What the Bible Says

The Millennial Reign of Christ



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PREFACE

For many Christians, the Bible is a book of mystery, full of hidden meaning only to be understood by pastors and seminarians who have devoted lifetimes to uncovering the truths found within its pages. Latin was the language of the Bible for centuries, and many still approach the Scriptures as if they were written in a foreign tongue. A few stories are learned in Sunday School, a handful of popular verses memorized, but many Christians fear to turn the pages of their Bibles into unfamiliar territory.

But there is no reason to be afraid. The Bible is the easiest book in the world to understand. You don't need to be a pastor or have a seminary degree. God designed the Bible to be understood by everyone, and the truths He intended for us to learn are easily found within its pages.

The "What the Bible Says" booklets are designed to illustrate simple biblical truths on topics that many consider to be particularly difficult to grasp. This book strives to let the Bible speak for itself, and therefore, a comprehensive list of scripture references for each of the topics discussed will be presented. Although it's not necessary to look up each and every reference in order to understand what the Bible is saying on a particular topic, we'll focus on the primary references, and give you a thorough list of supporting scriptures for you to study on your own.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

Here's the most important rule to follow when studying the Bible: You must take the Bible literally wherever it is at all possible. Obviously, there are times when the language of the Bible cannot be taken literally, and then we know it is to be understood figuratively. When this is the case, it is our job to find the literal truth conveyed by the figurative language, just as if it were expressed in literal language without the use of figures.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE OF THE BIBLE

The Bible contains some figurative language. A lot of confusion is caused when literal passages of Scripture are mistakenly understood figuratively, and the same holds true for Scripture that is interpreted as literal, when it is obviously figurative in nature. So what is figurative language in the Bible? How can we recognize it when we find it? Simply put, figurative language, or a "figure of speech" occurs when we use words in a different sense from that which is ordinarily given them. Figures of speech are used to give emphasis and to add attraction and variety to human expression. It is important to note that they are never used for the purpose of doing away with literal truth. Instead, figures of speech set forth literal truth in another form than that in which it could be literally expressed. What we're looking for is the literal truth found in the figurative language. Above all, we must not permit figures of speech to do away with the intended truth. If we fail to understand the literal truth expressed by the figure of speech, then it has failed in its purpose.

Now that we understand figures of speech, how can we tell whether a particular statement is intended to be understood literally or figuratively? It's easy! There's a fundamental rule to keep in mind when determining whether the language is literal or figurative: Every statement in the Bible is to be understood literally, when at all possible, and where it is clear that it is literal; otherwise, it is figurative. In other words, what cannot be literal must be figurative. The subject matter itself will always make this clear.

There are two kinds of figures of speech we find in the Bible: first, there are those involving only a word, as in Gal. 2:9 where Peter, James, and John are called "pillars" of the church; second, there are those involving a thought expressed in several words or sentences, such as the parable, allegory, symbol, type, riddle, fable, and enigma.

GOD'S PROMISES ARE ESPECIALLY SIMPLE

We've stated that many people think the Bible is hard to understand. In particular, this belief is held by many concerning the prophecies, the proverbs, and some figures of speech. However, these seemingly difficult parts of the Bible are no more difficult to understand than the sections of the Bible that deal with history, or those that many consider to be "simple." Prophecy is nothing more than history written beforehand and should be understood in this light. All riddles, allegories, types, symbols, and figures of speech are either explained in

Scripture, or are clear in themselves as to their true meaning.

When it comes to the promises of God, there shouldn't be any misunderstanding about what they say or mean. Every promise of God is a simple statement of obligation to men that God will give them certain benefits when they meet certain conditions. All the promises of God are conditional, as can be seen in the Scriptures themselves. If you want to receive the promised benefits, you must accept the promise for what it says and meet the conditions required. You can then depend upon the fulfillment of God's promise in this life. Since God cannot lie, man is assured that what God has promised He is abundantly able to perform. None of God's promises need further interpretation. All that we must do is act upon what the Bible says and believe that God's promise will be fulfilled in our lives. Do not attach any other conditions to God's promises than what is plainly written. When the conditions are met the blessings will be realized. As the apostle Paul writes in 2 Cor. 1:20, "For ALL the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

Chapter One

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST AND HIS SAINTS

> 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 worshiped 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. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years (Rev. 20:4-6)

The Millennium follows the Battle of Armaggedon and the binding of Satan for 1,000 years. If there were no other passage in the Bible to teach the doctrine of the Millennium this one would be sufficient, for the word millennium simply means “one thousand years.” This word is repeated six times in the first seven verses of Revelation 20. Before looking at the subject of the Millennium as it is presented in other scriptures, let’s see what chapter 20 says about it.

First, Satan must be bound before the Millennium can begin:

> And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season (Rev. 20:1-3)

These events—Satan being bound and cast into the bottomless pit—must take place before the Millennium begins.

In addition, not only will Satan be bound at the beginning of the millennial period, but he will also remain imprisoned in the bottomless pit during the entire 1,000 years (Rev. 20:3).

After he saw Satan being cast into the bottomless pit, John saw “thrones” and their occupants (Rev. 20:4). The occupants of the thrones will be the tribulation martyrs—those who have lost their lives rather than take the mark of the Beast. They will reign as kings and priests with Christ, as will all other redeemed people.

In verse five, John explains that the tribulation martyrs have a part in the first resurrection. This resurrection takes place before the Millennium begins and includes everyone who has been redeemed, saved and resurrected, from Adam to the binding of Satan. This verse also implies that the tribulation saints will be the last group of those who will be resurrected. This first resurrection ends with the rapture of the tribulation saints (and the two witnesses, mentioned in Rev. 11:3-13).

It is interesting to note that all the passages that deal with the resurrections, except a few that focus on the rapture of the Church, speak of the first and second resurrections as being one, and as occurring at the same time. However, Rev. 20:5 and 1 Cor. 15:20-23, 51-58; Phil. 3:10-14; 1 Th. 4:13-17; 2 Th. 2:1, 6-8; 2 Cor. 5:1-6; Eph. 5:26, 27; Heb. 11:35; and 1 John 3:13, speak of a resurrection “from out of the dead.” This resurrection of which they speak includes both the dead and living saints up to the time of the rapture, and those who are saved and have died during the Tribulation. In Revelation 20:11-15 the wicked dead, who have no part in the first resurrection and who will be resurrected after the thousand years, are pictured as standing before the Great White Throne to be judged. This will be the second resurrection. It includes all the wicked dead from Adam to the end of the Millennium.

Next, a blessing is pronounced upon all who have part in the first resurrection, for “on such the second death [the Lake of Fire, Rev. 2:11; 19:20; 20:10-15: 21:8] hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign one thousand years” (Rev. 20:6).

John tells us what happens next:

> When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his

> prison. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them against God (Rev. 20:7-10)
>
> Then fire will come down out of Heaven to devour his armies, and he himself will be cast into the Lake of Fire, where the Beast and False Prophet are and where they have been for the one thousand years (Rev. 19:20; 20:7-10)

Finally, the wicked dead will be resurrected and there will be a final judgment, after which the renovation of the heavens and of the earth will take place. The result will be a New Heaven, and a New Earth, as pictured in Rev. 21–22.

Now, with these basic facts in hand, we can look at the many other scriptures which speak of the reign of the Messiah.

Chapter Two

GENERAL TRUTHS ABOUT THE MILLENNIUM

Definition of the Millennium

During the Millennium, God the Father Himself, along with the Son and Holy Spirit, will set up a divine government on earth to rule over all the nations forever. The first thousand years of God's reign is called "the Millennium," which simply means "one thousand years." It is taken from the Latin words "mille" (thousand) and "annum" (year). Some of the terms used in Scripture to describe this Age are:

1. "The thousand years" reign of Christ (Rev. 20:1-10).
2. "The dispensation of the fulness of times" (Eph. 1:10).
3. "The day of the Lord" (Isa. 2:12; 13:6, 9; 34:8; Ezek. 30:3; Amos 5:18; Joel 2:1; Zeph. 1:7, 8, 18; 2:2-3; Zech. 14:1-21; Mal. 4; 1 Th. 5:2; 2 Th. 2:1-8; 2 Pet. 3:10).
4. "That day" (Isa. 2:11; 4:1-6; 19:21; 24:21; 26:1; Ezek. 39:22; 48:35; Hosea 2:18; Joel 3:18; Zech. 12:8-11; 13:1; 14:1-9; Mal. 3:17).
5. "The world [age] to come" (Mt. 12:32; Mk. 10:30; Lk. 20:35; Eph. 1:21; 2:7-14).
6. "The kingdom of Christ and of God" (Mk. 14:25; Lk. 10:11; 22:14-18).
7. "The kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 3:2; 4:17; 5:3, 10, 19, 20; 7:21; 8:11; 10:7; 13:43; 18:1-4; Lk. 19:12-15).
8. "The kingdom of God" (Mk. 14:25; Lk. 10:11; 22:14-18).
9. "The regeneration" (Mt. 19:28; Eph. 1:10).
10. "The times of the restitution [restoration] of all things" (Acts 3:20-21).
11. "The consolation of Israel" (Lk. 2:25).
12. "The redemption of Jerusalem" (Lk. 2:38).

Length of the Millennium (Rev. 20:1-10)

As we have seen, the Millennium begins with the binding of Satan at the return of Christ to the earth to re–establish the throne of David and set up God's kingdom on the earth (Mt. 24:29-31; Rev. 19:11–20:7). It will last until the loosing of Satan, the last rebellion, the renovation of the earth by fire, and the Great White Throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15; 2 Pet. 3:8-13).

It is particularly important to note that the Millennium will only be the first 1,000 years of Christ's reign on the earth. He will continue to reign over the same kingdom eternally; but it is during the first 1,000 years that Christ will rid the earth of all rebellion. It is during this initial 1000–year period that Christ will vanquish all enemies, destroying death and sin, restoring in the process this rebellious part of God's universal kingdom to its place over all other creation, just as it was before sin entered through Lucifer and Adam who headed the rebellions of their respective kingdoms. In this, the millennial age, God will gather together all things in Christ, both the things which are in heaven, and which are on the earth (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Eph. 1:10; Rev. 22:4-5).

The Favorable Beginning

In this age man will have a beginning more favorable than during any other time. Man will have the God of Heaven for a ruler and enjoy all the privileges that such rulership will bring. The following points concerning the divine government and the blessed conditions on the earth during the Millennium will clearly reveal the favorable conditions present during the millennial period.

The Kingdom Foretold

God's covenants with Abraham and David guaranteed to Israel not only an everlasting earthly kingdom, but that they also would be the channel of blessings to all the families of the earth. It seemed that these covenants and promises would fail when Israel was divided into two kingdoms about 1009 B.C. Later, God raised up the prophets, who emphasized to Israel that God would still bring to pass His promises, although He would have to use different means to complete them than would have been necessary if they would have submitted to

His righteous requirements.

Sixteen of these prophets left writings concerning the coming King and His kingdom. Note in the following passages, that because of the rebellion of Israel, they were to go into captivity and be scattered among the nations where they would be “many days” without a king, a sacrifice, or a knowledge of the true God, and that after this they would be gathered back to their own land and be brought very low because of the oppression of the Gentiles. Then they would be delivered from the nations by the Messiah who would come from glory to set up the kingdom (Isa. 1:2-9, 25-28; 2:2-5; 9:6-7; 11:2-16; 27:12-13; 32:1-5, 15-19; 34:1-17; 63:1-6; Jer. 33:17-26; Ezek. 24:11-30; 36:16-38; 37:1-28; Dan. 7:12-27; 8:16-27; 9:24-27; 11:36-12:13; Hos. 2:14-23; 3:4-5; Joel 2:28–3:21; Mic. 4:1-13; 5:l-15; Zech. 8:1–14:21; Mal. 3:1–4:6; Lk. 1:30, 35; 21:20-24; Acts 15:13-17; Rom. 11:25-27; Rev. 1:5; 5:10; 11:15; 20:1-4).

Men looked for the kingdom through the ages (Heb. 11; 2 Sam. 7; Isa. 9:6-7; Mt. 4; Mk. 15:43; Heb. 12:25-28; Acts 3:19-21).

When Will Christ’s Kingdom Be Set Up?

Scripture makes it very clear that certain events will have to come to pass prior to the millennial reign of Christ. His kingdom will be established:

1. At the return of the King from glory (Mt. 25:31-46; Isa. 9:6-7; Dan. 2:44-45; 7:13-14; 8:18-22; Zech. 14; 1 Th. 1:7; Jude 14; Rev. 17:14; 19:11–20:7).
2. After the Church is raptured (1 Cor. 15:5l-58; 1 Th. 4:13-17), for the Church comes back to earth with Christ to help Him set up the kingdom and reign over the nations (Zech. 14:1-5; Jude 14; Rev. 1:4-5; 5:10; 17:14; 19:11-21). It is not until after the days of the Church that Christ comes to build again the house of David (Acts 15:13-18; Isa. 9:6-7; 11:11; Hosea 3:4-5; Lk. 1:32-35). The Church is raptured before the coming of the Antichrist (2 Th. 2:7-8) and Antichrist makes his appearance before Christ comes (2 Th. 2:1-6). Therefore, Christ’s kingdom cannot be set up until these events take place.
3. After the future tribulation, for Christ does not come to the earth with the saints until then (Mt. 24:15-31; Zech. 14:1-21; Dan. 12:1-13; Rev. 19:11-

21).

4. After the great apostasy and the revelation of the Antichrist, for Antichrist is destroyed at Christ's coming to earth. Therefore, he must be here when Christ comes (2 Th. 2:1-12; Rev. 19:11-21; Dan. 7:18-27; 8:16-27; 9:27; 11:36–12:13).
5. At the time the Antichrist is destroyed and Satan is bound for 1,000 years (Rev. 5:10; 20:1-7). During the church age and the future tribulation period Satan is loose (1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:12-17; 13:1-8; 20:1-7). The devil is still loose, so we are still in the church age and will be until Christ comes to bind the devil.
6. After the first resurrection, for the saints reign with Christ on earth for 1,000 years (Rev. 5:9-10; 20:1-6). Therefore, the saints must first be resurrected before they can reign with Him. This is the period of suffering for Christ, not the period of reigning with Him (Rom. 8:18; 1 Cor. 15:20-58; 2 Cor. 5:6; Phil. 1:23; 3:20-21; Col.1:24; 2 Tim. 2:12; 3:12). The 1,000 years are between the resurrection of the righteous and that of the wicked (Rev. 20:4-6,11-15).
7. At the time Ezekiel's temple is built (Ezek. 40:1–43:7). The reign of Christ will be set up in Jerusalem in Ezekiel's temple (Ezek. 43:7), therefore, the kingdom cannot be set up until then. Christ will build this temple when He comes, but the kingdom naturally will not and cannot be set up in the temple until it is built (Isa. 9:6-7; 52:1-8; 62:6-14; Ezek. 36:24-36; 41:1; 43:7; Zech. 6:12-13; 14:1-21; Lk. 1:32-35; Acts 15:13-18).
8. After Israel is gathered back from all countries (Ezek. 20:33-36; 36:17-38; 37:1-28; Hos. 3:4-5; Dan. 9:27).
9. When the Jews are delivered from the armies of the nations and become a blessing to all the families of the earth (Gen. 12:1-3; Ps.2:6-8; Isa. 9:6-7; 25:6-9; Zech. 9:9-11; 14:1-21; Acts 15:13-18; Lk. 1:32-35).
10. In the days of the ten kings of Revised Rome and Revived Grecia (Dan. 2:40-45; 7:18-28; Rev. 17:8-18).
11. After Rev. 4–19 is fulfilled, for Christ comes in Rev. 19–20 to set up the kingdom.

According to these facts mentioned above, the establishment of Christ's kingdom in its fullness is still a future event and not a present reality. Christ Himself taught in the following passages that the kingdom would follow His Second Coming: (Mt. 16:21-27; 19:28; 20:20-23; 23:37-39; 24:3-31; 25:31-46; 26:29, 64; Acts 1:6-7; 3:19-21; Jn. 14:3; Lk. 9:26; 19:11-27; Rev. 5:9-10; 11:15; 20:1-7).

The apostles taught that the establishment of the kingdom was to take place in the future, following the Second Coming of Christ (Acts 1:7-11; 1 Pet. 1:7; 5:4; 2 Pet. 1:16; 3:3-4; Jas. 5:7; 1 Jn. 2:28; Jude 14; 1 Tim. 6:14-15).

Will it be a Literal Earthly Kingdom?

Christ's kingdom will be as "earthly" and "literal" as any kingdom has ever been. It will be the ninth of the following kingdoms mentioned in Daniel and Revelation: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo–Persia, Greece, Rome, the revised Roman Empire, the revived Grecian Empire, and the Kingdom of Heaven (Isa. 9:6-7; Dan. 2:44-45; 7:13-14, 17-27; Zech. 14; Rev. 17:8-18). As all the preceding kingdoms have been physical and literal, so must the kingdom of Heaven. The following studies will further prove that this kingdom will be a literal kingdom on earth.

(Note: The Seventh Day Adventists teach that the earth will be desolate during the 1,000 years and that this earth is the bottomless pit where the devil will be bound for that period. However, there is nothing in Scripture to indicate this. The bottomless pit is a department in the underworld for the confinement of certain demon and angelic spirits. That the earth will not be desolate during this period is proved by the scriptures in the points below).

What Will Be the Form of Government?

The government in the Millennium will not be monarchic, democratic, or autocratic, but a theocratic form of government; that is, God reigning through:

1. Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son (2 Sam. 7; Ps. 2; 89:35-37; Isa. 2:2-4; 4:2-3; 9:6-7; 11:1-15; 16:5; 24:23; 32:1-4; 40:9-10; 42:1-4; 52:7; Jer. 23:5-8; Ezek. 43:7; Dan. 2:44-45; 7:13-14; Mic. 4; 5:1-7; Zech. 6:12-13; 14:1-21; Mt. 25:31-46; Lk. 1:32-35; Rev. 11:15; 20:1-10).
2. David, the king of Israel (Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:24; 37:24-28; Hos. 3:4-5).
3. The apostles and all the saints from Adam to the Millennium, or those who have part in the first resurrection (Ps. 149:5-9; Dan. 7:18-27; Mt. 19:28; 1 Cor. 4:8; 6:2; Eph. 2:7; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 11; Rom. 8:17; 2 Th. 1:4-7; Rev. 1:6; 2:26-27; 5:9-10; 11:18; 12:5; 20:4-6; 22:5). Every saint will be judged

and rewarded according to the deeds done and will be given places of rulership according to the degree of their rewards, not according to the company of redeemed of which they are a part, or the age in which they were redeemed. Certain classes of men will not have part in reigning with Christ (Mt. 18:1-13; Lk. 9:62; 14:27; Jn. 3:3-5; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 12:14; 1 Jn. 3:10; Rev. 20:15).

4. Earthly judges and kings will be restored, but as subordinate to the heavenly rulers (Isa. 1:25-28; Ezek. 43:7-12; Rev. 21:24).

Where Will the Seat of Government be Located?

Jerusalem, rebuilt and restored to a greater glory than ever before, will be the seat of the government, the world capital, and the center of worship forever (1 Chron. 23:25; 2 Chron. 33:4-7; Ps. 48:8; Isa. 2:2-4; 11:11-12:6; Jer. 17:25; Ezek. 34:1-35; 43:7; Joel 3:17, 20; Mic. 4:7; Zech. 8:3-23; 14:1-21; 15:1-18).

What Will Be the Territorial Extent of the Kingdom?

Christ's kingdom will be worldwide and will forever "increase" in population and blessings (Isa. 9:6-7; 11:9; Ps. 72:8; 97:9; Dan. 7:13-14; Mic. 4:1-3; Zech. 9:10; 14: 1-21; Rev. 11:15).

Who Will and Will Not Be the Subjects of the Kingdom?

Various groups of people will be excluded from the kingdom (Mt. 5:20; 13:49-50; 24:45-51; 25:25-28, 31-46; Rev. 14:9-12). Some from among all the nations of the earth will continue their natural lives in the kingdom forever and ever. "All people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14, 18, 22-27; Isa. 9:6-7; Zech. 14:1-21; Lk. 1:32-35; Rev. 11:15).

After the battle of Armageddon and the judgment of the nations at the return of

Christ, there will be many left of all nations who will go up from year to year to worship the Lord of hosts and keep the Feast of Tabernacles. It is these people and their children that will populate the earth during the Millennium (Isa. 2:1-2; Zech. 14:16-21; Mt. 25:31-46; Rev. 11:15; 20:1-10).

The Russellists (Jehovah's Witness) teach that the atonement of Christ was for Adam alone, that one man could only atone for one man, that all the sons of Adam must remain dead until the Millennium, at which time they will be resurrected and given a second chance, and that all who will not accept God during this second probation will be annihilated. This is one of the most erroneous and unscriptural teachings ever set forth. It denies the very heart of the gospel, for Jesus died for every man, as proved in Mt. 1:21; 26:29; Lk. 24:47; Jn. 1:12-16; 3:5, 16-19; 6:37-40; 14:6; Acts 2:38; 4:12; Rom. 1:16; 5:6-11, 15-21; 6:23; 8:1-4, 32; 2 Cor. 5:14-21; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14, 20-22; Heb. 1:3; 2:9-10; 9:11-28; 10:4-22, 29; 1 Pet. 1:18-23; 1 Jn. 1:7.

These passages explain the justice of God to forgive everyone who repents and believes the gospel. Christ's sacrifice was for all men of all times, and not for Adam alone. If this were not so, then God would have had to do what He did in Christ a countless number of times. Such a thing is absurd. If men are going to have another chance in the Millennium, then the basis of their reconciliation must be the same then as it is now. Thus, the teaching that Christ died for one man is contradicted by the teaching that all men will have a second chance during the Millennium.

The Bible teaches that all the righteous dead will be resurrected before the Millennium and the wicked dead after that period (Rev. 20:4-15). Therefore, it would be impossible for the wicked to be resurrected and given a second chance during the Millennium if they are not to rise until after the 1,000 year period has ended. In no place does the Bible teach that men have a second chance. On the contrary it says, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). The Bible does not teach annihilation for anyone. During our lives we have hundreds of chances to get right with God, and if we fail to do so then we will be "cut off" and "that without remedy" (Prov. 29:1).

Hence, it is clear that the subjects of the millennial Kingdom will not be the wicked dead who will be raised to life again after the Millennium, but men of the nations who will be on the earth at the coming of Christ with the saints to set up the kingdom (Isa. 2:1-4; 11:11; 66:17-21; Zech. 14:16).

Will There Be Laws for the Subjects of the Kingdom?

There will be laws in this kingdom for the same purpose as in any other kingdom. There are laws even in Heaven. Adam was given laws to keep before he fell. In order for us to function in social groups, a system of laws has been established since before Adam's fall. Even in the Garden of Eden, there was at least one law that had to be kept. Why should things be different during the Millennium? There will be sinners during the Millennium—we know this, because Satan will lead them in a rebellion at the end of the Millennium—so God, out of necessity, will have laws to make known His will to His subjects. It is necessary to have laws to set certain standards for those with free will. The very nature of a free will demands law and revelation of the will of God in order to be enlightened as to his duties to the society of which he is a part and to enable his will to be exercised in regards to his moral obligations.

Because the millennial kingdom will be an earthly kingdom with earthly subjects, many will be rebels against the rule of Christ and openly side with Satan when he is loosed out of the pit at the end of the 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-10). Anyone who has been "born again" and has been living in fellowship with God during the 1,000 years certainly will not rebel with Satan at that time. That there will be sinners here during the Millennium is clear from Isa. 2:2-4; 9:6-7; 11:3-5; 16:5; 65:20; Ps.2:6-9; Mic. 4:3; Zech. 14:16-21; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 20:7-10.

Many unsaved people will be permitted to live and go through the Millennium because they will keep the outward laws of the government, but in their hearts they will be rebellious against the government. On the other hand, many will be executed during the Millennium because of committing sins worthy of death (Isa. 11:3-5; 16:5; 65:20). There will have to be laws to govern such people during the Millennium or there could be no transgression of the law to bring judgment.

What Laws Will There Be?

The laws of God revealing His will in detail as given by Moses and Jesus Christ will be the laws of the kingdom. This includes the laws of both the Old and New

Testaments. The outward laws, of course, will be the only ones enforced upon man. Outward laws alone could never govern the desires of a free will. It is clear from Isa. 2:2-4; Mic. 4:2; Ezek. 40:1–48:35 and the books of Moses that the law, or at least part of it, will again become effective during the Millennium and forever, as far as Israel is concerned.

The writers of these passages knew only of the law of Moses when they wrote, so when they mentioned “the law” they could have had in mind only the law of Moses. That law revealed the governmental plan and laws of God in detail, which were sufficient to govern men regardless of their attitude toward spiritual things. When God gave the law to Moses He gave it in eternal terms, thus emphasizing the truth that such law is eternal and should be observed by Israel forever. The law will, in some details, apply only to Israel in their land, for some of it was made only for Israel. The moral and governmental laws concern all nations alike, but the laws that apply to the nation of Israel, to be obeyed in their own land, will apply only to Israel. The laws of the gospel will apply to all men alike, while some of the laws of Moses concerning typical worship will apply in particular to Israel in their land, as taught by Ezekiel 40:1–48:35. Certain of the feasts of Israel will have to be observed by all nations or they will not get rain (Zech. 14:16-21). God will adjust all matters when the kingdom is set up.

The Jews naturally will enjoy certain blessings more than others due to the fact that the temple, with its worship, the world capital, and missionary headquarters will be located in Palestine.

Neither Israel, nor any other nation, has ever kept the law, yet the law was given for them to keep forever. If they ever keep it as God intended it will yet be in the future.

Besides these outward laws for the natural man in the kingdom, there will be laws governing the spiritual man; that is, the man who will desire spiritual things and live in the Spirit. This kind of spiritual man will have to keep the outward laws just as much as the man who rejects spiritual things, and as long as either kind of man obeys the outward laws he will not be punished because he has broken no law. The same thing is true in any government. A man does not have to accept spiritual things to escape the clutches of the law. He may be rebellious as far as spiritual matters are concerned, but as long as he keeps the outward law he is not apprehended by the law. On the other hand, the man who accepts Christ as his Savior and walks in the Spirit must also keep the outward laws, for besides

being under governmental law, he is under the laws of Christ (Mt. 5–7).

In these laws of Christ governing the spiritual man there are laws which would not affect the natural man. For example, the law concerning adultery affects both spiritual and natural men; but the one, “whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Mt. 5:27-30), would kill the spiritual man—he would be cut off from God and become spiritually dead. However, it would not affect the rebel in his relationship to God and spiritual things because he is already dead spiritually.

Who Will Execute These Laws?

Christ and the glorified saints, who have been made kings and priests as well as earthly rulers, will execute these laws forever (see scriptures under point (4), page 30).

Where Will the Different Nations Be Located?

The Gentile nations will perhaps live in the same places they do today, with the exception of those who live in lands promised to Abraham and his seed for an everlasting possession. The boundaries of this promised land extend from the Mediterranean Sea on the west to the River Euphrates on the east, taking in all of the Arabian Peninsula and the wilderness countries, both to the south and east of what was formely known as Palestine (Gen. 15:14-18; 17:6-19; Ex. 32:13; Lev. 25:23-34; Deut. 4:40; Joel 14:29; 2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 60:21; Jer. 25:5; Ezek. 47:15-23).

How Will This “Everlasting Possession” Be Divided?

This promised land will be divided in wide strips running east and west. There will be twelve great strips, one for each of the twelve tribes. The portion for Dan will be on the extreme north and that for Gad on the extreme south with the other tribes between. Judah and Benjamin will have their two portions joining the “holy oblation,” a portion of land sixty miles square and divided into three parts. There will be 24x60 miles on the north for the Levites, 24x60 miles in the middle for the Priests, and 12x60 miles on the south for the city of Jerusalem and

its suburbs and gardens. The city itself will be twelve miles square and will be a miniature of the New Jerusalem (Ezek. 48:1-35).

Will the Jews Have a Temple During the Millennium?

The Jews will have a temple during the millennial period. It will be located in the priest's portion of the "holy oblation." The temple and its enclosure called "the sanctuary" (Ezek. 45:1-4) will be one mile square (Ezek. 40:1–45:14). It will not be the temple that will be built in the last days before the Second Coming of Christ and in which the Antichrist will sit during the last three and one-half years of the present age (Mt. 24:15-22; 2 Th. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2), as this one will be destroyed at the Second Coming of Christ. The millennial temple will be built by Christ Himself when He comes to the earth to set up the kingdom (Zech. 6:12-13). It will be the place for Christ's earthly throne forever (Ezek. 43:7).

The River of the Millennial Temple

There is to be a literal river flowing out from this temple eastward and from the south side of the altar. It will then turn and run southward through Jerusalem and immediately south of Jerusalem it will be divided. Half of the river will flow westward into the Mediterranean Sea and half will flow eastward into the Dead Sea. There will also be trees on both sides of the river whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit be consumed. The trees shall bring forth new fruit according to their months, which shall be for meat and preservation of natural life for the nations. This river is not the same as the one in the New Jerusalem, for that does not come down to the earth until the New Earth after the Millennium (Rev. 22:1-5). The Dead Sea into which one branch of the river flows is to be healed so that multitudes of fish will be found in it (Ezek. 47:1-12; Zech. 14:8). When Christ sets His feet on the Mount of Olives there is to be a great earthquake and the whole country will be changed (Zech. 14:4-5). The Dead Sea will be raised so that it will have an outlet to purify the stagnant waters which have been shut up for all these centuries. There will be marshes left to provide salt.

Will There Be Priests in the Millennial Temple?

There will be earthly priests in the future temple just as there were in the first temple (Ezek. 43:19-27; 44:9-31). The Levites who went astray with the northern kingdom of the ten tribes will not be permitted to do the most holy work, but shall serve in other parts of the temple, that is, their descendants will serve in the future temple worship. The sons of Zadok who remained true to the house of David will do the most holy work (Ezek. 43:19-27; 44:9-31. See 1 Kings 1:39; 2 Sam. 8:17; 15:24; 20:25).

The priesthood of the law of Moses was an eternal one (Ex. 29:9; 40:15; Num. 25:11-13; 1 Chron. 23:13). This would seem to conflict with Heb. 7:11-28 where the writer speaks of a change in the law and priesthood of old. There is really no conflict. However, as far as the means of approach and the way of salvation and mediation to God are concerned, there has been a change. Those under the law had to come through the priests and offer certain sacrifices as a token of their faith, but today Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed once and forever for us by which we, individually, can draw nigh to God any time we desire (1 Cor. 5:7). Nevertheless, there will still be the earthly priesthood and offerings in the future ages for earthly peoples—not for salvation—for the blood of bulls and goats did not take away sins even when they were offered, but for a memorial or object lesson, just as the Lord's Supper serves as a memorial of Christ's sacrifice for us.

There is no question but what God intends to have a temple, an earthly priesthood, sacrifices and feasts in the future, for that is what He revealed to Ezekiel (40:1–48:35) and promised Israel when He gave them ordinances to be observed throughout all their generations, as we shall see below. These outward observances will not supercede the present individual salvation, or the means of approach to God.

Will There Be Offerings in the Future Temple?

Every offering mentioned in the law was to be observed by Israel forever, as is proved by the following statements in the law, which are found from two to eight times in a single chapter of the books of Moses:

"It is a statute forever"

"By a statute forever throughout their generations"

“This shall be an everlasting statute unto you”

“By a perpetual statute”

“By an ordinance forever”

There are many other such statements in connection with the offerings and feasts of the law which can only be taken in a literal sense. These offerings are definitely mentioned as being in the future temple described by Ezekiel to be the place where Christ would reign in the midst of the children of Israel forever (Ezek. 43:7). The offerings found in the millennial chapters of Ezekiel are:

(1) Burnt offerings (Ezek. 43:24-27; 45:17-25; 46:1-24. cf. Lev. 7:16).

(2) Sin offering (Ezek. 43:19-23; 45:17-25; 46:1-24. cf. Lev. 4:14-21).

(3) Meat offering (Ezek. 45:17-25; 46:1-24. cf. Rev. 6:14-23).

(4) Trespass offering (Ezek. 46:20. cf. Lev. 7:1-10; 14:12).

(5) Peace offering (Ezek. 43:27; 45:17; 46:1-24. cf. Lev. 7:11-38).

To some, it seems unreasonable that the old sacrifices and ceremonial law will be established in the Millennium and will last forever, but when we consider that neither Jews nor Gentiles have ever kept the law in its true sense, either with the heart or externally, it does not seem unreasonable. These ordinances will not be the means of salvation at that time, any more than they were in Old Testament times (Heb. 9:12-15; 11:4). They will serve as memorials, with a deeper significance than they ever served as types of old. We observe today the Lord’s Supper and water baptism in a deep spiritual way, and yet they are mere outward observances of what has actually been done. Neither one saves a soul from sin, but both are acts of obedience and have a true significance if observed in the right way. One is an outward symbol of what has been wrought in the heart and the other is a memorial of what has been done on Calvary for us. Christ is to observe the Lord’s Supper when He comes (Lk. 22:16). Ezekiel describes these things as a “perpetual ordinance unto the Lord” (Ezek. 46:14. See also Ex. 12:14, 24, 27:21; 28:43; 30:21; Lev. 6:13, 18, 22; 7:34-36; 10:9-15; 16:29-31; 17:1-7; 23:14, 21, 31, 41; 24:3; Num. 10:8; 18:8; 25:13; 28:3, 6, 10, 15, 23, 24, 31; 29:11, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38).

Will the Feasts of Jehovah Be Observed in the Millennium?

The feasts are nearly all mentioned in Ezekiel and Zechariah as being held in the time of the reign of the Messiah. They are:

(1) Passover (Ezek. 45:21. cf. Lev. 23; Ex. 12; 1 Cor. 5:7).

(2) Unleavened Bread (Ezek. 45:21. cf. Lev. 23; 1 Cor. 5:8).

(3) First-fruits (Ezek. 44:30. cf. Lev. 23; 1 Cor. 15:23).

(4) Pentecost, or Weeks (Ezek. 46:9. cf. Lev. 23; Acts 2:1).

(5) Trumpets (Ezek. 44:5; 45:17. cf. Lev. 23; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Th. 4:16).

(6) Day of Atonement (Ezek. 45–46. cf. Lev. 23; Heb. 8–10).

(7) Tabernacles (Ezek. 45:25; Zech. 14:16-21. cf. Lev. 23).

In addition to these offerings and feasts, the new moons, the sabbaths, and "all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, and all the laws thereof," and "all solemnities of the house of Israel" will be observed during the Millennium and even in the New Earth forever (Ezek. 44:5; 45:17; 46:1-3; Isa. 66:22-24).

What Will Be the Spiritual Conditions in the Millennium?

(1) The out–poured Spirit (Joel 2:28-32; Isa. 32:15-20; 44:3; 59:21; Ezek. 36:25-27; 39:28-29; Zech. 12:10–13:1). Although the prophecies of Joel and others of the outpouring of the Spirit (called the Baptism in the Spirit in Acts 1:4-5; 2:1-16; etc.) were fulfilled in a partial way on the day of Pentecost and in the early church (Acts 2:1-16; 2:38-39; 9:17; 10:44-48; 11:14-18; 19:1-6), and are now being fulfilled in these last days (Acts 2:14-21), yet they will not be completely fulfilled until the Millennium and thereafter. In other words, the outpouring of the Spirit that was received by the early church is being received today and will be received in a greater way throughout all eternity from the time the Messiah

comes to bring universal religion, peace and prosperity to all nations forever (Dan. 7:13-14, 18-27; Rev 11:15; 20:1–21:3).

(2) Universal knowledge (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14; Zech. 8:22-23). There will be universal knowledge so that all will know the ways of the Lord, whether they choose to walk in them or not. Many will not walk in the ways of God then, just as many choose the same path today.

Of those who profess Christ today, how many are truly "born again" followers of Christ? If true facts were known, the percentage would be small, for "not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt. 7:21). One must be "born again" and made a "new creature" in Christ and live a consistent life of holiness before one can be counted a true follower of Christ or a "Christian" (Jn. 3:1-8; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 12:1; Heb. 12:14; Jas. 4:4; 1 Jn. 2:15-17; 3:8-10)

(3) Jewish Missionaries (Isa. 2:2-4; 40:9; 52:7; 61:6; 66:18-21; Zech. 8:23). The Jewish people will become the missionaries of the gospel and priests of the law during this millennial age. They will carry out God's plan for the first time since God called out Abraham and promised to make his seed a blessing to all nations. The missionary program will be carried on then by the same means it is being carried on today, with the exception that it will be a governmental enterprise and not merely the enterprise of some small societies.

The purpose of God in establishing the government under His Son is to put down all rebellion in the universe (1 Cor. 15:24-28). Being a just God He will not even destroy rebels without giving them a knowledge of the means of reconciliation to Him and giving them a chance to become reconciled. Hence the necessity of filling the earth with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. He will then have a just and recognizable basis of judgment against those who rebel and sin against the truth.

(4) Universal religion (Mal. 1:11; Zech. 14:16-21; Isa. 2:2-4; Joel 2:28-31; Jer. 31:31-36). This will be the result of the universal missionary program and the preaching of the gospel of salvation unto the ends of the earth. It will become popular then to serve God and the Lord Jesus Christ, so it will not take long for this universal religion to be realized. Everyone will go to church and have a Bible in his own language. Every community will be like unto the days of Heaven on earth.

(5) The glory of God will be continually manifest (Isa. 4:2-6; 35:2; 60:1-9; Ezek. 43:1-5). A cloud of glory will be seen forever over the millennial temple when the Messiah reigns. It left the temple just before the captivities (Ezek. 11:22-25) and will not come back until the nation is fully restored under the Messiah who will build the future temple for the restored glory (Ezek. 43:1-5; Zech. 6:11, 12).

(6) Salvation for all (Joel 2:32; Acts 2:16-21; Isa. 2:2-4; 11:9; 33:24; 40:1-2; 52:7; Heb. 8–10; Jer. 50:20). However, salvation will benefit only those who repent and accept God's free gift as it is offered today, to all who will receive it.

(7) Universal holiness and righteousness (Isa. 1:26-27; Jer. 31:23; Zech. 14:6-21).

(8) Divine healing for all (Isa. 32:1-5; 33:24; 35:3-6; 53:5; Mt. 8:17). God will heal them, just as He did for Israel when coming out of Egypt. He healed them all and there was not a feeble person in their tribes (Ps. 105:37; 107:20).

(9) Yearly pilgrimages to Jerusalem (Zech. 14:16-21; Isa. 2:1-4; 35:8-9).

(10) A new and an eternal covenant (Isa. 59:2l; Jer. 3l:3l-34; 32:40; Ezek. 34:25; 36:26-27; 37:26; Rom. 11:25-29).

What Will Be the Living Conditions During the Millennium?

(1) Satan will be bound so there will be no tempter (Rev. 20:1-10; Isa. 24:21; 25:7).

(2) Universal peace (Isa. 2:4; 9:6-7; Mic. 4:3-4). This means that there will be no taxation to keep up large armies and navies. "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." Class prejudices and other national ills will be forgotten because of the great turning to God by all nations after hearing the gospel. Spiritual revivals will break out in every land and all peoples will become one in serving the great king. The universal conversation will not be about wars, treaties, armaments, depressions, various forms of religion or government, or anything that makes up the common talk today, but all peoples will be fully satisfied in peace and prosperity and will have no excuse to

talk about anything but the goodness of God and the wondrousness of His reign (Mal. 1:11. cf. Mal. 3:16).

(3) Universal prosperity (Isa. 65:21-24; Ezek. 34:26; Mic. 4:1-5; Zech. 8:11-12; 9:16-17). There will be no charity fund raised every year, no unemployment, and no poverty. The billions now spent on tobacco, drugs of various kinds, sickness, hospitals, cosmetics, crime, worldly amusements, and many other things will supply everybody with plenty. All investments will be safe and there will be no financial crashes to retard business throughout eternity.

(4) Financial system (Mal. 3:7-12). Tithing was the system before the law (Gen. 14:20; 28:22), under the law (Lev. 27:30-33; Num. 18:21; Neh. 10:37; 13:10-12; Prov. 3:9-10) as well as since (Mt. 23:23; Rom. 2:22; 1 Cor. 9:7-18; 16:1-3; Heb. 7), so no doubt the same system will be used by the government of Christ in the coming ages. There will be plenty of money from such a system to balance the budget and have plenty to spare. There will be no corrupt politics or graft as Christ and the glorified saints will reign in righteousness and true holiness (Isa. 32:1-5). They will need no salaries as they will own the universe and all things will be theirs. There will be no need of special taxes on automobiles, gasoline, food products, or anything else.

(5) Full justice for all (Isa. 9:6-7; 11:1-5; 42:1-4; 65:20; 57:15; 66:1-2; Mt. 5–7). Crime will be a thing of the past. The Lord and His glorified saints will try men and also judge them, thus assuring justice to all alike. If a man commits a sin worthy of death he will be immediately tried and executed.

(6) Human life will be prolonged (Isa. 65:20; Zech. 8:4; Lk. 1:33). Human life will be prolonged to a thousand years and then those who do not rebel against God with Satan at the end of the Millennium will be permitted to live on forever and ever.

(7) Increase of light (Isa. 30:26; 60:18-22). The light of the sun will be increased seven times and the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun today.

(8) Changes in the animal kingdom (Isa. 11:6-8; 65:17-25; Rom. 8:18-23). All animals will have their natures changed. There will be no more fierce or poisonous creatures. Things will be as they were in the Garden of Eden before the curse, with the exception of the serpent who will still be cursed (Gen. 3:14; Isa. 65:25).

(9) Land restored (Isa. 35:1-10; 55:12-13; Ezek. 36:8-12; Joel 2:18-27; 3:17-21; Amos 9:13-15). All lands will be restored to a wonderful beauty and fruitfulness, with the exception of the site of Babylon and perhaps a few more centers of great rebellion against God, which will be used as object lessons to coming generations of God's wrath against sin (Isa. 34; 13:17-22; Jer. 50–51). The earth will not be fully restored to the original condition until after the Millennium (Rom. 8:18-23; Rev. 21–22; 2 Pet. 3).

(10) Love, joy, and righteousness will prevail (Isa. 9:6-7; 11:5; 12:1-6; 25:6-10; 32:1-5; 35:1-10; 52:9; 55:12; 60:15; 65:18-25). The Gentiles will love the Jews who will then be the head of the nations (Deut. 28:1-14).

(11) Plenty of rain and water (Isa. 30:23-25; 33:20-21; 35:6-7; 41:17-18; 49:10; Ezek. 34:26; 47:1-12; Zech. 14:8; Joel 3:18).

(12) Plenty of trees, grass, cattle, sheep, gold, silver, and other material blessings (Isa. 29:17; 30:23-24; 32:15; 35:1-7; 41:19; 49:9-10; 51:3; 55:13; 60:5-17; 62:8-9; Jer. 31:27-28; Ezek. 34:27; 36:25-35; Joel 3:18; Amos 9:13).

(13) Rebuilding of waste places of the earth (Isa. 32:16-18; 49:19; 52:9; 61:4-5; Ezek. 36:8-15, 33-38; Amos 9:14-15).

(14) Great highways (Isa. 11:16–19:23-25; 35:7-8).

(15) Fruitfulness of women (Jer. 30:19; 33:22; Hosea 1:10).

These facts go far to prove that the millennial age is to have a most favorable beginning and will be a better age throughout than any we have known. These days will indeed be the days of Heaven on earth (Deut. 11:21).

The Test (Ps. 2; Rev. 5:10; 11:15; 20:1-10)

The test of man in this age will be to obey the laws of the divine government, to obey Christ and the glorified saints, and to mold one's character in harmony with God by the Holy Spirit and the power of the Gospel.

The Purpose of God in this Age

(1) To put down all rebellion and all enemies under the feet of Christ so that God may be all in all as before the rebellion (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Heb. 2:7-9).

(2) To fulfill the everlasting covenants made with Abraham (Gen. 12; 13; 15; 17), Isaac (Gen. 26), Jacob (Gen. 28; 35), David (2 Sam. 7), and others.

(3) To vindicate and avenge Christ and His saints (Mt. 26:63-66; Rom. 12:19; Ps. 2; Isa. 63; Rev. 1:7; 6:9-11; 19:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:10-11; 2 Tim. 4:7-8; Rom. 8:17-21).

(4) To restore Israel and deliver her from the nations and make her the head of all nations forever (Acts 15:13-17; Mt. 24:31; Isa. 11:11; Ezek. 20:33-44; 38–39; Deut. 28).

(5) To exalt the saints of all ages in some kingly or priestly capacity according to the promises and according to their works (Rom. 8:17-21; 14:10-11; 2 Cor. 5:10; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; 1 Pet. 1:10-13; 5:l, 4; Rev. 1:5; 2:26; 5:10; 11:18; 12:5; 20:4-6; 1 Cor. 6).

(6) To gather together in “one” all things in Christ which are in Heaven and in earth (Eph. 1:10) and restore all things as before the rebellion (Acts 3:20-21; 1 Cor. 15:24-28).

(7) To judge the nations in righteousness and restore the earth to its rightful owners (Isa. 2:2-4; 11:1-11; Mt. 25:31-46; Dan. 7:9-27; 1 Cor. 6).

(8) To restore a righteous and eternal government on earth as originally planned (Isa. 9:6-7; 11:1-9; 42:1-5; Dan. 2:44-45; 7:13-27; Lk. 1:32-35; Rev. 11:15; 19:11-16; 20:4-6).

(9) To fulfill the scores of prophecies concerning the reign of the Messiah (Dan. 9:24; Acts 3:20-21; 1 Pet. 1:10-13).

The Means of Accomplishing God’s Purpose

God will send His Son Jesus Christ with the mighty angels and all the resurrected and glorified saints from Heaven to put down all rebellion on the earth, bring all rebels into judgment, complete the dispensational dealings of God with men so that all the curse may be removed, and the Kingdom of God

established permanently over the earth as in the beginning (Mt. 24:29-31; 25:31-46; 2 Th. 1:7-10; Rev. 19:11-21, 20:1-10). This expeditionary force from Heaven will defeat the armies of the devil and the Antichrist and the kingdoms of this world, seize all the earthly kingdoms and establish a permanent kingdom here which later will be merged into the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

The Failure (Rev. 20:1-10)

This passage reveals that man in this dispensation will again fail in doing the will of God. The failure, however, will not be as universal as in other ages. Man, up to this time, will have failed while in a state of innocence, while in a state of freedom without restraint, while under self–rule, under promise, under the revelation of the divine will, and while under grace. However, in the Millennium he will fail under the most blessed conditions of divine government, having all the privileges of those who have been reconciled to God. God will have tried man in every conceivable way, and he will have proved a failure. This being true, there will be nothing more for God to do but to bring things to a speedy end and permit the remaining righteous ones who did not rebel to enter the new restored earth to carry out the original plan of habitation on the earth. Multitudes of men during the l,000 years will not have laid down their arms against God in their hearts, or surrendered themselves to Christ for a change of heart and life, so they will be given a chance to rebel openly. Satan will be loosed out of the pit at the end of the 1,000 years to unite and lead all such rebels at heart in open rebellion against God in a plan to overthrow the divine government and rid the earth completely of God and His followers. But they will not be successful as is clear from Rev. 20:7-10.

The Judgment (Rev. 20:1-10)

Because of man’s continued failures under every conceivable test, because the faithful have realized that God’s form of government is the best and that God does really love them and does nothing but good for them, because of the accusations brought against God by Satan and those who rebel with him have been amply demonstrated to be false, because the faithful have yielded their wills unreservedly to God, and because the time will then come in the plan of God to put down all rebellion and completely rid the universe of all rebellion, He will finally permit Satan to deceive and unite all those who are desirous of

overthrowing the government at the end of the Millennium.

The judgment upon man for his stubborn rebellion in the face of all God has done will be his complete destruction from the earth by fire coming from Heaven upon those who have rebelled. Their bodies will be resurrected from the dead, along with all other rebels of the human race since Adam, and will be brought up before the Great White Throne judgment along with the demons and angels who have rebelled. All will be judged and sentenced to the Lake of Fire and will be tormented according to their evil works. Satan himself will be cast into the Lake of Fire where the Beast and False Prophet will have been for l,000 years and will be forever in the torments of the damned (Isa. 66:22-24; Mt. 25:41, 46; Rev. 14:9-12; 9:20, 20:10).

Thus God brings an end to the rebellion in the universe. He has been longsuffering with rebels since Adam's time, for the sole reason of demonstrating to all that He is loving, merciful, just, and longsuffering. These holy attributes extend even to those who rebel against Him, giving them every possible means of reconciliation, so that God's blessings to them might be again realized as though they had never rebelled. God will then be free to judge the ones who persist in rebellion and bless the ones who lay down their rebellion and become reconciled to Him. This He does by confining rebels away from society and permitting the faithful to enter into eternal blessing in the restored earth.

God's Provision of Redemption

God will provide the same eternal salvation for those who will accept it during this period as was provided in all previous ages —redemption through Jesus Christ. The faithful at the end of the Millennium will be delivered from the terrible judgment of fire from Heaven upon the rebels, and will be permitted to enter the New Earth to carry out His original purpose in the earth. The earth will pass its second sinful career into a redeemed and perfect state "wherein dwelleth righteousness." God Himself will then set up His headquarters on the earth and reign over His universal kingdom which will then be free from all sin and rebellion. From this time and through eternity all will submit to the Lord of the universe, having been purged from all possible rebellion.

The eternal benefits of the redemption of Christ will for the first time be realized fully in the New Earth at the end of the Millennium. At that time the whole

creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God (Rom. 8:21-24). All rebels will be confined to the eternal Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:11-15). All resurrected saints will continue to reign forever and ever over the coming natural generations of men yet to be born in all eternity (Dan. 2:44-45; 7:13-14, 18; Rev. 5:10; 11:15; 22:4-6). The natural people will eat of the tree of life and live forever (Rev. 22:1-2). They will carry out God's original purpose of replenishing the earth with sinless human beings forever (Gen. 1:26-28; 9:12). All natural life on the earth will be restored to its original creative purposes for man to utilize for the best good of the eternal natural society (Rom. 8:21-25; 1 Tim. 4:1-8). All plant and animal life will be as it was before the fall. There will be no more thorns, thistles, poisonous weeds, and destructive forms of life. The earth will be a perpetual garden, a paradise restored to its original beauty and usefulness (Rev. 21–22).

From the original creation to the end of the Millennium the earth will have gone through two perfect states and two sinful careers. It was perfect when originally created (Gen. 1:1). The first earthly inhabitants were destroyed because of sin and rebellion under Lucifer (Gen. 1:2). The earth was restored in six days and made perfect the second time (Gen. 1:3-2:25). The second earthly inhabitants rebelled under Adam and the earth entered its second sinful career (Gen. 3). This career will end with the last rebellion under Satan at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20: 7-10). Then the earth will be made perfect the third time by the renovation by fire.

Chapter Three

THE RENOVATION OF THE EARTH BY FIRE

The subject of the renovation of the earth is as much misunderstood as any other biblical topic. The ideas that generally prevail—that the world is coming to an end, that the coming of Christ will end all things on the earth, that the present Heaven and earth will be annihilated and cease to exist, that the New Heaven and New Earth never existed before, that all men are to be glorified and that none will exist in a natural state after the Millennium, that we will spend eternity in Heaven, that men and animals will not multiply and continue on earth forever—are all unscriptural. Now that we've looked at some of the basic facts concerning the millennial reign of Christ, let's continue with a study of how the atmospheric heavens and the earth will be purified by fire, resulting in new or renewed ones, as pictured in Rev. 21–22; Isa. 65:17; 66:22-24; 2 Pet. 3:10-13.

The only consistent way to arrive at a logical understanding of this subject, or any other in the Bible, is to collate all Scripture on the subject and harmonize the seemingly difficult passages, regardless of how inconsistent they may seem to our finite minds. Until we have followed this procedure, it is unwise to speak with authority. Having followed this procedure on this subject, we advance the following:

1. The time of the renovation of the earth and the elements will be after the Millennium, the Battle of Gog and Magog, and the casting of Satan into the Lake of Fire, and during the Great White Throne judgment at the end of the Millennium:

> But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Pet. 3:7)

This statement further indicates that the final judgment will take place in Heaven, where God's throne is located, and will not take place until after the renovation of the earth. Then the throne of God and His capital city, the New

Jerusalem, will come to the New Earth to be forever with men. The time of the renovation of the earth is made clear from the following facts:

Isa. 66:22-24 mentions the wicked in Hell during the New Earth. The wicked are not resurrected and judged until after the Millennium (Rev. 20:5, 7-15) much less cast into the Lake of Fire. This proves the renovation of the earth will be after the Millennium.

> This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Pet. 3:1-13)

2 Pet. 3:1-13 is the main passage dealing with the renovation of the heavens and the earth. This passage teaches the time of the renovation to be “against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” This day of judgment is at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20:11-15). It is further stated to be when “the day of

God" begins, which is after the Millennium when God becomes all-in-all, after Christ reigns during the Millennium for the purpose of putting all enemies under His feet. Peter states that in the New Earth "dwelleth righteousness," which could only be after the Millennium, for sin, death, enemies, rebellion, etc. continue during the Millennium (Isa. 65:20; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 21).

Rev. 21–22 proves conclusively that the New Earth will be realized after the Millennium, as is clear from a study of these chapters and with Rev. 20:1-15. It was not until after the l,000 years reign of Christ and His saints, the last rebellion of Satan and man against God, the destruction of the rebels, and the last resurrection and final judgment that John said, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away". . . and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

2. The present Heaven and earth will not pass out of existence. This idea is the result of a superficial reading of 2 Pet. 3:10-13 and Rev. 20:11; 21:1. That this doctrine is not taught in these passages is clear from a study of the words and expressions used by Peter and John, and by looking at these passages in conjunction with other scriptures on the subject that are more clear.

> (1) 2 Pet. 3:10-13, as it reads, does not convey the idea that the present Heaven and earth will be annihilated. In fact, fire does not cause anything to cease to exist. Fire can merely change something from one condition to another, or renovate and cleanse, as the case may be. Peter shows that there will be a renovation of the earth by fire and that the future renovation will not blot out the earth any more than did the destruction of the world by water in the beginning.
>
> He further reveals three definite periods of the earth: first, the world (*kosmos*) "that then was," before Adam, which was destroyed and which destruction affected the atmospheric heavens and earth; second, the restoration of kosmos and the heavens and the earth "which are now," since the six days of Gen. 1:3–2:25; third, the renovation of the heavens and earth, with the result of a New Heaven and a New Earth and the continuation of all life in them forever. The kosmos that now exists will never be destroyed by the future fire, as was the Kosmos (social system) by water in Gen. 1:2.

These facts alone prove that the atmospheric heavens and the earth, “which are now,” will never cease to exist, but will merely be renovated by fire and exist in a renewed state; wherein dwelleth righteousness. This is proved by a study of the different words found in 2 Pet. 3:10-13. It does not state that the present kosmos or social order is reserved unto renovation, but the earth and the elements only, or just the parts that require it, as is made clear by other passages which we shall consider below.

A. This renovation will end the Day of the Lord and begin the Day of God (2 Pet. 3:10-13). “In which [Day of the Lord] the heavens shall pass away.” The Greek word for “pass away” is *parerchomai* and means “to go by or away from” in the sense of “from one condition to another.” It never means cessation of existence. It is used over seventy-five times as follows: for the passing of time (Mt. 7:28; 9:10; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; etc.); of events coming to pass (Mt. 24:6; Lk. 21:7; Jn. 14:29); of the infallibility of the Word of God, showing that it would be easier for Heaven and earth to be changed than for the Word of God to fail (Mt. 5:18; 24:34, 35; Mk. 13:31; Lk. 16:17; 21:32-33); of people passing by certain places (Mk. 6:48; Lk. 18:37); to denote neglect (Lk. 11:42; 15:29); and of the coming of an individual (Lk. 12:37; 17:7). Thus, we see from the various uses that it never conveys the idea of passing out of existence. As used in 2 Pet. 3:10 it means passing from one condition to another, as clearly expressed in Heb. 1:12; 12:27-28. This “change” is to take place with “a great noise.”

B. “And the elements shall melt with fervent heat” (2 Pet. 3:10, 12). The Greek word for “elements” in these two verses is stoicheion, meaning “something orderly in arrangement,” “element,” “principle,” or “rudiment” and it always refers to the foundation principles of the question involved. It is used in Gal. 4:3, 9; Col. 2:8, 20; 2 Pet. 2:10-12 in reference to the principle of sin and of the present world system, such as the sinful nature, disease germs, and spirits that cause men to corrupt themselves. The meaning also includes the things which man has made that must be destroyed before the earth can be purified and loosed from its present state of bondage and corruption (Rom. 8:18-25).

C. The Greek word for “melt” is *luo*, meaning “to loose,” “put off,” “unbind,” “untie” or “set free,” and is so translated in Mt. 21:2; Lk. 19:30, 33; Jn. 1:27; 11:44; Acts 7:33. It is translated “dissolve” in 2 Pet. 3:11 and 12. These passages show that all that is to happen to the atmospheric

heavens and the earth in this renovation is the loosing of them from the present bondage into a new state, as in Rom. 8:21-23. This loosing will be done by fervent heat, a method of cleansing used for millenia. If the English word “dissolve” in this passage means cessation of existence, as is generally held concerning this passage, why not give it the same meaning in Psalm 75:3; Isa..14:31; 24:19; 34:4; 2 Cor. 5:l? It can be seen from these passages that this is not the idea. This word further expresses the idea of a change in the heavens and the earth into a new and better state wherein everything is good and worthy of the presence of God among men forever.

D. “The earth [ground] also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10). The Greek word for “works” is *ergon*, meaning “work,” “toil,” “deed,” “labour,” and “the acts of men.” It is used of religious works as well as of other kinds of works. The Greek word for “burned up” is *katakaio*, meaning “to burn down to the ground and wholly consume by fire.” It has reference to the things of man on the earth, which he has made, that will not be permitted in the New Earth. These things will be burned up or destroyed by fire. This fact is made clear from the next verses written by Peter, “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved [loosed] . . . the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved [loosed], and the elements [sinful things of this world system] shall melt [Greek *teko*, meaning “to liquify or melt”] with fervent heat” (2 Pet. 3:12). The Greek word for “melt” here is not the same Greek word translated “melt” in 2 Pet. 3:10 where it means “to loose.” The whole passage (2 Pet. 3:10-13) is simple when we consider that it merely records the act of loosing the heavens and the earth from all effects of the curse and corruption and making everything clean and pure for man forever. The result of all this will be the fulfillment of the promises to man of a “new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Pet. 3:13; Isa. 65:17; 66:22-24; Rev. 21–22).

(2) Rev. 20:11 is often misconstrued to mean that the earth and the heavens we now have will cease to exist, but this passage does not teach this. The meaning of the Greek word *pheugo*, translated “fled,” is “to flee away,” “to shun,” or “to vanish.” It is used both in a figurative and literal way. That its usage here is figurative is clear from its usage in Rev. 6:14 and 16:20 where, if taken literally as some would do in Rev. 20:11, we should have the passing out of existence of the heavens and every island and mountain under the sixth seal and again under the seventh vial. This could not be the case, for they are all eternal, as proved by other scriptures on the subject.

The Bible teaches that the islands (Ps. 72:8-10, 17; 97:1-6; Isa. 42:1-4, 8-12; 51:5; 60:9; 66:18-24), mountains (Gen. 49:26; Ps. 125:1; Isa. 42:10-12; 52:7; Nahum l:15; Hab. 3:6), the earth (Ps. 78:69; 104:5; Eccl. 1:4), and the heavens are all eternal and therefore could not cease to exist (Ps. 89:22; 119:89).

Examples of figurative language concerning things being shaken may be seen in Ps. 18:7; 60:2; 68:8; Isa. 44:23; 54:10; 55:12; 64:1-3. The language of things passing away in Rev. 6:14; 16:20; 20:11, is all figurative of the shaking of the heavens and the earth at the time of God's wrath before and after the Millennium. This passage (Rev. 20:11) pictures the same renovation of the earth as 2 Pet. 3:10-13. The actual heavens and the earth are pictured as if they had passed away and no place was found for them, but the language being figurative merely pictures the renovation of them and the taking away of the things which God is to destroy in them before they can be made new in character, as we shall see below.

(3) Rev. 21:1 is also misconstrued by those who teach that the present heavens and earth will cease to be. The correct meaning hinges upon the right understanding of the word "new." The Greek for this is *kainos*, meaning "renewed," or "new," especially in freshness and character, but never new in existence. It is in direct contrast to the Greek neos, meaning "new in existence." A contrast between the two words is found in Mt. 9:16, "men put new wine [neos, newly made wine] into new bottles [*kainos* freshened or renewed wineskins], and both are preserved." This same contrast can be seen wherever the two words are used. Compare Mt. 13:52; 26:28-29; 27:60; Mk. 1:27; 14:25; 16:17; 2 Cor. 3:6; 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Heb. 8:8, 13; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 2:17; 3:12; 5:9; 14:3; 21:1, 2, 5, where *kainos* (renewed, or new in character or freshness) is used, with 1 Cor. 5:7; Col. 3:10; Heb. 12:24, where *neos* (new in age) is used. Thus the expression, "new heaven and new earth," in 2 Pet. 3:3; Rev. 21:1, has reference to the present heavens and the earth being made new in character, renewed, and loosed from the old curse. The Old Testament word *khawdawsh*, used in Isa. 65:17, 66:22, of the same New Heaven and New Earth, means the same as the Greek *kainos*. This simplifies the meaning of Peter's doctrine of renovation.

3. The Scriptures further reveal the extent of this renovation and show that many things will not be burned by fire. Only those things that are not made new at the

beginning of the Millennium will be renovated by fire at the end of that time. There is not one passage in the Bible which shows the extinction of any species of living creatures that God has created.

On the other hand, there are scores of passages teaching that creatures created by God will replenish the earth eternally. This is required in order to have an everlasting covenant with all flesh, as we read in Gen. 9:12. Did God intend to cause man and animals to live on earth for only a few thousand years and then destroy them altogether? This idea would destroy the very eternal plan of God and the purpose of His dealings with man, which is to rid the earth of all rebellion and to continue with man living on the earth, replenishing it forever, as Adam was to have done before he fell. The "whole creation" that was created by God at the time of Adam will remain forever, and all that will be done is to deliver that creation from the present bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty and manifestation of the sons of God (Rom. 8:18-25).

The millennial kingdom will go on forever, and will not be burned up by this fire of renovation. In the book of Hebrews, we have a definite statement concerning the fact that some things are to be destroyed and removed, while others are to "remain."

> Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear (Heb. 12:26-28)

Further, we see in these verses that we shall receive a "kingdom which cannot be moved." These verses do not only refer to things after the renovation of the earth as being immovable, but also to things before the renovation, for we shall receive the kingdom at the beginning of the thousand years, and reign throughout eternity. Even through the renovation the kingdom will continue with its peoples, rulers, system of government, and material equipment (Isa. 9:6-7; Dan. 7:18-27; Lk. 1:32-33; Rev. 11:15).

In Heb. 1:10-12, we have another statement to the effect that all that is to happen to the earth and heavens is a "change," not the annihilation of them. Can we

conceive of God sending His Son to this earth to put down all rebellion, and then, after Christ accomplishes this in a thousand years, annihilating the earth and all things therein? What is to be destroyed is in God's own hands, and how it is to be done can certainly be left in the hands of Him who never fails, or makes a mistake, and who has the best interests of His creatures at heart. Are not the natures of animals changed and many other things fully restored at the beginning of the Millennium? Cannot God destroy some things with fire and not touch other things in the earth?

The God that caused this kind of miracle with the three Hebrew children, and the burning bush, can certainly do the same thing with the whole creation, and the things that are left can remain without even the smell of fire upon them. "Our God is a consuming fire" and can do all things, whether we can fully understand them or not. We can rest assured that the judge of the whole earth shall do right, and not one of his humblest servants need have fear in His august presence. In the rebellion of Satan and all mankind on the earth (Rev. 20:7-10), fire will consume the wicked rebels. But the camp of the saints (which will be earthly Jerusalem) will remain forever without being touched, and the natural people who do not rebel will be privileged to continue on earth and have dominion over it, as did Adam before he fell.

That the renovation will simply change and remove certain things and leave other things to remain is clear from the following scriptures:

> The creature [creation] itself shall be delivered [not annihilated] from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8:21)
>
> Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands . . . And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed (Heb. 1:10-12)
>
> Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, THAT THOSE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN MAY REMAIN. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom WHICH CANNOT BE MOVED, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:25-28)

The earth abides forever (Eccl. 1:4; Ps. 104:5), so it cannot be annihilated by the fire of 2 Pet. 3:10-13. When Christ removes all who have rebelled against Him, the earth will be purified and renewed to a perfect state for the third and last time.

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