

Epic: Millennium to Eternal State

Rev 20; We're finishing our Epic series this weekend, where we've been discovering God's work of redemption from creation to eternity; *Stirring up your sincere mind . . . By way of reminder, that you should remember* (2 Pet 3:1-2) (**Time Periods**)

And thus far we've covered 15 of the 17 time periods; From Creation and the Fall, to the Life of Christ and the Church Age
Calling for everything from praise and worship, to perseverance and urgency

But I think it's fair to say that the best is yet to come; Starting, with the . . .

Millennium

(**Time Period – In the Future, for a Thousand Years**)

Key People – Christ, Satan, Believers, Unbelievers

Key Places – The Whole Earth, Lake of Fire

Main Events – Return of Christ, Binding of Satan, Reign of Christ, Defeat of Satan, Great White Throne Judgment)

And to help you understand it, I want to give you 4 quick facts

1. It's the future reign of Christ on earth (Rev 20:1-6)

Alluded to in both the New and Old Testaments; Like Zech 14, and Ps 72, and 1 Cor 15, and Rev 12&19; But it's Rev 20:1-6 that describes it *explicitly*

[1] Then [as in after Christ's 2nd coming] I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. [2] And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years [a millennium], [3] and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

[4] Then I saw thrones [positions of influence], and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed [referring to believers, with decision-making responsibility, in matters of right and wrong, better and best]. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands [during the Great Tribulation]. They [the believers and martyrs and faithful followers] came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. [5] The rest of the dead [the unbelievers] did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection [referring to v4b, when Christ returns and raises all believers from the dead].

[6] Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power [referring to the judgment of eternal punishment in the Lake of Fire], but they will be priests of God and of Christ [people who are able to enter his presence], and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

Christ will reign, and we with him, for a millennium; That's fact #1

2. It starts when the Great Tribulation ends

John says in v1 – Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven; When?

Right after the events of chapter 19; Where he describes the Battle of Armageddon at the end of the Great Tribulation

The Church Age will end with the Great Tribulation, and *that* will end with the coming of Christ; When he strikes down the nations (Rev 16:16; Rev 19) . . .

And throws the Anti-Christ and False Prophet into the Lake of Fire (Rev 19:20)
Paving the way for the *M* to start; It starts when the Great Tribulation ends

3. It ends when Satan is defeated (20:7-10)

Rev 20:7-10 – *And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison [8] and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog [a derogatory expression referring to those in rebellion against God], to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. [9] And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city [a metaphor for the community of the redeemed], but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, [10] and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

The M ends when Satan gathers the rebellious for a final battle against the saints, and is defeated; Leaving no one but genuine followers of Christ

4. It's complete when unbelievers are judged (Rev 20:11-15)

The M ends when Satan is defeated and unbelievers are judged; Rev 20:11-15

*[11] Then I saw a great white throne [symbolic of holiness and power and justice] and him who was seated on it [Jesus]. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them [even fallen creation won't bear his holiness]. [12] And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne [referring to those who *didn't* come to life at the first resurrection; aka unbelievers], and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done [not on the basis of what Jesus had done for them, but their own deeds]. [13] And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them [Hades referring to the condemned realm of hell where the souls of unbelievers go when they die], and they were judged [measured and condemned], each one of them, according to what they had done.*

*[14] Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire [representing all the unbelievers]. This is the second death, the lake of fire [as opposed to the first death, physical death, that we all incur]. [15] And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire [Implying that we're all there, believers and unbelievers alike; But only the *unbelievers* are condemned]. (**Summary**)*

That's how the M ends – unbelievers are judged

And God's primary purpose, for the entire time, is . . .

God's Purpose: To extend peace on earth and goodwill toward men (Ps 72)

You think Christmas is good, you ain't seen nothin' yet; And it's found in Ps 72

Ps 72 is a *messianic* Psalm – a Psalm that speaks of Jesus, but set in a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity; A time we have yet to experience
And it most likely refers to the M

[72:1] Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son!

[2] May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice! [3] Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people [as in goodwill], and the hills, in righteousness!

[4] *May he [this royal son] defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor!*

And up to this point, Solomon could be referring to *himself* as the royal son; But the next verses definitely don't; B/c he starts talking about a kingdom that *far* outlasts him
[5] *May they [the people] fear you [God] while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations [that's the M, while the sun and moon endure]!* [6] *May he [this royal son] be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth [more goodwill]!* [7] *In his days may the righteous flourish, and peace abound, till the moon be no more!* That's the time frame of this royal son's kingdom

Here's the extent

[8] *May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth!*
[9] *May desert tribes bow down before him, and his enemies lick the dust!* [10] *May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts!* [11] *May all kings fall down before him, all nations serve him!* [12] *For he delivers the needy when he calls, the poor and him who has no helper.* [13] *He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy.* [14] *From oppression and violence he redeems their life, and precious is their blood in his sight [more goodwill].*

[15] *Long may he live; may gold of Sheba be given to him! May prayer be made for him continually, and blessings invoked for him all the day!* [16] *May there be abundance of grain in the land; on the tops of the mountains may it wave; may its fruit be like Lebanon; and may people blossom in the cities like the grass of the field!* [17] *May his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun! May people be blessed in him, all nations call him blessed!*

It's a messianic Psalm, most likely referring to the M, b/c Solomon describes a kingdom whose extent is as big as it can be, a king whose reign goes on forever and ever . . .
And the unprecedented provision of peace on earth, goodwill toward men

Our Response: Get ready!

Jesus says in Rev 22:20 – *Surely I am coming soon.*

And in **Mt 24:44** he says – *Be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.* Are you ready? You can be; In fact, here's 5 ways to make sure

1. **Trust him** – trust him to save you and keep you; Now, and from the wrath to come
 2. **Love him** – love him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength
 3. **Live for him** – every minute of every day; B/c that's what you're going to be doing in the M
 4. **Watch for him** – in prayer and awareness; Awareness of all that's he's doing in our world
 5. **Rest in him** – take comfort in his grace, sovereignty, control, and wisdom (**Summ**)
- Are you ready? Get ready; That's *our* response to the coming M

And that brings us to the last of the time periods, but definitely not the least; The . . .

Eternal State

(Time Period – After the Millennium, Lasting Forever

Key People (or participants in this case) – **God, Believers**

Key Places – **The New Earth**

Main Events – **Destruction of our World; Creation of New Heavens and New Earth)**

Rev 21:1; The eternal state is the culmination of God's entire epic; Intended to fulfill all his promises and accomplish all his purposes

Starting with the destruction of the heavens and the earth, and the creation of new ones
V1 – *Then [as in after the M draws to a close] I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.*

It's just like the prophet Zephaniah said 600 years before Christ – *In the fire of his jealousy, all the earth shall be consumed* (Zeph 1:18)

And the Apostle Peter (**2 Pet 3:7**) 35 years after Christ – *The heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.*

And then in **v10** – *The heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed . . . [13] But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

The Eternal State starts with the destruction of the heavens and the earth, and the creation of new ones;***** Which is God's primary purpose

God's Purpose: To make all things new (Rev 21:1-4)

And not just in physical terms, but emotional, spiritual, and everything else; **V2**

[2] *And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem [symbolic of the church], coming down out of heaven from God [to the new earth], prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

[3] *And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. [4] He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."*

Talk about making all things new; We're going to be ushered on to a new earth, our tears will be wiped away, death and pain will be abolished . . .

We will dwell in God's presence, and bliss will reign; *For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD*, Isaiah says (Is 11:9b)

All things will be made new, never to grow old, and never to wear out; Ever

And our response? Man, I hope it's . . .

Our Response: Excitement and anticipation

We've been given a glimpse of the future that ought to fill us with joy and hope

B/c truly – *no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him* (1 Cor 2:9)

That's something to get excited about; And anticipate; Just like we anticipate Christmas Only in this case, it never ends; The gift *literally* keeps on giving (**Summary**)

➤ That's the *Eternal* State, and that's God's epic work of redemption (**time periods**)

From Creation and the Fall, to the Millennium and forever

And to help you get your mind around it, take a look at this **video** (God's Photo Album)

Pray – Father, we praise you for all you've done, all you're doing, and all you'll do – in us, our church, and our world; Accept our tithes now, as an expression of that