

The Millennium

When the Lord establishes His millennial kingdom, it will **bring to an end** all of the human kingdoms that will be on the earth. Once established, the Bible reveals that it will **endure forever** and that nothing, or no one, will be able to destroy it.

Dan. 2:44 - In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

This future kingdom will have **two phases** to it. The **first** phase is the millennial kingdom where the Lord Jesus is reigning on the throne of David in Jerusalem for 1000 years. The **second** phase is the eternal state. At the end of the 1000 years, Satan will be taken care of, some judgments will take place and then the eternal state will be ushered in with the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, where God's glory will be on display for all eternity.

In our time together, we will be studying the first phase of the kingdom of God, the millennium. We will focus on the 1000 year time span when the earth as we know it will be transformed.

The Millennium

“A larger body of prophetic material is devoted to the subject of the Millennium, developing its character and conditions, than any other prophetic subject.” Pentecost

A millennium is a period of time that lasts 1000 years. The Bible speaks of a time period of 1000 years where the Lord Jesus will be ruling as King on the throne of David. **Should this be taken literally?** If so, what is the purpose of the millennium? Why is it necessary?

With that in mind **1. Why Must There Be A Millennium?**

It goes back to the events that happened in the Garden of Eden. God gave Adam and Eve dominion over the earth. But, that was lost to Satan when Adam fell. The millennium will be the time when God reestablishes His sovereign Theocratic rulership over the earth through Messiah Jesus, the Second Adam. But, for now Satan is the god of this world.

2 Cor. 4:4 - in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

A theocracy is a form of government that only acknowledges God's kingship. That was lost in Adam, but will be reclaimed by **the Lord Jesus, the Second Adam** (sometimes called the Last Adam) during the millennial kingdom.

The millennium reestablishes the Biblical Theocratic rule of God on the earth, which was lost by the fall. Even while the devil is operating as the god of this world, **God remains sovereign over His universe.** God in His sovereignty allows Satan to be the ruler of the world system. The good news is, the millennium, **will reclaim** all that was lost as a result of Adam's fall.

Some things that will take place during the millennium that were lost by Adam.

- *God will remove the devil and his evil influence on earth - Satan is bound
- *God will restore His rule on earth - The Lord Jesus rules on the throne of David
- *God will restore creation back to the way it was before the fall - nature is transformed
- *God will fulfill the covenant promises He made to Israel - Israel's blessings are the main focus

The **tribulation period** is called the time of Jacob's troubles. The **millennium** can be called the times of Israel's blessings.

Zech. 8:13 - It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing.

Verse 13 provides a summary of the main thoughts of this section in Zech. 8 by contrasting Israel's past and future. In the past, disobedient Israel served as a prime example of a people experiencing God's judgment. But in the future (the millennium) they will be a people known for divine blessing. J. Carl Laney

2. Who Will Populate the Millennium

There are several different groups of believers that populate the millennium. **It begins with all saved people** from different time periods. No one unsaved will be able to initially enter the 1000 year kingdom. There are **two types of saints** who will be present in the Millennial Kingdom, those who have already been glorified and those who still have their human bodies.

Who are some of the different groups of saints that populate the millennium?

- *Old Testament saints and Church saints - from the beginning of humanity, until the rapture

*resurrected tribulation saints - those who died during the tribulation. They will be resurrected and receive glorified bodies and enter the millennium

*surviving tribulation saints - those who survived the seven year tribulation period will enter the millennium with their human bodies

*those who are born in the millennium - they are born lost, some will get saved, some will not

How's the millennium is going to begin? At the end of the tribulation period, the Judgment of the Gentiles and the Judgment of Israel will separate out the saved from the lost. Those who are unsaved will be taken and sent to eternal fire. Those who are saved will be left to enter the millennial kingdom with their human bodies. You can read about these judgments in Matt.

25:31-46 and Ezek. 20:34-38

O.T. Saints

Dan. 12:2, 13 - Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. But as for you, go your way to the end; **then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age.**

Church Saints

1 Thes 4:17 - Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and **so we shall always be with the Lord.**

Tribulation Saints Who Died

Rev. 20:4 - Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who **had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand;** and they came to life and reigned with Messiah for a thousand years.

Tribulation Saints, From Among Jewish People and Gentiles Who Survived the Entire 7 Years

Matt. 25:34 - Then the King will say to those on His right, Come, you who are blessed of My Father, **inherit the kingdom** prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Ezek. 20:37 - I will make you (Israel) pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the Lord.

What about those born in the millennium? Many who are born during this time, **will not become believers** in Messiah Jesus. At the end of the millennium, **Satan will be loosed** and will gather these rebels for one last battle. God will rain down fire and consume them.

Rev. 20:7-9 - When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

3. The Literalness of the Millennium

The opponents of a literal millennium say that the number 1000 is not to be taken literally. But why shouldn't we take it literally? What insight is there in the text that would suggest otherwise? Actually the context of Rev. 20:1-7 argues for a literal interpretation.

The Beatitude

The prophetic vision of what John sees is contained in verses 1-5 of Revelation 20. In verse 6 John is taken out of the prophetic vision and a beatitude is given, which interprets the vision.

Rev. 20:6 - Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

This beatitude interprets the prophetic vision. Notice that Vs. 6 is not part of the vision, but rather it's an interpretation of the vision. It's important to point out that the thousand years is found both in the prophetic vision and in the interpretation.

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The verb tenses are different in the vision, then from the interpretation

Notice in vs. 4, which is part of the vision and in vs. 6, which is the interpretation of the vision, the Greek tenses are different.

Rev. 20:4 - And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God..., and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Rev. 20:6 - ...but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

In the vision, the tense is written in the past tense, but in the interpretation the tense is future.

This is similar to other Scriptures that are found in the Bible. For example Isa. 53:

4. The Length of the Millennium

Although there are multitudes of Old Testament verses that teach about the Millennium, none of them speak about the **length** of it, it's the New Testament that does that. The primary verses in Scripture which teaches the **length** of the millennium are found in Rev. 20:1-7.

The length of the kingdom on earth is said to be 1000 years. It is mentioned six times. It is true, **one would have to read almost the entire Bible** to discover its' length. While the Old Testament supplies us with multiple characteristics of the millennium, it is the New Testament that provides us with the length of the millennium.

5. Characteristics of the Millennium

The Old Testament Scriptures are so abundant with teachings about the millennium that a detailed picture of what life will be like during this time can be drawn from them.

Peace - Isa. 2:4, 11:6-9, 66:12

Joy - Isa. 9:3-4, 12:3-6

Glory - Isa. 4:2, 35:2

Justice - Isa. 9:7, Jer. 23:5

Earth's Curse Removed - Isa. 11:6-9

Protection - Joel 3:16-17

Economic Prosperity - Isa. 35:1-2

Free From Oppression - Isa. 14:3-6

Righteousness - Isa. 60:21, 46:13

Holiness - Joel 3:17, Isa. 35:8

Comfort - Isa. 12:1-2

Knowledge - Isa. 11:9, Hab. 2:14

Physical Age Lengthened - Isa. 65:20

Population Growth - Ezk. 47:22

Manifest Presence of God - Ezk. 37:27-28

There will also be some very specific characteristics in the millennium that pertain to Israel. This is going to be the time when the covenants and promises that God made with them will be fulfilled. It will be a time marked by special blessings for Israel.

Special Blessings For Israel During the Millennium

Reunited as a nation - They will no longer be divided, but will once again be one nation - Jer. 3:18, Eze. 37:1-23 (dry bones)

Israel will be the center of attention - Isa. 14:1-2, **Zeph. 3:20, Zech. 8:23**

King Jesus will be reigning on the throne of David - Jer. 23:5-6, Isa. 9:6-7

Remember the **tribulation period** is called the time of Jacob's troubles. The **millennium** can be called the times of Israel's blessings.

Jer. 3:18 - In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and they will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers as an inheritance.

Isa. 14:1-2 - When the Lord will have compassion on Jacob and again choose Israel, and settle them in their own land, then strangers will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob. The peoples will take them along and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them as an inheritance in the land of the Lord as male servants and female servants; and they will take their captors captive and will rule over their oppressors.

Zeph. 3:20 - At that time I will bring you in, Even at the time when I gather you together; Indeed, **I will give you renown and praise among all the peoples of the earth**, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

Zech. 8:23 - Thus says the Lord of hosts, in those days **ten men from all the nations** will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.

Jer. 23:5-6 - Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will **reign as king** and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, The Lord our righteousness.

6. Worship During the Millennium

The details that describes the worship and the sacrifices in the millennium makes it clear that there is a **distinction between the Mosaic system and the one that will be going on in the millennium**. The Mosaic Law has been done away with as a result of the death of Christ. A new literal system will be in place during this time.

During the millennium, a temple will be built by Jesus, along with redeemed Jewish people, as well as redeemed Gentiles. See Eze. 43:10-11, Zech. 6:15

Zech. 6:12-13 - Tell him this is what the Lord Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the Lord. 13 It is he who will build the temple of the Lord, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne...

This millennial temple is for all the people who are there. Unlike the tabernacle and the temple which were primarily for Israel. But why will there be sacrifices during this time?

In the light of several New Testament verses, one might easily conclude that any kind of sacrifice that is offered since the death of Christ would be a violation of not believing in the sufficiency of His atonement.

Heb. 9:12 - and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

We will address the question, as to why there will be sacrifices during this time, but first it's important that we make an important observation.

First of all, Ezekiel is not the only one to speak of the Millennial Temple and the sacrifices. If people want to spiritualize the teaching in Ezekiel, they would also have to do the same with the teachings that are found in Isaiah, Daniel, Joel, Haggai, Jeremiah Malachi, and Zechariah, that pertain to the Temple and sacrifices.

Jer. 33:15-18 - In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch of David to spring forth; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell in safety; and this is the name by which she will be called: the Lord is our righteousness. For thus says the Lord, David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man before Me to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings and to prepare sacrifices continually.

Zech. 14:16-19 - Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. ...If the

family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the Lord smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

Isa. 56:7 - Even those I will bring to My holy mountain And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; For My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples.

What are some of the **reasons for sacrifices** during the millennium? Just as there were several reasons for the Levitical sacrifices, there are several reasons for the millennial sacrifices.

Reasons For the Millennial Sacrifices

A memorial for the death of Christ

When Communion is presently celebrated by Church saints, it is done to remember all that the Lord Jesus did for us on the cross. The sacrifices during the millennium will be similar to what Communion is for the Church during this present time. Those sacrifices will remind Millennial saints all that the Lord Jesus did in offering Himself as the eternal sacrifice.

Communion is to go on until the return of the Lord Jesus. When He establishes His kingdom, sacrifices will be instituted to aid us in remembering His atonement.

1 Cor. 11:26 - For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

A means of restoring fellowship with God

This will not be necessary for the saints who already have their glorified bodies in the millennium, but we need to remember that there will be people present who will not have their glorified bodies and they will be able to sin. The sacrifices will be a way to restore fellowship under the new system just as the sacrifices did while Israel was under the Law of Moses.

For ritual cleansing and uncleanness

One of the major purposes for the sacrifices under the Mosaic system were for purification of the priests and for the objects used during worship. Ceremonial cleansing was ongoing because of sin. This will also be true in the millennium. Because there will be a temple and the Lord Jesus will be personally present, there will be the necessity for ceremonial cleansing during the millennium.

Ezek. 43:19-20 - You shall give to the Levitical priests who are from the offspring of Zadok, who draw near to Me to minister to Me, declares the Lord God, a young bull for a sin offering. You shall take some of its blood and put it on its four horns and on the four corners of the ledge and on the border round about; thus you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it.

Animal sacrifices during the millennium will serve primarily to remove ceremonial uncleanness and prevent defilement of the Millennial Temple. This will be necessary because God's presence will once again be personally dwelling in the presence of a sinful and unclean people. Because of God's promise to dwell on earth as stated in the New Covenant, it will be necessary that He protect his presence through sacrifices.

Are you going to be present in the Millennium? If you have trusted in the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins you will.