to bring about the glorious, eternal Kingdom of God. If you said, “The glory of God,” I would not disagree (who would want to do that!?), but I would expand it, “The glory of God *in the coming of His kingdom.*”

Other evangelical writers and theologians have echoed each other in saying the same thing:

John Bright says, “The Bible is *one* book. Had we to give that book a title, we might with justice call it ‘The Book of the Coming Kingdom of God.’” – *The Kingdom of God*

Walter C. Kaiser Jr. affirms, “Indeed, the Gospel of Mark began the narrative of Jesus’ ministry with Jesus saying, ‘The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!’ (Mark 1:14–15). We may fairly conclude, then, that the burden of Jesus’ teaching was to announce the kingdom of God.” – *Continuity and Discontinuity*

Alva McClain says in *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, “The Kingdom of God is, in a certain and important sense, the grand central theme of all Holy Scripture.”

George Peters in *The Theocratic Kingdom* says, “The kingdom deserves the first place in Biblical and the first rank in Systematic theology...In view of its extent, the doctrine exceeds all others in magnitude, enfolding in itself nearly all doctrine.”

Robert Saucy in *The Case For Progressive Dispensationalism* says, “The concept of the kingdom looms large on the pages of Scripture. Its features are the dominant content of the Old Testament prophecy. It is the theme of the proclamation of Jesus according to the Gospels. While mentioned far less often in the epistles, the ‘kingdom of God’ still qualifies as the summary of the apostolic teaching (e.g. Acts 19:8; 28:23, 31). Finally, in the book of Revelation it reaches its climax and is again mentioned predominantly (e.g. 1:9; 5:10; 11:15; 12:10; 20:4). All this leads to the conclusion that the kingdom of God is one of the grand themes, if not *the* theme, of Scripture.”

I too could not be more convinced that the kingdom of God is the central theme of the pages of Scripture. Not only does it put all the other themes of Scripture into perspective, but also it recognizes God in His highest place and fixes man in his proper place as humble servant and grateful kingdom heir (by God’s grace!).

Objective:

This morning we will be looking at **5 biblical components of the Millennial Kingdom**, the next part to our 13-week study on Eschatology. We will give two weeks to examine the period of time right after the Second Coming of Christ in **Revelation 19:11ff** and right

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before the New Heavens and the New Earth in **Revelation 21:1ff**, called “the Millennial Kingdom.”

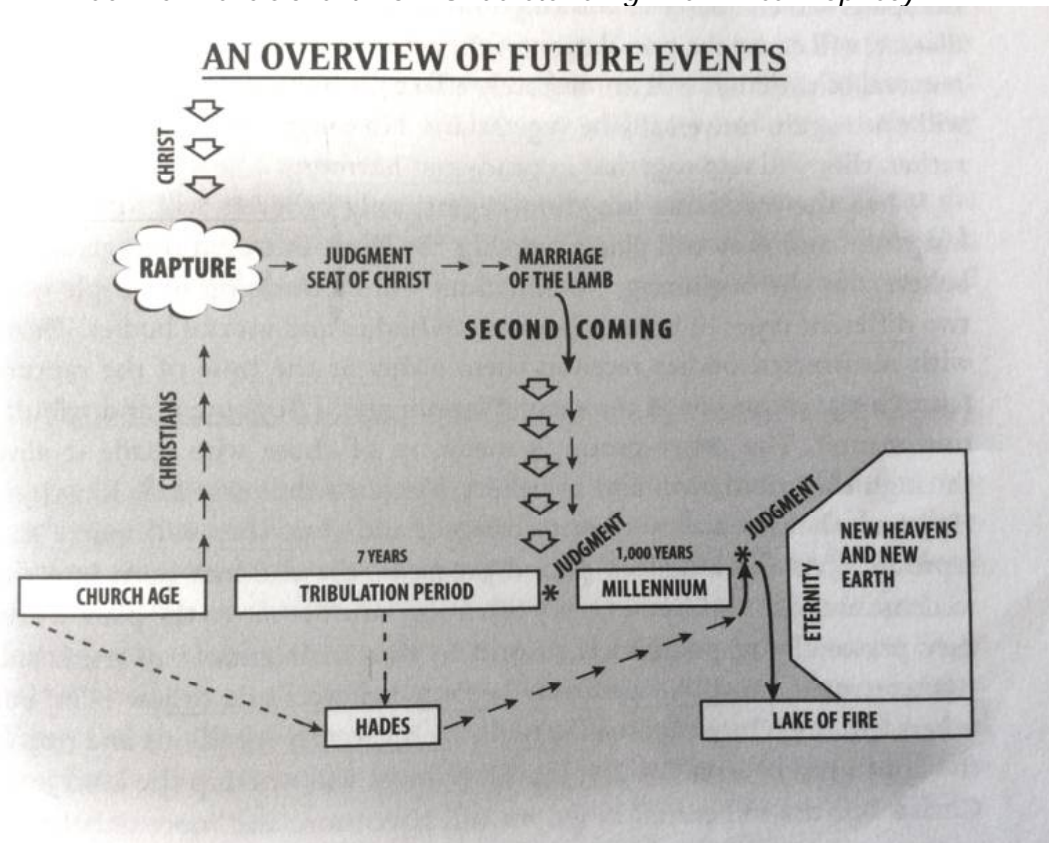
Prayer:

My prayer is how the Lord Jesus taught us to pray: “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (**Matt 6:10**). May our time together give us an accurate, biblical view of the earthly reign of Christ so that we will walk with God by faith now that we might walk by sight when we are with Him in His kingdom. May His will be done in and through us here on earth as it is in heaven now.

Let’s read **Revelation 20**. Comment briefly.

Review:

Paul Benware’s chart from *Understanding End Times Prophecy*



The 5 biblical components of the Millennial Kingdom we will study are:

1. The *Duration* of the Millennial Kingdom
2. The *Purpose* of the Millennial Kingdom
3. The *Characteristics* of the Millennial Kingdom
4. The *Subjects* of the Millennial Kingdom
5. The *Worship* of the Millennial Kingdom

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Outline:

A. The Duration of the Millennial Kingdom

In short, the duration of the Millennial Kingdom is 1,000 years, as the term “millennial” implies (from the two Latin terms *mille*, ‘thousand’ and *annum*, ‘year’). At the Second Coming of Christ (**Rev 19:11ff**), He will come to establish His kingdom on this present, restored earth and reign as King over all nations until the thousand years are up. At that point, following the chronology of **Revelation 19–22**, there will be a “new heavens and a new earth” (**Rev 21**).

Having said that, I would like to take a step back and look at the Kingdom of God in a more comprehensive sense, and see how the millennial reign of Christ relates to and fits into the broader topic of the Kingdom of God.

Daniel says of the future Kingdom of God:

Daniel 2:44 says, “And in the days of those kings the God of heaven *will set up a kingdom* that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and *it shall stand forever.*”

Daniel 4:3 says, “How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is *an everlasting kingdom*, and his dominion *endures from generation to generation.*” (Also see **4:34**).

Daniel continues, “And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is *an everlasting dominion*, which *shall not pass away*, and his kingdom one that *shall not be destroyed*” (**7:14**).

And again in **Daniel 7:27**, “And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom shall be *an everlasting kingdom*, and all dominions shall serve and obey them.”

This “everlasting kingdom” is seen in many other key passages of Scripture (**2 Sam 7; Ps 145; Lk 1:33; Heb 1:8; Rev 11:15**). According to the Scriptures, this forever kingdom (in its future sense) is segmented into two *phases* or *aspects* that blend with incredible continuity. They contain several similarities yet maintain certain distinctions between them both for God’s redemptive purposes.

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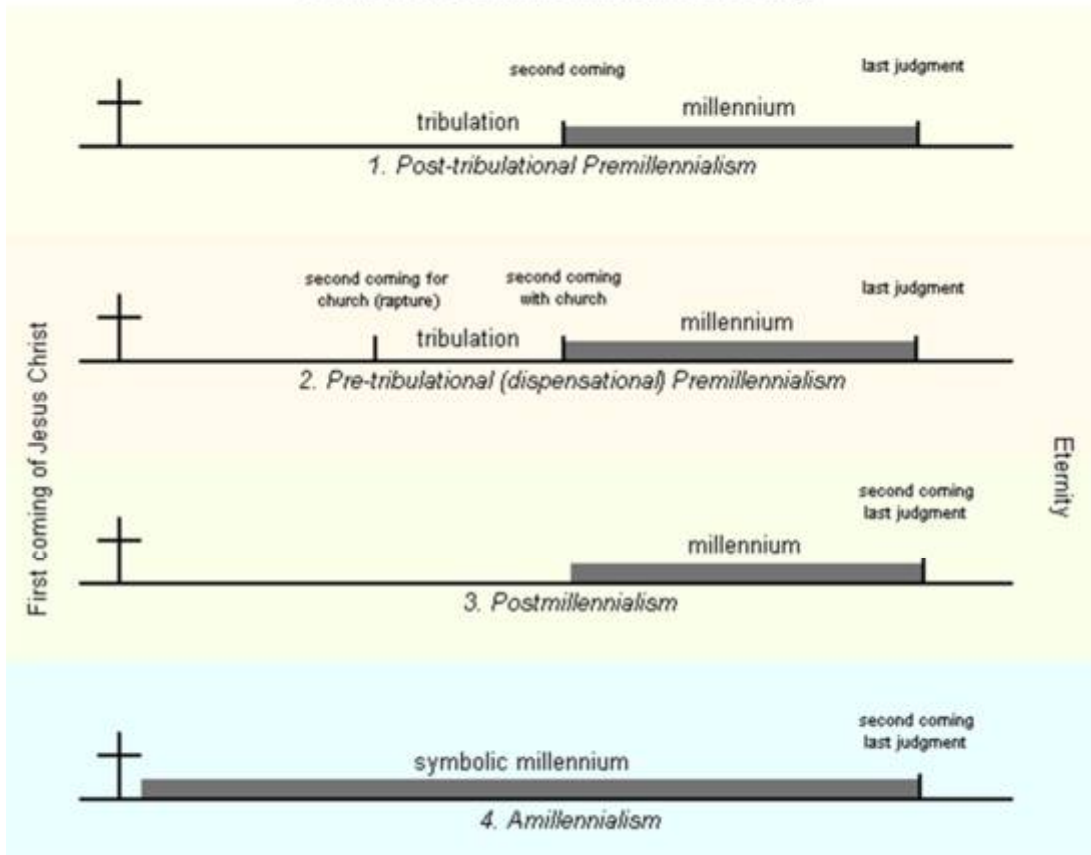


a. **Phase 1 of “the Kingdom of God”: The Millennial Kingdom**

Revelation 20:1–7 clearly establishes the duration of this earthly kingdom as “a thousand years.” This is the key text that reveals the duration of the first phase of this kingdom of God. While there are scores of Old and New Testament texts that describe or speak of the earthly, eternal reign of Christ, it is not until **Revelation 20** that we know it is a 1,000-year reign.

A Comparison of Different Millennial Views¹

Comparison of Christian millennial teachings



¹ http://www.preteristarchive.com/ARTchive/Charts/Tables/millennial_views.gif (Note: I am not endorsing this website for their content or views, merely giving them credit for the helpful graphic)

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Although many other believers take this figure of 1,000 years to be symbolic (Amillennialists and Postmillennialists), there are solid reasons for taking it literally as a 1,000-year reign of Christ (drawn from Matt Waymeyer in *Revelation 20 and the Millennial Debate*):

- i. The figure (1,000 years) is used 6 times in **Revelation 20** (vv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). It would be unusual to symbolically refer to a very large number with the same specific figure several times one after the other.
- ii. Where do you as the interpreter of Scripture draw the line when you take some figures and phrases and biblical concepts literal and others symbolically? The literal sense of the passage must be upheld unless there is clear indication that the author is speaking with a figure of speech or clearly speaking symbolically. Walter Kaiser addresses this dilemma:

“Who or what will arbitrate among the various [non-literal] meanings suggested and decide which are to be accepted as authoritative and which are spurious? Short of saying that every person’s fancy is his or her own rule, there does not appear to be any final court of appeal... There simply are no justifiable criteria for setting boundaries once the interpreter departs from the normal usage of language.” –*Back Toward the Future*
- iii. The early church fathers, for the first 300 years after Christ’s ascension, all held to a literal hermeneutic of Scripture interpretation. It wasn’t until Origin and Augustine (especially!) and others that an allegorical method of interpretation was introduced. The key problem with taking this figure symbolically is that the reader of Scripture becomes the one who possesses power over what the Scriptures ultimately say rather than taking what God has communicated literally, unless indicated to do so otherwise. Where do Amills and Postmills draw the line with what is literal and what is symbolic in Scripture? The literal, contextual, grammatical, historical hermeneutic is the only consistent approach to handling the Scriptures.
- iv. “The symbolic nature of the book of Revelation is overly simplistic,” says Matthew Waymeyer (*Revelation 20 and the Millennial Debate*). The interpreter must provide compelling evidence to prove that the figure should be taken symbolically. The burden of proof falls on the interpreter who symbolizes every prophecy of John in Revelation.

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- v. John *specifically* identifies the duration of Satan's binding for "a thousand years" (verse 2) while in verse 3 he *generally* identifies the length of Satan's release at the end of the thousand years. He was careful to do so.
- vi. Symbolic language in Scripture must fit one of two characteristics: 1) some degree of *absurdity* when taken literally and 2) some degree of *clarity* when taken symbolically. But in this context, there is nothing to suggest that it fits either of these two characteristics of symbolic language. One thousand years makes sense.

So phase 1 of the Kingdom of God endures for a literal 1,000 years while Christ reigns on the earth *after* His Second Coming and *before* the New Heavens and the New Earth.

b. **Phase 2 of "the Kingdom of God": The Eternal State**

In another sense, the great topic of "the Kingdom of God" in Scripture refers to the eternal kingdom beyond the millennium. Christ's kingdom will not be limited, or come to an end, or cease in its strength, but will last for all eternity.

Leon Wood says, "At the conclusion of the thousand years, there will be a merging of the earthly form of the kingdom into God's eternal rule. At that time, Christ will deliver up 'the Kingdom to God, even the Father,' and there will be an adjustment of its character and dimensions to eternal proportions rather than temporal" (cf. **1 Cor 15:24–28**). – *The Bible and Future Events*

You will see the Eternal State commence at the end of the 1,000-year reign of Christ on the earth. A "new heavens and a new earth" will come (**Rev 21:1a**) because the former will have passed away and He will make all things new.

B. **The Purpose of the Millennial Kingdom**

Some might ask what the purpose is of an earthly, temporal, Millennial Kingdom considering all else that God is doing in the end of days. Why would OT saints, raptured church age saints, and tribulation martyrs go to be with the Lord in the place that He has prepared in heaven to only return to the earth? What business do we still have with this present, sin-saturated, waste-filled, dinky earth? A study of the Scriptures will draw the reader's attention to at least two major purposes:

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- a. **Purpose 1:** *For God to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is Sovereign over all creation*

This first purpose is in reference to the broader purpose of God. As you read carefully through the Scriptures from start to finish, you will come to find that God's chief plan and purpose for the Millennial Kingdom is *to reestablish His rule over the earth through the Messiah.*

This has been the plan of God all along (**2 Sam 7:10–16; Heb 1**). Consider:

Genesis 3:15 says, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

Psalms 2:4–9 says, "He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. **5** Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, **6** 'As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.' **7** I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. **8** Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. **9** You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Ephesians 1:9 "making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ **10** as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth."

Philippians 2:9 "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

In the Millennium, God is in fact taking His universally established throne that is in the heavens surrounded by majestic, eternal praise and bringing it to the earth. The eternal throne promised to David in the Davidic Covenant (**2 Sam 7**) will in that day be established on the earth. See:

Psalms 103:19 says, "The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all."

2 Samuel 7:12 "When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. **13** He shall build a

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house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”

Matthew 19:28 says, “Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’”

Matthew 25:31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.”

The first great purpose of the Millennial Kingdom is for Christ to be revealed to all people of all time that He alone is Sovereign, the King of kings. He is all-powerful. He is faithful and true. He is eternally worthy of worship.

b. **Purpose 2: For God to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is Savior of Israel**

There is a further and more particular purpose recognized in the Scriptures as well. Jesus Christ is not only Sovereign of all creation but He is Savior of Israel. During the Millennial Kingdom, Jesus will fulfill all of the promises of God made with Israel. It will be a “Golden Age” like Israel has never seen before and we get to be there!

Listen to the great blessings in the covenants (promises) God made with man:

i. *The Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12:1–3, 7; 15:7–21; 17:1–21)*

God promised to “Father Abraham” (the biological head of the people of Israel) three specific things: a) The Blessing, b) The Seed, and c) the Land. Or, “Salvation, Seed, and Soil.”

The “blessing” for Abraham was to be characterized by spiritual and material blessings for obeying God. The “seed” of Abraham had to do with his descendants becoming like the sand of the sea that there are so many. And the “land” had to do with granting Abraham and his descendants access into the Promised Land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. And ultimately, through the nation of Israel (looking forward to Christ), God promised to bless all the nations of the earth.

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ii. *The Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:8–16; 1 Chron 17:7–15)*

God promised to “King David” multiple things as well: a) to make David’s name great among the nations, b) to provide security for Israel in the land of Canaan that they might have peace, c) to preserve the line of David’s descendants, and d) to enthrone one of David’s descendants as king over His kingdom forever. Or, “Reputation, Rest, Relatives, and Reign.”

iii. *The New Covenant (Jer 31:31–34; Ezek 36:24–38; Rom 11:26–27)*

God promised the nation of Israel the blessings of the New Covenant: a) spiritual transformation of a new heart, b) the forgiveness of sins, c) restoration to the divinely-renewed and prosperous land of Canaan, and d) the relationship in which He will be their God and they will be His people. Or, “Regeneration, Remission, Restoration, and Relationship.”

At this first phase of the Kingdom of God, in the Millennial Kingdom, God will fulfill His promises to Israel completely like they were always meant to be. The entire world will finally witness a truly vibrant and lasting relationship in full bloom between His chosen people and her King. Israel won’t be a joke and a byword among the nations anymore but a treasured possession among the peoples, a kingdom of priests, and holy nation (**Exod 19:5, 6**). God will be faithful and true to His covenant promises with His people, Israel, and there will be no lack of faith among His Kingdom heirs.

In His infinite wisdom, God worked through the “partial hardening” that “has come upon Israel.” “The fullness of the Gentiles” can now come into the promises of God to Israel (**Rom 11:25**). The church has not replaced Israel, superseded Israel, or fulfilled Israel’s role. Israel does not get all the *curses* for disobedience and the church does not get all the *blessings*, as some think. The church, by grace through faith, has been spiritually grafted into all the promises of land, seed, and blessing (material and spiritual blessings). Israel’s rejection led to the world’s reconciliation with God (**Rom 11:15**)!

The New Testament teaching makes it clear that the spiritual aspects of the New Covenant are on display now and that the material blessings of peace and prosperity will come in the kingdom.

In the Millennial Kingdom, both the church and Israel will live and serve Christ in the glow of the Golden Age never experienced before by man.

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Introduction (Part II):

Michael Vlach: “Although Revelation 20 is the only passage in the Bible that explicitly mentions a 1000-year reign of Christ before the Eternal State, premillennialists point out there are Old Testament passages that are consistent with the idea of an intermediate kingdom after the present, church age but before the Eternal Kingdom.

1. “For instance, **Isaiah 65:20** states: “No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.”

This passage speaks of longevity of life that is not true of the present age, but it also mentions the presence of death which will not be true of the Eternal Kingdom either. Thus, premillennialists understand passages such as this to refer to an intermediate kingdom of Messiah.

2. **Zechariah 14:5–17** also supports Premillennialism. Here the Lord is said to be King over all the earth, but there is still disobedience and rebellion on the part of some nations. According to premillennialists, both these conditions can only occur in an intermediate kingdom between the present age and the Eternal Kingdom.
3. **Isaiah 11:6–11** This passage speaks of incredible changes in nature that far transcend the present age, but it also speaks of the evangelization of nations that could not be true of the eternal state.
4. **Psalms 72:8–14** This passage speaks of a universal reign of Messiah in which the kings of the earth will serve Him. But it also tells of “the weak and needy” who need deliverance from death.”

These are just a few texts of Scripture that support a literal, chronological interpretation of **Revelation 19–22**. The sequence of events John sees is one right after the other: the return of Christ (**19:11–16**), the battle of Armageddon (**19:17–21**), the binding of Satan (**20:1–3**), the 1,000-year reign of Christ with all His resurrected saints (**20:4–6**), the release and final damnation of Satan when the 1,000 years ends (**20:7–10**), the Great White Throne Judgment of all those held in Hades (**20:11–15**), the new heavens and the new earth and new Jerusalem (**21:1–27**), and the throne of God from which flows the river of life to the nations (**22:1–5**).

It is clear that the above read passages refer to the event sandwiched between the glorious return of Christ where He battles the ungodly (**Rev 19**) and the Eternal State where God dwells with man (**Rev 21–22**)—the Millennial Kingdom (**Rev 20**).

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Several other OT passages speak of this reign of Messiah on the earth (**Ps 2:6–9; Isa 2:2–4; 11:6–9; 65:18–23; Jer 31:12–14, 31–37; Ezek 34:25–29; 37:1–6; 40–48; Dan 2:35; 7:13–14; Joel 2:21–27; Amos 9:13–14; Mic 4:1–7; and Zeph 3:9–20**). The NT continues on with the eschatological hope of Christ establishing His kingdom on the earth (**Matt 5:1–20; 19:27–30; 26:27–29; Mk 14:25; Lk 22:18; 1 Cor 6:9–11; and Rev 20**). And this is just barely scratching the surface of what is written about the return and reign of Christ.

This morning we will be building on our previous message in which we established the duration and purpose of the Millennial Kingdom. The bones have been set in place, now we get to flesh things out with the characteristics of the Millennial Kingdom, followed by the subjects and the worship of this kingdom.

Review:

Outline (continued):

C. The Characteristics of the Millennial Kingdom

“And since the Mediatorial [Millennial] Kingdom is a *phase*, we should expect that its characteristics will not be totally unrelated to the larger Kingdom but will shed further light upon the nature of the latter.” Alva McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, 36

a. The Political Characteristics

“Political,” in the sense of the *government* of the kingdom. The government will be a *theocracy*, meaning ruled by God. It is “a *monarchy* in the highest sense,” says Dwight Pentecost. The Scriptures have much to say about the government of the Millennial Kingdom.

i. *Christ will be King*

Consider the Scriptures:

Psalms 2:6 “As for me, I have set *my King on Zion*, my holy hill.”

Isaiah 9:6 “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and *the government shall be upon his shoulder*, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, *Prince of Peace*. **7** *Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with*

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righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this."

Luke 1:32 "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And *the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."*

Revelation 19:16 "On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, *King of kings and Lord of lords."*

Because Christ will be King, the nature of His kingdom will be *universal (Dan 2:35; 7:14, 27; Mic 4:1–2; Zech 9:10), righteous and just (Isa 11:3–5; 25:2–5; 29:17–21; 30:29–32; 42:13; 49:25–26; 66:14; Dan 2:44; Mic 5:5–6, 10–15; Zech 9:3–8), full of the Spirit (Isa 11:2–3), united (Ezek 37:13–28; Hos 1:11), and eternal (Dan 7:14, 27).*

At His first coming, we saw foretastes of His earthly reign as King (Kingdom was proclaimed, the sick were cured, the demons were cast out, the curse was chased away, spiritual blessings were abundant, miraculous power was demonstrated, Kingdom character was displayed, authority on heaven and earth was granted, etc).

ii. *Christ will be King over Israel*

"Not only will Christ's millennial kingship include His rule over Israel as a nation, but this nation will claim a primary place in His attention. He will be especially Israel's King." Leon Wood, *The Bible and Future Events*, 171

Consider the Scriptures:

Jeremiah 23:5 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. **6** In his days *Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely.* And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'"

Micah 4:7 "And the lame I will make the remnant, and those who were cast off, a strong nation; and *the LORD will reign over them* in Mount Zion from this time forth and forevermore."

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Isaiah 24:23 "Then the moon will be confounded and the sun ashamed, for *the LORD of hosts reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and his glory will be before his elders.*"

Matthew 19:28 "Jesus said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, *judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*"

Not only will Christ be King over national Israel, but He will also set His twelve disciples as judges over the twelve tribes of Israel (**Mt 19:28**). Note: "the regeneration" in NAS, or "new world" in ESV, is a reference to the Millennial Kingdom. Christ's words affirm that national, believing Israel will be restored at His Second Coming.

In addition, numerous OT prophecies speak of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel (Israel and Judah, respectively) being reunited under Christ's reign in Jerusalem (**Ezek 37:21, 22; Jer 3:18; 33:14; Hos 1:11**). Every consequence of Israel's sin and rebellion against God will be removed and reversed. They will no longer be divided, scattered, pursued by their enemies, and cursed; but they will be united, gathered, admired (**Isa 60:14, 15; 61:6, 7; 62:2-5**), "set high above all the nations of the earth" (**Deut 28:1**), and eternally and abundantly blessed in Christ as a true people of God. Jerusalem will be the world's capital city (**Isa 2:3; Ezek 43:6, 7; Ps 48:1; 110:2; 2 Sam 5:7**). From *The Greatness of the Kingdom*:

Alva McClain says, "Certainly, if there is ever to be a Kingdom of God on earth, no more appropriate place for its world center could be found than the place hallowed by the sacred memories of the One who there suffered and died for the sins of the world. Furthermore, in this ancient city we have literally the crossroads of the world, joining the three great continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe. Ezekiel speaks appropriately of the location as the "navel of the earth" (**38:12**)."

iii. Christ will be King over Israel and the Gentiles

Though Christ will reign with special reference to Israel, He will also reign as King over *all* the earth—something that the false king, the Antichrist, tried but failed to do. Consider:

Psalms 72:8 "May he have *dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth!* **9** May desert tribes bow down before him, and his enemies lick the dust! **10** May the

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kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts! **11** May *all kings* fall down before him, *all nations* serve him!"

Zechariah 14:9 "And the LORD will be *king over all the earth*. On that day the LORD will be one and his name one."

With specific reference to the Gentiles, the Scriptures disclose that Israel will be the leading nation of the world during the millennium with Gentiles being subservient (**Isa 14:1, 2; 60:14; Zech 8:22, 23**). Although the Gentile nations are subordinate to the restored nation of Israel, they are still recognized as "the people of God":

Isaiah 19:21 "And the LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day and worship with sacrifice and offering, and they will make vows to the LORD and perform them. **22** And the LORD will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to the LORD, and he will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them. **23** In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and Assyria will come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. **24** In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, **25** whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, '*Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance.*'"

So, the *political* characteristics of the Millennial Kingdom first involve Christ as King. And not only will He be King *over* believing Jews and Gentiles, but He will also reign *with* the redeemed, issuing positions of authority over the earth during His thousand-year reign (**Rev 20:4, 6** "thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed...they will reign with him for a thousand years").

Many questions remain as to the complete nature of what it means to "judge" others in the Kingdom, but God's gracious plan for those who have willingly bowed the knee to the Lordship of Christ is that we will reign with Him for one thousand years.

Most likely only believers with glorified bodies (the *raptured* church and *resurrected* OT/Tribulation saints rather than the "sheep" from the Sheep and Goats Judgment) will have positions of authority to judge others. Throughout the thousand years, the number of non-glorified saints will grow rapidly and the need for judges with glorified bodies with Christ will grow.

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“All the functions of government are centered in the glorious Person of this Mediatorial King. The prophet Isaiah paints a vivid picture of the political situation in the days of the established Kingdom: Then the eyes of men ‘Shall see the king in his beauty’ ruling upon the earth as a ‘judge,’ ‘lawgiver,’ and ‘king’ (**Isa 33:17, 22**)—a remarkable forecast of the conventional divisions of modern government: judicial, legislative, and executive.” McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom*, 207

b. **The Spiritual Characteristics**

Pilate asked Jesus at His trial, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus responded to this confused man teetering on the razor-thin edge of saving faith, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” Pilate responds, “Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?” Even though Christ came first to the Jew and then the Gentile, in order to be faithful to His Heavenly Father’s redemption mission, His response is profound, “*My kingdom is not of this world...my kingdom is not from the world.*” Pilate’s conclusion is that He must be the King. And Christ says, “For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth” (**Jn 18:33–38**).

First of all, Jesus is being sure to answer Pilate that He in fact IS a King, but that it should not be a threat to Caesar, at this point. He is not primarily a political ruler. His primary interests are spiritual. So what we learn here is that Christ’s Kingdom is not worldly in its *nature* or its *origin*.

To be clear, even though here Christ was stressing the *spiritual* nature and foundation of His Kingdom, it by no means negates the earthly element of His Kingdom’s establishment. The Jews, and Pilate here, did not need to be convinced any further that Messiah’s Kingdom was one that would be established on the earth; they needed to receive Him as a *spiritual* leader and liberator rather than just a *national* leader and liberator.

This generation of Israel was not worthy of the Kingdom (**Matt 21:43**) because of their worldliness and their desire for political resurgence and dominance. Therefore, Christ said the Kingdom would be taken from them and given to one producing the Kingdom’s fruits—spiritual fruit like faith, repentance, and the fruit of the Spirit.

Romans 14:17 “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

The spiritual aspects of the Kingdom are at the core of the biblical description, but once again, this in no way eliminates or voids the national,

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political, and physical aspects which will be examined in great detail below. Here are the major spiritual characteristics of the Kingdom:

i. Presence of Christ

This fact alone sets this period of history so vastly apart from any other period or “Golden Age” or economic boom this world has every seen or experienced. The Lord will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king. He who is faithful and true will be set on Zion, His holy hill. With His coming in power, His Kingdom will crush the kingdoms of man and grow like a mountain over the whole earth. With the presence of Christ, the glory of God recedes the high tides of the curse of sin.

ii. Absence of Satan

Not only the *presence* of Christ but the *absence* of the deceiver. Heaven and earth will be completely influenced by Christ and not Satan. Satan will no longer deceive the nations so the knowledge of God will spread wide over the globe. Consider the Scriptures:

Revelation 20:1 “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. **2** And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, **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.”

2 Corinthians 4:3 “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. **4** In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

2 Timothy 2:25 “correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, **26** and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.”

1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

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Satan is a dreaded dragon, ancient serpent, blinder of minds, deceiver of hearts, prince of darkness, god of this world, adversary of the glory of the Gospel, and he will be revealed for who he is and bound for the entire extent of the Millennial Kingdom. Though he is a prowling and hungry lion in this church age, in the Kingdom we will not hear more than a distant purr from His sealed cage.

There is *One* Lion in this jungle—“the Lion of the tribe of Judah”...the conqueror and only One worthy to open the scroll, the title deed to the earth (**Rev 5:5**). The purpose and program of God will move forward with the opposition removed.

iii. Fullness of the Holy Spirit

This period will also be characterized by the full and complete presence of the Holy Spirit, indwelling, filling, and perfectly leading every believer in all his/her ways. Consider:

Joel 2:28 “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. **29** Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.”

Ezekiel 36:27 “And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.”

The major results of the full and complete out-pouring of the Spirit of God are as follows: *widespread salvation* (**Isa 60:10; 60:18; 12:3**), evidence of God's *abundant grace* (**Zech 12:10; Ps 45:2**), and lives characterized by *perfect righteousness* (**Ezek 36:27, 31; Zeph 3:13**).

iv. Righteousness

With the perfect and unhindered presence of the glorious Messiah, the binding of Satan with his power to deceive, and the pouring out of the fullness of the Spirit of God what else would one conclude or expect to see on the earth but righteousness?

Isaiah 11:1 “There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. **2** And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. **3** And his delight shall be

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in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, **4** but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. **5** Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.”

Isaiah 32:1 “Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule in justice.”

Isaiah 33:5 “The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness.”

At the entrance of the Millennial Kingdom, only righteous Jews and Gentiles will be allowed to enter (the “Sheep and Goat Judgment” in **Matt 25:31ff**). However, they will bring with themselves earthly bodies, which have the capability to sin because of their sin nature. And the same is true with their children. Despite the presence of sin nature, the dominant characteristic of the Kingdom will be righteousness, perfection, obedience, holiness, truth, goodness, blessing and not sinfulness.

c. **The Physical Characteristics**

God’s glorious Kingdom will be established on the earth that we live on today, but it will look radically different. For instance, “The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft on its site... (**Zech 14:10a**).” And again, “the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that half of the mountain shall move northward, and the other half southward” (**14:4**). And, “make straight in the desert a highway for our God. **4** Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low, the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain” (**Isa 40:3, 4**). Whatever purposes the King has on that Day, He will move earth and heaven to accomplish.

Keep in mind that the physical characteristics of Christ’s Kingdom are a *direct result* of the spiritual condition changing (see **Hebrews 8** and the New Covenant promises). Each of the covenants (Abrahamic, Davidic, and New) have *spiritual* blessings that believers enjoy to the degree that they walk worthy of His commands, but believers will only share in the complete *physical* blessings of God’s covenant promises when the Kingdom of God comes.

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For example, listen to how some of the OT prophets viewed the physical elements of the Messianic Age:

Isaiah 2:4 “He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; 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 anymore.”

Jeremiah 31:34 “And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Isaiah 9:3 “You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.”

Isaiah 32:18 “My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.”

Joel 2:28 “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.
29 Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.”

The physical blessings of the covenants of God (land, seed, peace, prosperity, an eternal king and kingdom, etc) are a direct result of the reversal of the curse on mankind during the Millennial Kingdom.

When the curse on the earth and its inhabitants is reversed, all areas of life on earth will be affected:

i. Agricultural Life

Rainfall, which has always been a problem in Palestine, will never again be sparse; there will never again be a water shortage in the Holy Land.

Isaiah 30:23 “And he will give rain for the seed with which you sow the ground, and bread, the produce of the ground, which will be rich and plenteous. In that day your livestock will graze in large pastures, **24** and the oxen and the donkeys that work the ground will eat seasoned fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork.”

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And because of the abundant rainfall, this will bring forth excellent crops across all the Land.

Isaiah 35:1 “The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; **2** it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God... **6** then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; **7** the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.”

Why do you think the Holy Land in Israel is referred to as the “land flowing with milk and honey” in OT times? Because milk and honey come from healthy herds and lush lands.

Ezekiel 20:6 “On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands.”

Also, “thorns and thistles” (**Gen 1:18**) are a direct result of the curse, so they will be removed for the millennial reign of Christ. The fields and forests will be lush and blessed by the fullness of Christ, the Creator and Keeper of all the earth.

ii. Animal Life

Not only plant life, but animal life as well, will be altered when the curse is reversed. For instance, all animals will once again become plant-eaters like they were originally created. The peace that proceeds from the righteous reign of Christ on the earth, will impact the way animals behave around each other:

Isaiah 11:6 “The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. **7** The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. **8** The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den. **9** They

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shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”

Isaiah 65:25 “The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,” says the LORD.

We also have protection from the beasts of the field, not having to worry of any wild and harmful activity from animals. All flesh will be blessed, not cursed. Man will subdue and have dominion over the earth and the earth will no longer have dominion over man.

iii. Human Life

The Scriptures also teach that in the Millennial Kingdom, Christ is the Great Healer over every disease and every deformity.

Isaiah 33:24 “And no inhabitant will say, ‘I am sick’; the people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity.”

Isaiah 35:5 “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; **6** then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.”

Isaiah 65:20 “No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.”

If someone possessing a mortal body dies at the age of one hundred, they will be thought of as being cut off prematurely. “He died young,” they’d say. The life spans of those possessing earthly bodies will put to shame Noah’s contemporaries. There is no calculating how blessed it will be in the Kingdom of God—no disorders, disabilities, deformities, deficiencies, etc.

Ezekiel 34:16 “I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.”

Isaiah 61:1 “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he

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has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; **2** to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn."

Luke 4:16ff is a "preview of coming attractions" as Christ fulfills Isaiah's prophecy at Christ's First Coming, only to perfectly fill the earth with His Spirit-empowered healing at His Second Coming.

The political, spiritual, and physical characteristics of the earth will radically change to be fit for the reign of Christ with His bride. This change will be in direct correspondence to the Lord reversing the curse and bringing fullness of blessing.

D. The Subjects of the Millennial Kingdom

Every king has subjects. It is a matter of his command, his dominion, and his right as a king. It isn't any less true in the Millennial Kingdom with Christ Jesus reigning as the Supreme Ruler—He will have subjects. And because of the gracious plan and promise of our Lord, His subjects will reign *with* Him occupying thrones (**Rev 20:4a**).

Essentially, the redeemed of all the ages, who have trusted in Christ's righteousness, are the ones who will inherit and participate in the Millennial Kingdom. And within the redeemed of all the ages, certain groups of people are said to rule with Christ:

- a. **Old Testament Saints. Daniel 7:27** says, "And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them."
- b. **The Apostles. In Matthew 19:28**, "Jesus said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'"
- c. **New Testament Saints. 1 Corinthians 6:2** says, "Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases?"

2 Timothy 2:12 says, "If we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us."

Revelation 2:26 says, "The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations."

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Revelation 3:21 says, “The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.”

Revelation 5:10 “And you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

- d. **Resurrected Tribulation Saints. Revelation 20:4–6** says, “Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. **5** The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. **6** Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.”
- e. **Anyone With Glorified Bodies.** Anyone (Jew or Gentile) who confesses Christ as Lord and who is alive on the earth at the end of the Tribulation, will surely “inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world” (**Matt 25:34**). But because these “sheep” have mortal bodies, and are thusly able to sin still, they will not be given positions of delegated authority in the Kingdom.

Leon Wood comments, “Glorified saints would have to rule, since they alone would be qualified to officiate, at least in the most important positions. If a sinless King is required to make the utopian conditions of the millennium, then sinless subordinates must be necessary as well.”

The great story of redemption that is written across the pages of Scripture assures the one who possesses faith in Jesus Christ that “they shall inherit the earth” (**Matt 5:5**). As kingdom heirs, and willing subjects of the King of kings, we must live grateful lives filled with worship to God. And as citizens of the coming kingdom of heaven we must live fit for His arrival.

E. The Worship of the Millennial Kingdom

Just as a kingdom with no subjects is no kingdom at all, so a kingdom with no worship and obedience to the king is no healthy kingdom at all. The subjects of the Kingdom of God are worshipers of God.

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Some key OT verses apply to the theme of worship in the Millennium:

Isaiah 2:2 “It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, **3** and many peoples shall come, and say: ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.’ For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. **4** He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples...”

Isaiah 11:9 “They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. **10** In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.”

Ezekiel 20:40 “For on my holy mountain, the mountain height of Israel, declares the Lord GOD, there all the house of Israel, all of them, shall serve me in the land. There I will accept them, and there I will require your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your sacred offerings. **41** As a pleasing aroma I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered. And I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations.”

Zechariah 14:16 “Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths.”

There are specific conditions for this worship service to Christ in the Millennial Kingdom:

- a. The **Messiah** will function **as the Priest-King** seated on His own throne. We will have perfect and unhindered access to Him. We will worship Him as our King and we are able only because He is our High Priest.
- b. And restored and regenerated **Israel** (who repents of their sin and comes to faith in Jesus Christ during the Tribulation Period) will function **as worship leaders** and a “kingdom of priests” (**Exod 19:6**) like God has always purposed for them.
- c. The **City of Jerusalem**, Mount Zion, will function as the **religious center** of the world. Saints will come from all over the earth to worship here. The Holy Land will expand from the River of Egypt to the River Euphrates (**Gen 15:18**) to accommodate.

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- d. The **future temple** will be rebuilt in the Millennium as laid out in **Ezekiel 40–48**. This temple is future and full of glory.
- e. **Animal sacrifices** come back in to play in the Millennial Kingdom. Paul Benware explains:

While the Old Testament sacrificial system was *effective*, it was not *expiatory*. In the words of Hebrews, it was effective for temporary ritual restoration, the “cleansing of the flesh” (**Heb 9:10, 13**), but it could not permanently expiate guilt by “taking away sins” (**Heb 10:4**) or “cleansing the conscience” (**Heb 9:14**).

The Savior offered Himself in place of guilty sinners to both *expiate* (remove guilt of sin) and *propitiate* (appease the righteous wrath of God against sin).

Although animal sacrifices and temple worship will be reinstated, they will not detract from the glory of the cross of Christ, the great altar of God. In fact, they will magnify the power of the cross by reflecting back upon the perfect sacrifice and Sacrificial Lamb. Those who have resurrected bodies will not need sacrifices, but sinful men with non-glorified bodies will need to be purified and cleansed. After the 1,000 years there will be no need for sacrifices because there will be only glorified bodies inhabiting the new earth.

Therefore, the literal interpretation of the sacrifices of the Temple of Ezekiel and their resumption during the Millennium are a means to blessing in the theocratic kingdom. And though this final Temple and its priestly service will be at the center of the blessing of this Messianic age, its course will conclude when the 1,000 year reign of Christ over a restored Israel is complete (**Rev 20:7**) and the eternal kingdom has begun with the creation of a new heavens and earth (**Isa 66:22; Rev 21:1**). “And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb” (**Rev 21:22**). This is one detail that differs from the Millennial Kingdom and the Eternal State.

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Conclusion:

The reality is that not all men and women on earth submit to the Lordship of Christ. In fact, it is the wide path that leads to destruction and those who enter by it are many (**Matt 7:13**). Although God has always been the reigning King over all the earth, it is His will that the “kingdom come,” as Christ taught us to pray (**6:10**). Therefore, pray to this end—that God’s sovereign rule *over* the universe will soon come *on* the earth. And in the meantime, may our lives reflect our gracious King and the nature of His coming kingdom.

If the curse on creation is the only limitation to acceptable lives of worship to God as His loyal subjects, then we have great hope in Christ! For “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’—**14** so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Holy Spirit through faith” (**Gal 3:13, 14**). Christ has redeemed us from the curse so that we might be **restored worshipers**. Restored worship is a matter of walking before God’s presence and Him continually walking with us (**Gen 3:8**). As a subject and heir of Christ’s coming kingdom, we must be all about worship now—to the praise of the glorious grace of the Eternal King.

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Appendix:

Here is an extended excerpt from John MacArthur on the physical changes in the new world, the Millennium, from a *scientific* point of view:

"The violent earthquakes and upheavals through the Tribulation time will have leveled all the polluted cities of a sinful world, the better to facilitate the erection of new, clean, peaceful communities at the beginning of the Millennium. These great land movements will also have eliminated the great mountain ranges and islands of the world, filling up the ocean depths and restoring gentle globally habitable topography and geography all over the world, as it had been in the antediluvian age before the cataclysmic upheavals of the Flood. As Isaiah the prophet has foretold, every valley shall be exalted, every mountain and hill shall be made low. The crooked shall be made straight, the rough places plain. The prophets also say the islands will flee away.

"This reversal of the topographic upheavals of the Flood, however, will not send waters over the continents again." In other words, they won't flood the globe. "Since much of the waters of the ocean will already have been re-elevated above the atmosphere, restoring in some measure the antediluvian waters above the firmament, the canopy of water. The worldwide drought of the first half of the Tribulation. The cataclysmic splashdowns of bodies from the heavens during the trumpet judgments and the intensified solar radiations of the bowl judgments will all have contributed to the translation of vast quantities of water vapor far back into the skies. The earth then would be sheltered, as it was before the Flood. Sheltered from the ultra violet rays of the sun and that's why people will live to be very old, like they did before the Flood.

"Quite probably the immense tectonic movements and the earthquakes and eruptions and landslides may also have trapped vast quantities of water beneath fresh sedimentary volcanic deposits, reinstating in partial degree the primeval pressurized reservoirs of the great deep, as the Bible calls it. Facilitating the birth of copious artesian springs, including one which will feed the vast river emerging from the millennial temple in Jerusalem, described both Ezekiel and Zechariah. And the seas of the millennial world will be relatively narrow and shallow once again, as in primeval days. Furthermore the restoration of the vapor canopy should enlarge measure restore the globally pleasant warm climate of that part of the...that period of the earth again. No longer will great atmospheric movements generate violent rainstorms, blizzards, hurricanes and tornadoes because the uniform temperatures of the global greenhouse will inhibit air mass movements of more than local extent.

"In the original world the only rains were gentle mists from localized daily evaporation and precipitation, according to Genesis 2:5, keeping the world everywhere at comfortable temperatures and humidities and supporting an abundance of plant and animal life in all regions of the globe. There were no deserts or icecaps or uninhabitable mountain heights, it was all very good. The cataclysm of the Great Flood destroyed that beautiful world, but the global upheavals of the Great Tribulation will restore it, at least in measure.

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"Joel wrote, 'Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree bears her fruit, the fig tree and the vine yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, rejoice in the Lord your God, for He hath given you the former rain moderately and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain in the first month.'

Scientific expectation goes on..."The redistribution of earth's topography and restoration of its vapor canopy will result in the elimination of many if not all of its wastelands and deserts. And the prophet said in Isaiah, 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them and the desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose, for in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water.'

"Somehow there will also come a great healing of the lands and the waters of the earth. Healing from the terrible judgment of the Tribulation. Before the Great Flood the soils were rich in all the needed nutrients. And the drinking waters all came pure and fresh from Artisan springs, fed from deep underground reservoirs. The destruction of these deep fountains and the devastating land erosion of the Great Flood largely destroyed God's primeval terrestrial ecology, leaving the lands depleted and the waters polluted.

"Originally all animals as well as man were to derive nourishment only from plant foods, but under the far more rigorous conditions of the post-diluvian environment, God authorized man to eat animal flesh as well. Evidently for the same reason many animals also had to become carnivorous. These conditions were further aggravated during the long centuries after the Flood. With the lands becoming further impoverished and the waters further contaminated, requiring increasingly great expenditures on fertilization and purification. The traumatic upheavals of the Tribulation period will have brought these conditions to a climax with devastating famine conditions and with terrestrial waters so depleted and poisoned that all the animals of the sea had perished. Had such conditions been allowed to persist much longer, all life on earth would become impossible.

"In some marvelous way God will use the physical convulsions of that awful period to purge and cleanse the land and the waters of the earth, as well as its moral and spiritual climate. Possibly the tectonic and volcanic upheavals and perhaps even the atmospheric bombardments will implant new supplies of needed nutrients and trace elements in the soils. Even the multitudes of dead animals and plants in the lands and the oceans as well as the skeletons of the millions of dead men and horses at Armageddon and elsewhere may well become fertilizing agents for the land as they remain scattered far and wide.

"Unprecedented global earthquakes and eruptions will trigger vast and violent landslides and showers of dirt and rocks, entrapping tremendous volumes of ocean waters beneath great overburdens of solid materials which will rapidly become pressurized, lithophied and partially sealed. This will likely produce at least two effects. In the first place, the sea bottoms will be raised to higher elevation than at present, compensating for the great

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losses of water caused by the restoration of the atmospheric canopy and by the entrapment of vast volumes beneath the huge landslides which produced the great reservoirs of fresh water. The entire crust itself will to some extent have shifted and slipped over the earth's mantle, rearranging the various continental plates to a more nearly uniform distribution of land and sea surface areas. Second, this extensive rearrangement will facilitate the development of a new terrestrial system of springs and spring-fed rivers. Isaiah 41 says, 'I will open rivers in to high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys, I'll make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water.'

"Somehow God is even going to repopulate the oceans. We know that the second bowl judgment resulted in the death of every living soul in the sea so that those fish who required a marine environment were destroyed, eliminated. But we know that in the great millennial river in Jerusalem described in Ezekiel 47, 'And wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish.' Somehow the Lord is going to bring the fish back to the seas. He's going to adjust them so they can live in whatever the climate of that new water is.

"Well, you say, 'Is that all absolutely true or is that a little speculation?' It's a little speculation. But it may not be too far off. This is the...this is the new creation, this is the glorious liberation of the children of God. This is when the creation is freed from its bondage. That's the kind of world it's going to be in terms of ecology or something similar to that, something like that. And when Satan isn't here, beyond that it's going to be a world of blessedness, a world of absolutely blessed, blessed conditions."