

The WORLD TO COME

What It Will Be Like





The World to Come: What It Will Be Like



This publication is not to be sold. It is produced as free educational material by the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 3490 • McKinney, TX 75070-8189
972-521-7777 • 888-9-COGWA-9 (toll-free in the U.S.)

© 2021 Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the

New King James Version

(© 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.).

Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Author: Erik Jones

Contributing Writer: Ralph Levy

Publication Review Team: Peter Hawkins, Jack Hendren, Don Henson, Paul Suckling

Editorial Reviewers: Mike Bennett, Clyde Kilough, David Treybig

Doctrine Committee: John Foster, Bruce Gore, Don Henson, Doug Johnson, Larry Neff

Illustrations: Elisabeth Vaughn

Design: David Hicks

Contents

	Introduction: Is There Hope for Our World?	6
1	The Return of Jesus Christ: The Coming Turning Point	9
	Sidebar: Are the Millennium and the Kingdom of God the Same Thing?	15
2	A New Government for a New World	17
3	A World Rebuilt From the Ground Up	27
4	How Christ Will Change the World, Starting With Israel	33
	Sidebar: Animal Sacrifices During the Millennium?	40
5	How the 10 Commandments Will Transform All Mankind	45
	Sidebar: The Nature of Animals Will Be Changed	60
6	How the Earth's Physical Environment Will Be Transformed	63
	Sidebar: Health and Healing During the Millennium	72
7	What Happens After the 1,000 Years?	75
	Epilogue: A Vision of Hope	80
	What Does All This Mean for You?	81

Jesus Christ will return and reign on earth. But what will the world be like under His rule? What changes will He bring, and what effect will they have? Read on to discover the amazing truth the Bible reveals about the wonderful world of tomorrow.

Is There Hope for Our World?

“Imagine all the people living life in peace.”

These lyrics come from one of the most well-known songs ever. “Imagine,” written by John Lennon in 1971 during the Vietnam War’s unrest and turmoil, urges listeners to envision a world radically different from today’s—a tranquil world, a future where greed and hunger have ceased and all humanity lives as one.

Few would argue against the *idea* of such a world. But the question is, and always has been, how can it ever be achieved?

The song also sees this utopian world being created solely through human effort. But decades after its release, human effort seems to have sunk us only deeper into the mire of division, hatred, chaos and war.

Theories for bringing world peace have abounded. Some have proposed democracy as the key. Others have countered idealistically that socialism will bring paradise. Still others hope that international organizations, like the United Nations, can be the solution.

And history chronicles the unending story of empires trying vainly to forcefully impose their forms of peace, but leaving only violence and suffering in their wake.

In the end, all empires have collapsed, but not without killing millions of people in the process. Human experience has repeatedly demonstrated the reality of Isaiah’s immortal words: “The way of peace they have not known” (Isaiah 59:8).

War isn’t the only problem we’ve been incapable of solving. We still grapple with hunger, poverty, disease, terrorism, religious divisions, immorality, hatred and racism.

And beyond those societal issues are the everyday problems people face all over the world—addictions, marital troubles, family divisions, economic hardships, chronic health issues, hopelessness and depression. Probably everyone reading this has struggled with at least one of these. Many people



can scarcely worry about world peace when they can't find peace in their own homes or minds.

Will we ever be able to really solve these problems?

Looking at the reality of history and human nature, it seems rather hopeless. Many thinkers see little hope for peace because of proliferating nuclear weapons, increasingly sophisticated warfare, growing hostility and divisions between groups, fragile economic structures—the challenges seem endless.

The truth is, the Bible reveals these problems are only going to worsen. Jesus Himself predicted that religious confusion, warfare, starvation and disease will intensify beyond imagination (Matthew 24:5-7), and that mankind will ultimately bring itself to the precipice of total self-destruction (verse 22).

But He then promised that, just at this world's bleakest moment, "those days *will* be shortened" (verse 22, emphasis added throughout).

This booklet is not about how bad things are or will be. But we started there to establish this essential premise: something has to change in order for our world to survive and truly thrive, and the change we need will not come from our own efforts.

How about imagining instead the direct intervention of Jesus Christ, who promised to return to this earth to save us from ourselves and begin creating a completely new, vastly different world?

How will this coming world of tomorrow be different? How will it be built? What will it be like?

The Bible is full of prophecies that reveal God's plans for that future world—He doesn't leave us to our own imaginations! This booklet examines many of those prophecies that paint a spectacular picture of "the world to come" (Hebrews 2:5).

This message is, without a doubt, our world's greatest and only hope.



CHAPTER 1

The Return of Jesus Christ: The Coming Turning Point

“For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matthew 24:27).

Many end-time prophecies describe how bad the world will become. Millions of people will lose their lives due to increasing warfare, religious deception, famine and disease epidemics (compare Matthew 24:7-8, 21, 29-30 with Revelation 6:2-17). Yet humanity will not be destroyed.

Instead, we will be *saved* from destroying ourselves. “Unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved,” Jesus said, “but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” (Matthew 24:22).

How will humanity be saved from destroying itself?

Our Savior—the One who came to earth to make it possible for us all to be saved from our sins—will return to rescue us from total destruction. Jesus Christ “will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation” (Hebrews 9:28).

What will the return of Christ be like?

The world Jesus returns to will be a very dark place.

The purpose of this publication isn’t to cover all the details about the dark time preceding Christ’s return. You can learn more about those prophecies in our booklet [*How to Understand Prophecy*](#).

But here’s a brief summary of what the world will be like at that time:

The environment will be horribly polluted—likely, at least in part, the result of nuclear fallout and the effects of meteorites pummeling the earth’s surface (Matthew 24:29; Revelation 6:12-13). Fierce global warfare will have killed and traumatized billions of people. Many will be on the brink of starvation. Powerful armies will converge to fight a climactic battle in the Middle East that will likely include weapons of mass destruction so deadly they threaten human existence (Zechariah 14:1-4; Revelation 16:12-16).

But before this battle takes place, something will occur that will stop everything.

It will begin with a sound coming from the sky—not a sound produced by anything man-made, but the ear-piercing blast of a supernatural trumpet (Matthew 24:31; 1 Thessalonians 4:16)!

Throughout history, trumpet blasts have been used to get people’s attention. This trumpet, blown by an angel, will be like none ever heard!

Have you ever been near a bolt of lightning striking the earth, its energy so powerful you could feel it to the core of your being? Such a loud crack can bring grown men to their knees, but the sound of this trumpet blast will be much more powerful. It will grab the whole world’s attention.

As people cower and cover their ears, they will look up and see the sky open, revealing a glowing and radiant spirit being, followed by a host of other spirit beings. This will be the returning Savior Himself, Jesus Christ. The sheer power and glory of His presence will cause “the heavens and earth” to shake, and the mountains to “quake before Him” (Joel 3:16; Nahum 1:5).

“

Recognizing Jesus Christ’s limitless power will be the first step to learning to fear and honor Him as their God.”

No one in the world will miss this event—“every eye will see Him” (Revelation 1:7). Jesus said: “They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:30).

The apostle John, seeing Christ’s appearance in a vision, tried his best to describe what He looks like in glory: “His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;

His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters” (Revelation 1:14-15).

When He returns, Christ will look nothing like how people have commonly pictured Him, which will likely cause great confusion about who this actually is.

Christ’s first act—the resurrection of the faithful

After that powerful trumpet blast, something truly miraculous will begin to occur. Around the world, those called by God in this lifetime who have died over the centuries will awaken from death, come up from their graves in glorified bodies and rise into the air. People dead for thousands of years—people like Noah, Abraham and King David—will live again. And not just those notable names from the Bible, but all of the faithful throughout the ages.

The apostle Paul described this resurrection this way: “We shall not all sleep [die], but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

At this moment, these faithful people will be born into the spirit family of God as His glorified, immortal children (Romans 8:21; Hebrews 2:10). It’s what the Bible calls “the first resurrection” (Revelation 20:6).

Imagine thousands of people rising out of the ground—having been changed from dust to immortal spirit!

And it won't just be the dead! God's faithful who are alive will also rise into the air and be glorified. Together, both groups will rise to "meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thessalonians 4:17; see also Matthew 24:31).

It will be a family gathering like no other!

But what happens next?

Why Christ will make war before peace

After this resurrection, attention will then turn to the earth to which Christ is descending.

John described the armies of the earth uniting to fight the returning Christ. "And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army" (Revelation 19:19).

Satan will delude them to believe they can somehow challenge and stop these powerful beings descending from the sky, so instead of welcoming Jesus as their Savior, a group of nations will launch a counterstrike against Him and His saints.

This is why the returning Christ will "go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle" (Zechariah 14:3; see also Revelation 19:11)—the only thing these arrogant, God-defying armies will understand is overwhelming superior force. So He'll come wielding "a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations . . . He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Revelation 19:15).

He'll first defeat the governmental and religious heads of these armies (verse 20), then easily destroy the rest (verse 21). Zechariah provided a gruesome description of how these human armies will fall: "Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths" (Zechariah 14:12).

The scene of millions of people literally melting where they stand will be a stark lesson to humanity that Jesus Christ is all-powerful and cannot be challenged (2 Chronicles 20:6; Psalms 110:5-7; 135:6; Daniel 4:35).

Does that sound cruel? Consider first that Jesus prophesied that He will have to do this to "destroy those who destroy the earth" (Revelation 11:18), and that unless He intervened in such manner "no flesh would be saved" due to the cruelty of man (Matthew 24:22). In order for warfare and suffering to end, those who wage war and cause suffering must first be



defeated in the most decisive manner. (Yet, as we will see, the Bible shows that God will give them a chance to repent later.)

This massive display of supernatural power will so frighten people that they will try to hide in utter terror (Isaiah 2:19). This will break their pride and humble them before God—“the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; the LORD alone will be exalted in that day” (verse 17).

Recognizing Jesus Christ’s limitless power will be the first step to learning to fear and honor Him as their God (Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7; 9:10).

By watching this display of power, the whole world will learn the answer to the questions “Who can stand before His indignation? And who can endure the fierceness of His anger?” (Nahum 1:6).

The answer is definitive and undeniable: *Nobody*.

But rebellious human beings won’t be the only opposition Christ deals with when He returns.

The adversary captured and imprisoned

The armies trying to challenge Christ will be under the influence of another being. The Bible calls him “the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world” (Revelation 12:9).

This fallen angel and his demons are a primary source of our world's troubles. Before his fall, Satan was a mighty archangel who served God, but pride and lust for power led him to organize an angelic rebellion against God. Though he understood God's superiority as well as anyone could, he became so deluded that he actually convinced himself he could overthrow his Creator and take His throne (Isaiah 14:13-14).

God quickly and easily defeated his attempted rebellion, and Jesus described seeing "Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18).

Satan's violent rebellion occurred before the creation of mankind (Ezekiel 28:16; Genesis 2:7). Since that time, he has been confined to this earth, but his hostile attitude toward God never changed. Paul identified him as "the god of this age" (2 Corinthians 4:4) because his influence has provoked the violence, suffering, deception and evil this world has experienced.

So he and his demons will have to be dealt with immediately. After Christ crushes the human armies, He will send an angel to capture and imprison the rebel spirit beings.

John described this future event in Revelation 20:1-3: "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished."

This confinement will render Satan completely powerless to influence anyone for 1,000 years.

This reference to Satan's 1,000-year banishment is significant because it's the first time the Bible defines a time frame of Christ's initial rule after His return. The Old Testament contains hundreds of prophecies about this time, but not until this verse, at the very end of the Bible, are we given the length of time that Christ will rule over the human inhabitants of the earth who survive the climactic end time.

This period, the 1,000-year reign of Christ, is often called the *Millennium*—from the Latin *mille* (thousand).

Immediately after Satan and the demons are imprisoned, the Millennium will begin. So one of the first major things we learn about this Millennium is that Satan will be gone, and his absence will be a major factor in allowing a new and better world to be built.

What does the Bible tell us about the various themes of Christ's millennial reign and the effects they will have on people over time?

We'll begin exploring this in the next chapter, as we look at the foundation upon which this new world will be built—the government of the Kingdom of God.

Are the Millennium and the Kingdom of God the Same Thing?

The Millennium and the Kingdom of God are strongly connected, but they aren't the same thing.

The Kingdom of God exists right now, with its throne in heaven where God and Jesus Christ reign. When Christ returns, He will establish that reign on earth.

The Millennium is the first 1,000 years of that reign on earth—the period between the binding of Satan and his temporary release (Revelation 20:3, 7). During this 1,000 years, the Kingdom will rule over this earth, but not everyone living during the Millennium will be *in* God's ruling family, which is the Kingdom of God. Humans will be its subjects, but humans cannot inherit the Kingdom while they are flesh and blood (1 Corinthians 15:50).

The major distinction between the two terms is that the Millennium is temporary, ending after 1,000 years, and the Kingdom of God is eternal and will have no end (Isaiah 9:7; Daniel 7:18).



CHAPTER 2

A New Government for a New World

*“The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms
of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign
forever and ever!” (Revelation 11:15).*

The prophet Zechariah reveals that when Christ returns, “in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west” (Zechariah 14:4).

Imagine—a half-mile-high (more than 800 meters) mountain splitting straight down the middle! This will be yet another incredible display of the sheer power of Christ (verse 5).

It’s significant that Christ’s feet will touch the Mount of Olives first because this was the very location from which He ascended to heaven (Acts 1:4-12).

The beginning of a new world

His arrival in Jerusalem commences a new era of history, closing the era of the “present evil age” (Galatians 1:4) and ushering in “the world to come” (Hebrews 2:5).

Acts 3:19-21 describes this transition from today’s era under Satan to tomorrow’s era under Christ:

“So that *times of refreshing* may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of *restoration of all things*, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.”

What do the phrases *times of refreshing* and *restoration of all things* tell us about this future age?

“Times of refreshing” signifies a time of healing and relief from the suffering and anxiety that precedes it. The Greek word translated *refreshing* means “a refreshing coolness after heat” (Greek Dictionary, BillMounce.com). Christ will usher in a new era of calm and relief—like cool, refreshing water.

“Restoration” in the original Greek means “a restitution of a thing to its former state” (*The Complete Word Study New Testament*, p. 890). This refers to when Adam and Eve lived in perfect tranquility and peace in the Garden of Eden in God’s presence and under His guidance. That state quickly ended with their fateful decision to reject God’s rule and follow the deceptive serpent (Genesis 3).

By choosing to eat the forbidden fruit—choosing sin—they lost the close access they had originally had to God and “the tree of life,” which represented access to God’s Spirit and the gift of eternal life (verses 23-24). Based on their choice, God stepped back and has allowed Satan, for the time being, to be “the god of this age” (2 Corinthians 4:4). Under

his awful rule, people have continually eaten “the fruit of their own way” (Proverbs 1:31).

But God has always had restoration in mind, and upon Christ’s return, He will begin the process of fully reestablishing God’s direct rule over the entire earth.

What does the Bible tell us about this new world government?

Jesus Christ: the King of Kings

Heading this government will be Jesus Christ, the undisputed sovereign of the entire earth, the “Lord of lords and King of kings” (Revelation 17:14; see also 19:16).

Lord means master—Jesus will be Master over all other masters. *King* is a term of royal dominion—Jesus will be King over all other kings.

This element of Jesus Christ’s identity is not often emphasized. Many basically view Him as a Savior who came to die for our sins, which is certainly true. But He will not return as a suffering Servant. Rather, He will come as a ruler, the Lord God Almighty.

Christ inherited this authority when He was resurrected from the dead. He is “far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He [God] put all things under His feet” (Ephesians 1:21-22).

Even though Christ has inherited all authority, He won’t fully exercise that authority over “all things” until He returns to earth (Hebrews 2:8).

One remarkable prophecy about Jesus’ future role as “King of kings” is found in Isaiah 9:6-7:

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

“Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

Christ’s rule will continue to increase and expand, bringing peace, judgment and justice to everyone under it.

The Kingdom of God will rule over the earth

Christ will fulfill hundreds of prophecies about His Kingdom being established on earth.

Notice this beautiful prophecy Isaiah recorded:

“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it” (Isaiah 2:2).

The Bible often uses mountains to symbolize governments. The “mountain of the LORD’s house”—the Kingdom of God under the rule of Jesus Christ—will command the obedience of all the other mountains and hills, which symbolize the large and small nations of the earth.

Zechariah wrote that “His dominion shall be ‘from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth’” and that “the LORD shall be King over all the earth” (Zechariah 9:10; 14:9).

Another striking prophecy is found in Daniel 7:14:

“Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.”

This is echoed in Revelation 11:15. The “kingdoms of this world” will “become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” Interestingly, these prophecies show that national identities will continue in some form during His reign.

Once reestablished, His governing dominion will last forever (Daniel 4:34). Unlike all the kingdoms of men, which rise and fall, Christ’s Kingdom will “stand forever” (Daniel 2:44).

Given its importance, Jesus stressed to His followers that the coming of the Kingdom of God must be their central hope and focus. When He walked the earth 2,000 years ago, His primary message centered on the gospel—the good news—of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 4:23; 9:35; Mark 1:14-15). He urged us to regularly pray, “Your kingdom come,” and to *seek* it first, above all other things (Matthew 6:10, 33).

Jerusalem—the capital city of the “world to come”

The seat of Christ’s government will be in Jerusalem, a name meaning “city of peace” or “established in peace.” Though many glorious events of Israel’s past transpired there, the city has also experienced terrible tragedy and bloodshed during its long history. Today Jerusalem is a divided city, characterized by disputes and hostility. When Christ resides in and rules from there, it will truly become *the* city of peace.

Jeremiah underscored Jerusalem’s future glory by foretelling, “At that time

Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem” (Jeremiah 3:17).

Jerusalem will also be called “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS”

(Jeremiah 33:16) and “the City of Truth, the Mountain of the LORD of hosts, the Holy Mountain” (Zechariah 8:3). These names reveal beautiful truths about Jerusalem’s future.

Joel wrote: “So you shall know that I am the LORD your God, dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy, and no aliens shall ever pass through her again” (Joel 3:17). This doesn’t



Leadership in
God’s government
will always be
based on service
and care for those
being led.”

mean non-Israelites will be forbidden from entering the city (we’ll see later that people of all nations will visit Jerusalem), but that it will not be attacked by hostile foreign armies.

Jerusalem, under the watchful care and rule of Jesus Christ, will become a secure and peaceful city.

The “kings and priests” under Christ

Jesus Christ will not be ruling alone, though. Governing with Him will be a team made up of those who were resurrected and transformed into spirit at His return.

As Daniel wrote, “But the saints of the Most High”—God’s faithful servants through the ages—“shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever” (Daniel 7:18).

A few verses later, he elaborated: “Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him” (verse 27).

So the Kingdom of God will include Jesus Christ and the saints, His spiritual brothers and sisters.

Not only will they inherit eternal life and be in God’s family, the saints will also play an integral role in the government of the Millennium.



Revelation 5:10 contains a song that summarizes their destiny: “And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.”

So God’s family will serve as “kings and priests,” reigning and teaching God’s way of life.

The parable of the minas and God’s Kingdom

Jesus gave some insight into the Kingdom’s structure in His parable of the minas, recorded in Luke 19.

In this story, a “certain nobleman” (picturing Jesus Christ) went to a far country to receive a kingdom. He called 10 servants together and gave each of them a mina (a large sum of money) and instructed them to “do business till I come” (verses 12-13). This represents God calling and working with people in this age, giving them His Holy Spirit to empower them to grow in righteous character.

When the nobleman returned, he summoned the servants for an accounting. They were rewarded with rulership over cities according to how much they had increased the nobleman’s investment (verses 16-19). But one servant who didn’t increase it at all was rewarded with nothing (verses 20-24). The parable’s lesson is that Christ will reward people based on how much they used His Spirit to grow and produce spiritual fruit throughout their lives.

The most important qualification for being given responsibilities in His Kingdom (such as ruling cities) won’t be political skill, technical expertise or intelligence, but growth in godly spiritual character.

Jeremiah referred to God’s future ruling family as “shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding” (Jeremiah 3:15). The knowledge and understanding that people will be taught in the world tomorrow must be first learned and practiced in life today. That’s why it’s so essential for Christians to continually strive to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

Isaiah described this future government this way: “Behold, a king [Jesus Christ] will reign in righteousness, and princes [His family, the saints] will rule with justice” (Isaiah 32:1).

This life is a training ground in which faithful Christians can prepare to be the “kings and priests,” “princes” and “shepherds” of the world tomorrow by growing in knowledge, understanding, justice, grace and righteousness today. These principles are so desperately needed to transform the world.

Jesus said He was going to “prepare a place for you”

Jesus said on the last night of His physical life: “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:2-3).

Right now, Jesus is preparing a place for each person He is working with. Based on the parable of the minas, we conclude that during the

Millennium, that “place” may be teaching and guiding people in a city, or a group of cities, or perhaps helping individuals in ways that our experiences and growth would specifically qualify us to serve.

Some responsibilities already chosen

Scripture shows that a few of the major leadership responsibilities have already been determined.

Under Christ, the governmental structure over the nation of Israel has already been announced. The nation will be governed by the resurrected King David.

“But they [the people of Israel] shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them” (Jeremiah 30:9). King David, Israel’s greatest king, will be resurrected at Christ’s return and restored to his position as king over the 12 tribes of Israel.

God also stated this through Ezekiel: “I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them” (Ezekiel 34:23-24).

A few chapters later, God proclaimed, “David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them . . . and My servant David shall be their prince forever” (Ezekiel 37:24-25).

Note that David is called both “king” and “prince.” He will be a king over those he leads, but a prince under Christ, the King of Kings.

Jesus revealed another element of His future government structure. When Peter asked what the 12 disciples would have for following Him, Jesus answered: “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matthew 19:28).

So David will lead the entire nation, while the resurrected apostles will lead the individual tribes of the restored Israel.

This leads us to consider it likely that all nations will be similarly structured—a king over the nation, assisted by local leaders over regions and cities. Though we don’t know the specifics, it’s logical that other faithful servants described in the Bible will also assume prominent governing roles.

It’s fascinating to imagine what great men like Abraham, Joseph, Moses and Elijah may be responsible for in the Kingdom. Will they be given duties

that relate to what they accomplished in their lives? Will Joseph oversee food reserves and distribution? Will Moses oversee a new justice system? Will Elijah be responsible for spiritual education?

Whatever responsibilities people are assigned, leadership in God's government will always be based on service and care for those being led (Luke 22:24-27). Those who have developed God's heart of love and concern for others will be those most qualified for the highest positions of service in His government!



CHAPTER 3

A World Rebuilt From the Ground Up

“Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations” (Isaiah 58:12).

The earth Jesus will find when He returns will be a disaster. Jeremiah described the area of Jerusalem as becoming “desolate” (Jeremiah 33:10). Other prophets depict “waste cities” (Amos 9:14) in “ruins” (Ezekiel 36:33-34).

This will be the world to which Jesus Christ will return.

Historical images and written accounts of places ravaged by wars give us a limited glimpse of the world’s condition at this time, though not necessarily the depth of the human suffering within those ruins.

For example, Ian Buruma, in his book *Year Zero: A History of 1945*, described post-war Germany this way: “The scale of human misery in the aftermath of the war was so vast, and so widespread, that comparisons are almost useless. Germany had to contend not only with its own citizens and returning soldiers, but also with more than ten million German-speaking refugees from Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Romania who had been expelled from their native lands . . . Almost all had lost everything they ever possessed. This added huge numbers of people to the drifting masses in search of food and shelter” (pp. 62-63).

The world Jesus will begin to rule will be far worse, and the damage global. He and the saints will immediately have to deal with a planet in shambles and survivors of the most traumatic time of suffering ever known.

It will be a world waiting to be rebuilt.

The greatest rebuilding project ever

The priority won’t just be rebuilding physical infrastructure, but reconstructing human lives.

Families separated by wars and disasters will need to be reunited. People in captivity will need to be restored to their homelands. People starving due to famine will need to be nourished back to health. People distrustful of authority due to evil leaders will need their trust restored. People who hate and want revenge will need to be taught to put away hostility and learn to forgive. People who are angry with God for their suffering will need to be shown that God has come to save them.

Rebuilding people’s lives will begin immediately, but it will take time. Healing wounds of trauma can only come gradually.

One of the most important things Christ will do is provide *comfort* (Isaiah 40:2; 51:3; 66:13; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4). He will “feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young” (Isaiah 40:11).

People who experience serious trauma need safety and stability, and a new sense of normality, in order to heal. One of the first tasks Christ and His family will tackle will be to start creating such an environment.

A great example of Jesus' ability to do this is when He was asleep in a boat with His disciples and a dangerous storm arose, threatening their lives. When awakened by the fearful shouts of His disciples, He "rebuked the winds and

the sea, and there was a great calm" (Matthew 8:26).

Imagine how their panic gave way in a moment to wonderment and peace. Similarly, His return will begin with a rebuke, and then humanity's panic will ebb, giving way to great calm.

Christ will set out to institute a new normal, an entirely new society built on a new foundation—the laws and ways of God. It will be a society

Instead of today's world, largely driven by selfishness and greed, we'll see a new culture based on God's way of life."

marked by leaders who have genuine love and care for those they serve.

They will shape the new era God describes through Isaiah: "The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places" (Isaiah 32:17-18).

Rest, peace, quietness and assurance—imagine!

Micah foresaw the entire world eventually living without fear. "Everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken" (Micah 4:4).

This environment will help the end-time survivors who live into the Millennium heal and rebuild their lives. This is why Peter spoke of it as "times of refreshing" (Acts 3:19).

Building a new global culture

The Bible also prophesies of the time when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9). Later we read that "righteousness and praise" will "spring forth before all the nations" (Isaiah 61:11).

This describes a dramatic, global cultural shift based on the knowledge and righteous ways of God. Instead of today's world, largely driven by selfishness and greed, we'll see a new culture based on God's way of life. It will take time for all the world to understand, embrace and practice these values, but we'll see more in the following chapters about how it will come.

Rebuilding a world in ruins

Restoring destroyed cities, towns, villages and farms will be another essential step in stabilizing life. Christ's government, therefore, will immediately begin to "restore the earth" (Isaiah 49:8) by making it functional, inhabitable and more beautiful than ever.

Cities will be raised from their ruins: "I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt" (Ezekiel 36:33).

Sterile lands will be made fertile: "The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited'" (verses 34-35).

The world's inhabitants will be marshaled to do this productive work: "And they shall rebuild the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations" (Isaiah 61:4).

God spoke through the prophet Amos about this: "'I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them,' says the LORD your God" (Amos 9:14-15).

Amos specifically foretold about the future of Israel, since that was his audience, but other prophecies show the entire world being restored to beauty and order.

It took years for Germany to rebuild its cities and agriculture after the destruction of World War II. Who knows how long it will take for the entire world? Perhaps a large part of the first decades of the Millennium will be dedicated to this massive global rebuilding project.

Notice this beautiful prophecy about this time: "And they will dwell safely there, build houses, and plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell securely, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them. Then they shall know that I am the LORD their God" (Ezekiel 28:26).

God understands that safety and security help people heal from psychological trauma, and He will ensure these exist to help survivors recover from the stress and trauma of the Great Tribulation and Day of the Lord.

It may take years to rebuild the physical infrastructure to be functional and beautiful and to reframe society to support the emotional and spiritual well-being of all people. But out of the rubble of the old world, a new world will emerge with a refreshed and transformed culture based on God's laws!



CHAPTER 4

How Christ Will Change the World, Starting With Israel

“And so all Israel will be saved” (Romans 11:26).

One of the Bible's major themes is God's relationship with the people of Israel.

The 12 tribes of Israel descended from the patriarch Abraham. God had a special relationship with Abraham because of his faithfulness, and He promised to bless "all the families of the earth" through Abraham and to make his descendants a great people (Genesis 12:2-3). This promise passed on to his descendants through Jacob, who became known as Israel.

Under Moses, the 12 tribes entered a formal covenant with God. The people, as a nation, promised to faithfully obey His law, and God pledged to protect and bless them (Exodus 19:3-9). God wanted them to be a model nation, an example to the world of the blessings that come from obeying Him (Deuteronomy 4:5-7).

The tribes later became a kingdom called Israel, but their national unity was short-lived. The northern 10 tribes eventually broke away from the southern kingdom, and the country divided into the southern kingdom of Judah (the Jewish people) and the northern kingdom of Israel. This breach has never healed, continuing nearly 3,000 years to this day.

Through the years, the two kingdoms descended into worse and worse immorality, breaking their covenant with God. Instead of modeling God's way, they followed the model of surrounding pagan nations. Because of the people's flagrant sins, the northern kingdom of Israel was conquered and taken captive by the Assyrians in the eighth century B.C., never to return to their homeland. These Israelites eventually lost their identity and migrated northwest to Europe. (We will learn more about their modern identities later in this chapter.)

Around 135 years later, Babylon conquered the southern kingdom of Judah and destroyed Jerusalem, again because of rampant sin. A Jewish remnant eventually returned to Jerusalem, but remained mostly dominated by other empires (Persia, Greece and Rome). An attempted rebellion against Rome ultimately led to the Jews being expelled altogether from the Holy Land. The descendants of Judah are now known as Jews and are scattered throughout the earth.

In the New Testament we find God entering into a New Covenant, this time with the Church, which is composed of people from all nations. They are given the Holy Spirit, empowering them to succeed where physical Israel failed. God is now working with the Church, *spiritual* Israel, as His model people (Philippians 2:15; 1 Peter 2:9-10).

But is God finished with physical Israel? Will they forever remain scattered throughout the world, cut off from God? Will the descendants of the two kingdoms remain divided forever?

Many millennial prophecies reveal the answer is a resounding *no*.

One of the great themes of millennial prophecies is that God will fulfill His promises to resume His special relationship with Israel. He will make them a great, unified nation once again, and this time they will model His righteousness to the entire world.

Many of the prophets who warned Israel and Judah of their sins and approaching punishment also proclaimed *hope* that they would rise again and be given another opportunity to be the people God desired them to be.

Let's explore some of those prophecies and discover how Jesus Christ will work with the people of Israel after His return.

Israel during the Great Tribulation

Prophecies show that because of their national sins, Israel's descendants will suffer greatly in the end times. Jeremiah called the 3½-year period before Jesus' return "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7), a time "of fear, and not of peace" (verse 5). The modern nations descended from Israel will be in some form of captivity during this time (verse 3), a chastisement brought upon them for their continued sins (Deuteronomy 31:16-18, 29).

Though they will face intense suffering during this time, they won't be destroyed. The returning Messiah will deliver the modern Israelites from their captivity and suffering! "The LORD their God will save them [Israel] in that day, as the flock of His people" (Zechariah 9:16).

But what will Christ do after He saves them?

Christ will gather Israel

Many prophecies show that Jesus will save *both* Judah and Israel.

Note God's statement through Zechariah: "I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph. I will bring them back, because I have mercy on them. They shall be as though I had not cast them aside; for I am the LORD their God, and I will hear them" (Zechariah 10:6).

Christ will save and bring back *both* the house of Judah (the Jews) and the house of Joseph (representing the northern 10 tribes).

God continued: "I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt, and gather them from Assyria. I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, until no more room is found for them" (verse 10).



Isaiah gave a much wider view of where the Israelites will be scattered during this time and how God will gather them: “He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth” (Isaiah 11:12; see also verse 11).

The Israelites restored to their homeland

But where will Christ bring them?

Speaking through Jeremiah, God said: “For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers” (Jeremiah 16:15)—their original homeland.

Later, Jeremiah said the Israelites’ future migration back to the Promised Land will dwarf the historical exodus from Egypt (Jeremiah 23:7-8; see also Ezekiel 11:17).

So one of the first acts of Christ’s government will be to lead a massive relocation of the Israelite peoples back to the lands allotted to them.

Upon their return, the millions of Israelites will begin a massive project of cleanup and reconstruction from the destruction caused during the violent end times (Amos 9:14-15).

The state of desolation will require tremendous work for Jerusalem and Israel to be restored to a habitable and productive land. At the same time,



work will begin on building a new temple in Jerusalem (Amos 9:11), and the remnants of the false forms of worship will be cleared out (Ezekiel 11:18).

From its ruins, Jerusalem and its surroundings will rise again to beauty and glory as the new world capital (Ezekiel 28:26).

Israel, through most of its history, was highly vulnerable to aggressive empires that rose against it. But in the Millennium, it will become the safest place on earth.

Judah and Israel reunited into one nation

Another major factor involved with bringing back the descendants of *both* Judah and Israel is that Christ will reunite them as one nation.

For the most part, Judah and the northern tribes of Israel were divided brothers, only unified as one kingdom for less than 120 years—a short blip on history’s timeline—under the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon.

Ezekiel recorded one of the most descriptive prophecies of how God will reunify them:

“Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them *one nation* in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall

no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again” (Ezekiel 37:21-22). The king over them will be David (verse 24).

Think about it: this prophecy proves the descendants of the 10 northern tribes of Israel continue to exist today and are not the same as the house of Judah!

The descendants of Judah, known today as Jews, are scattered throughout the world, with a portion living in the modern State of Israel. So where are the rest of Israel’s descendants, sometimes called “the lost 10 tribes”?

A close study of history and prophecy shows the tribes of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) are found among the English-speaking nations of the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth nations and the United States. The other tribes continue to exist among the nations of northwestern Europe. You can learn more about the modern identity of Israel in our booklet *The United States, Britain and the Commonwealth in Prophecy*.

So the Jewish people will be reunited with their lost Israelite brothers under righteous leadership—something they rarely experienced throughout their history—and this will lead to the most significant reason for their restoration.

Israel will become a righteous nation

God will give the reunited nation another chance to fulfill His original purpose—to model His way of life to all nations. This time they will!

Ezekiel reveals how God will begin this spiritual transformation:

“When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies’ lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer. And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,” says the Lord GOD” (Ezekiel 39:27-29).

This spiritual transformation will begin by Jesus Christ’s revealing that He is their God. After bringing them back to their land, He will make His Holy Spirit available to them, which will give them the power to transform their lives (Romans 12:2).

At that time, the New Covenant will apply to all of Israel:

“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant

which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jeremiah 31:31-33).



Year by year,
more and more
people will follow
Israel’s example
and choose to
obey God from
the heart.”

This is confirmed in the New Testament in Hebrews 8:10.

They will be offered a loving, family relationship with their God and have the opportunity to have His law imprinted on their hearts and minds through His Holy Spirit. Having His Spirit and living by His law will totally transform Israel and Judah into a nation of spiritually converted men and women (Isaiah 45:17; Hosea 3:5; Malachi 3:18).

Hundreds of years after the prophets wrote about Israel’s future conversion, the apostle Paul confirmed that God has not forever abandoned physical Israel.

He wrote, “God has not cast away His people [Israel] whom He foreknew” (Romans 11:2).

Paul then echoed the prophets’ message that God will indeed work again with Israel after Christ returns: “And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins’” (verses 26-27).

You may be wondering, what does this have to do with my future and the future of the rest of the world? Is Christ going to focus only on Israel and ignore everyone else?

What is the significance and God’s ultimate purpose behind Israel’s national conversion?

Israel will finally be a *light*

God *never* intended to limit His working to only the descendants of one family.

When God placed Israel in the Promised Land, He told them to “be careful to observe” the law He had given them, not only for their own good, but as an example to other nations.

“For this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?” (Deuteronomy 4:6-7).

Though they failed then, Isaiah showed they will succeed in the future. “Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you” (Isaiah 60:1). Christ is, of course, the “light of the world” (John 8:12). But as Isaiah goes on to illustrate, Israel will follow Christ and reflect His light in their example to others.

“For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising” (Isaiah 60:2-3).

Christ will use Israel as a real-life example—a shining light—for all nations. Why? To extend the light of His salvation “to the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6)!

God has always desired for *all people* to understand His wonderful truth (1 Timothy 2:4).

At the beginning of the Millennium, the Israelites’ direct relationship

Animal Sacrifices During the Millennium?

Prophecies of a rebuilt physical temple, animal sacrifices and a functioning Levitical priesthood during the Millennium often puzzle Bible students.

In the sixth century B.C., after the Babylonians took him captive, Ezekiel prophesied many astonishing things about Israel’s future. In his 13th and last vision, God showed him details of the future rebuilt temple and its attendant ceremonies and functions.

What is the need for a restored physical temple when Christ will be on earth and ruling from Jerusalem? And weren’t animal sacrifices rendered unnecessary through Jesus’ sacrifice (Hebrews 9:11-14)?

with Jesus Christ, their conversion and obedience, will lead to spiritual and physical blessings—prosperity, bounty, joy, peace, happiness and safety.

Other nations and peoples will look and marvel—and seek to experience these blessings for themselves.

“Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD” (Zechariah 8:22). The rebuilt temple in Jerusalem will become what God always intended: “a house of prayer for *all nations*” (Isaiah 56:7; Mark 11:17).

Year by year, more and more people will follow Israel’s example and choose to obey God from the heart.

“At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts” (Jeremiah 3:17).

Israel will finally fulfill God’s purpose of being a truly righteous nation, modeling God’s truth and blessings to everyone around the globe. Where Israel failed in the past, it will succeed in the Millennium.

Let’s now see how the rest of the world will be transformed by finally obeying the eternal laws of God.

Some skeptics say Ezekiel’s imagination was running wild, and we shouldn’t take these prophecies literally. But many of Ezekiel’s prophecies have already been fulfilled and were literal. So we would be presumptuous and mistaken to label these millennial prophecies as figurative.

Given the detailed description of this future temple found in Ezekiel 40-43, he clearly intended the vision to be taken literally.

Other scriptures support and help us understand these prophecies. Toward the end of the sixth century B.C., after Ezekiel had died, Zechariah foretold something similar.

“In that day ‘HOLINESS TO THE LORD’ shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD’s house shall be like

the bowls before the altar. Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite [‘no more traders,’ Tanakh] in the house of the LORD of hosts” (Zechariah 14:20-21).

Yes, there will be a house dedicated to the Lord, with pots and sacrifices. Isaiah also spoke of the fine materials to be used in this future temple and recorded God Himself saying, “I will glorify the house of My glory” (Isaiah 60:7). It will be an exceptionally beautiful building—and Jesus Christ will be there.

But the question remains: Why have a physical temple when Christ is here on earth?

Zechariah tells us that every year the nations—even those that formerly fought against Jerusalem—will send people to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (Zechariah 14:16-19). And, if any refuse to come, they will be corrected to teach them a lesson (verse 17).

When thinking about nations sending people to God’s headquarters to learn His ways, remember that so much of the world knows little or nothing about the Bible.

Today many live and die with no access to a Bible, much less the opportunity to learn about God and His laws. Many world religions have no concept of a Messiah or Savior.

For those people, the ideas of submitting to one God, obeying His laws, accepting Jesus Christ as Messiah, repenting of sin

and seeking forgiveness will be foreign and confusing. These truths will have to be systematically introduced and taught. As it was in ancient Israel, the Levitical system of sacrifice will be used as a great teaching tool for educating people.

The restored temple Ezekiel described will be the hub of the Millennium's religious education system. Through the physical rituals of the original temple, Israel learned basic concepts about God, His law and His way of life. Just as the sacrifices in the past pointed forward to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ, so those sacrifices in the Millennium will point back to it.

As Paul noted, "The law was our tutor to bring us to Christ" (Galatians 3:24). It seems the millennial temple will exist to assist people in learning by progressing from an Old Covenant arrangement, replete with animal sacrifices and a sacred building, to a New Covenant understanding of Jesus Christ, repentance, conversion and eternal life in God's family.

Ezekiel's vision ends with these striking words: "The name of the city from that day shall be: THE LORD IS THERE" (Ezekiel 48:35). And God will be there for the great masses of people who come to Jerusalem to learn His ways.

Almighty God has set His hand to bring "many sons to glory" (Hebrews 2:10), and He will use the physical temple and sacrifices as a tool to that end.

Truly God's ways are marvelous! He knows what people need to accomplish His plan, and the restored temple shown in Ezekiel's vision is but one stepping-stone in its fulfillment.



CHAPTER 5

How the 10 Commandments Will Transform All Mankind

*“For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of
the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:3).*

Scores of prophecies describe the peace, beauty, safety and happiness the world will experience during the Millennium. As described earlier, Christ and His saints will build a completely new world culture, one that will first be instituted within the restored nation of Israel. Israel will learn to model that culture and its blessings, and from there it will spread throughout the world.

But what will create this transformation? What will underlie the world's becoming a peaceful utopia? The simple answer: perfect government and perfect law. All nations around the globe will learn God's law and begin to be transformed by it!

That doesn't mean all people will immediately become perfect simply because they will live under perfect government and law. Humans will still have their imperfect nature, will still sin and will still need to repent. It will take time for people to internalize these laws and learn to obey them in the spirit and the letter. But as they do, their lives—and society as a whole—will be changed in incredible ways.

In this chapter we'll focus on how obeying each of God's 10 Commandments will impact people's lives and transform the world.

More than a legal code

God didn't institute the 10 Commandments to be just a legal code. He designed them to define a way of life that can be summarized in one word: *Love*.

God clearly states that “love is the fulfillment”—intent and purpose—“of the law” (Romans 13:10; see also Galatians 5:14; James 2:8). The first four commandments teach us how to love God; the last six, how to

love people. God's laws are spiritual—meaning they are designed to spiritually transform anyone who obeys them (Romans 7:14).

Consider how the principle of love, if applied, would completely transform our world. Paul described love this way: “Love does no harm to a neighbor” (Romans 13:10). Instead of doing harm,

“

Eventually, people will worship the true God exactly as He commanded—“in spirit and truth.”

love shows genuine, outgoing concern for others' well-being. If society was based on this principle, and if it became the socially accepted norm, virtually all suffering could be eradicated.

The problem is, most people today aren't driven by God's law of love. In fact, we have an inherent hostility to it (Romans 8:7). But that will begin to change under Christ's rule.

God's law will be taught to the world

After Christ returns and establishes His government, He will begin transforming humans by teaching the principles that truly cause righteousness—the 10 Commandments (Psalm 119:172).

First, Israel will learn how to live God's law, then, eventually, the entire world will learn. "For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3).

Notice how it will occur: "Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths'" (Isaiah 2:2-3).

Zechariah 8:22 adds, "Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD."

Jesus Christ and the glorified children of God will lead this totally new global education system rooted in the laws of God. "Yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, but your eyes shall see your teachers. Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it,' whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left" (Isaiah 30:20-21).

But how will these 10 laws change the world?

Let's examine God's 10 Commandments to see how each will contribute to this transformation.

"You shall have no other gods before Me"

The First Commandment teaches that God alone is to be worshipped, with nothing elevated above Him or put beside Him as equal.

As the people learn about the true God, they will abandon their false gods and beliefs and come to properly worship Him alone. All the world's religious deities will be exposed for what they are—miserable man-made inventions.

But it's hard to *unlearn* falsehoods. It will take time to reject what one once

believed. Of course, the fact that Christ will be present should speed the process!

People will come to see that, as God said through Isaiah, “I am the LORD, and there is no other; there is no God besides Me” (Isaiah 45:5), and then “every knee shall bow” to God (verse 23).

King David also prophesied of this time: “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You” (Psalm 22:27).

Zephaniah described the worldwide worship of God: “The LORD will be awesome to them . . . people shall worship Him, each one from his place, indeed all the shores of the nations” (Zephaniah 2:11).

Another amazing prophecy even describes Israel’s former enemies, Assyria and Egypt, uniting with Israel in worshipping the true God (Isaiah 19:23-25).

Applying this commandment will be a major contribution to the establishment of world peace. Our history is filled with violence between competing religions—Sunni vs. Shia, Protestants vs. Catholics, Catholics vs. Muslims, Hindus vs. Muslims, etc. But under God, religion will divide no one because all will worship the same God and practice the same faith.

Imagine a world where all people are united in worship, where former enemies become brethren. Religious tensions will gradually fade as peoples who previously hated one another because of their faiths abandon their old beliefs and unite in worshipping the true God.

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image”

The Second Commandment teaches us not to use physical objects to worship God. Visiting temples, cathedrals, churches and shrines today quickly shows how so many religions flagrantly break this commandment. This includes using statues, icons and pictures attempting to portray God the Father or Jesus Christ.

Zechariah revealed that Christ will deal with idolatry. “‘It shall be in that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land’” (Zechariah 13:2).

His awesome power and presence “will reduce to nothing all the gods of the earth” (Zephaniah 2:11).

Christ will immediately begin in Israel by removing the end-time beast and false prophet and the idolatrous abominations they set up in Jerusalem (Matthew 24:15; Revelation 19:20). The Israelites brought back from their scattered places will also abandon their idolatrous ways (Hosea 14:8).

People will finally be taught the futility and foolishness of idolatry. “The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; the LORD alone will be exalted in that day, but the idols He shall utterly abolish” (Isaiah 2:17-18).

Why does God abhor people venerating images and statues to supposedly worship Him? Because they actually redirect our focus off of Him and onto man-made images that falsely portray Him (Deuteronomy 4:15-19; Jeremiah 10:3-14). Any attempt to portray God through a man-made object

diminishes His greatness. In the Millennium, such phony substitutions will be swept away, and misleading concepts of God (or gods or saints) will not be taught.

Not only does the Second Commandment apply to graven images, but also to other idols we can place ahead of God: money, possessions, fame, power, status, sex, addictions and self.

“

People will live
in peace and
safety—free
from the terrors
of war, crime
and violence.”

Eventually, people will worship the true God exactly as He commanded—“in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). All will be taught the futility of all forms of false religion and anything else that turns their focus away from the true God. Only He “will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10).

Imagine a world with no idols or images of false gods, where all people are taught to place nothing between them and the true God, and to exalt God as supreme!

“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain”

The Third Commandment teaches us not to misuse God’s name. Today we constantly hear God’s name—and, therefore, God Himself—disrespected, insulted and abused in expletives and euphemisms or by people calling themselves by His name but living in ways that dishonor Him.

The spiritual intent of this law isn’t just to show what not to say, but to teach that we are to praise God by using His name respectfully and reverently! Jesus taught us to *hallow* (treat as holy, venerate) God’s name in prayer (Matthew 6:9).

Isaiah prophesied how eventually people will come to use their words to praise and honor God's name:

"And in that day you will say: 'Praise the LORD, call upon His name; declare His deeds among the peoples, make mention that His name is exalted'" (Isaiah 12:4).

People will "call on" God's name—and He *will* answer them (Zechariah 13:9). God's name alone will be exalted (Psalm 148:13).

Zephaniah also recorded a thought-provoking prophecy about God's plan for speech in the Millennium:

"For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, that they all may call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him with one accord" (Zephaniah 3:9).

Since the earliest civilizations, humans have weaponized language for destructive purposes. In Genesis 11, we read the tower of Babel account when "the whole earth had one language and one speech" (verse 1). But their linguistic unity allowed them to unite in defiance against God (verses 4-6). In order to stop this, God confused their languages and scattered the people throughout the world.

Apart from God, humans used linguistic unity for accelerating evil and destruction, but under Christ, humanity will use linguistic unity for achieving incredibly positive things.

Zephaniah's prophecy isn't clear whether one language will replace all others or be spoken in addition to people's native tongues. But what is clear is that this language will be *pure* and will assist people in calling on God's name.

Consider the kinds of words that would be missing from a pure, godly language. One would hear nothing vulgar or rooted in ancient pagan worship. Names associated with old false gods will fade from use as new generations will be born and grow up never hearing or speaking them (Hosea 2:17). Instead, language will facilitate positive, pure and uplifting speech.

Imagine a world where people turn to God and learn to use their words to praise and exalt Him, to build up others and to speak truth and kindness. Imagine people from all around the world praying and singing hymns of praise to God in a pure language!

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy"

The Fourth Commandment teaches us to remember, honor and keep holy the Sabbath, established and blessed at creation on the seventh day (Genesis 2:2-3). God specifically tells us to *remember* it, yet ironically, it seems to be the most forgotten and neglected of all God's commandments.

But the Sabbath won't be neglected in the Millennium! Isaiah prophesied, "From one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me," says the LORD" (Isaiah 66:23).

Under Christ's rule, the whole world will enjoy the benefits and blessings of Sabbath-keeping. First, the restored nation of Israel will have to relearn what they abandoned—how to keep God's Sabbath properly. The restored Levitical priests will diligently teach this (Ezekiel 44:2-24). As with other matters of godly obedience, when Israel begins to observe the Sabbath and reap its benefits, other nations will see and follow its example.

In time, people around the world will assemble every Sabbath to worship and learn from God's Word.

Is it possible that individuals from Bible times will visit different areas and speak? Imagine Abraham, Joseph, Jeremiah and others speaking at different locations, telling of their lives and lessons to be learned from their experiences. Imagine hearing a sermon about the Exodus from Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea—delivered by Moses himself!

No one knows exactly how this will work, but imagining the possibilities is exhilarating.

Prophecies also speak of people observing other special days—God's annual Sabbaths and festivals listed in Leviticus 23. Zechariah shows that they, too, will be restored to importance in the Millennium:

"And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zechariah 14:16).

The Feast of Tabernacles is one of the "feasts of the LORD" (Leviticus 23:2, 33-41). It lasts for seven days and is a time of great rejoicing (verse 40). Under Christ's rule, the entire world eventually will celebrate and observe the Feast of Tabernacles together! Yes, some nations will initially resist celebrating these days (Zechariah 14:17-19), but eventually all will come to rejoice together in the Feast.

And not just the Feast of Tabernacles, but *all* of God's annual festivals. These are not "Jewish" feasts—they are God's! He calls them "My feasts," "the feasts of the LORD" and "My Sabbaths" (Leviticus 23:2; Exodus 31:13).

It's also fascinating to contemplate the logistics of millions or billions of people assembling together to celebrate God's feasts. We know nations will send representatives to Jerusalem on these feasts, but logic says that they will need local gatherings as well. The joyful brotherhood the entire world will experience by unitedly worshipping God every year on these special feasts will be incredible to witness.

Imagine everyone on earth stopping work every week and gathering peacefully with family for a day of rest, then assembling with others to worship God on His Sabbath! And the same thing will occur on an even larger scale on God's annual festivals when His plan of salvation will be celebrated!

“Honor your father and your mother”

The Fifth Commandment was designed by God to maintain and protect the family. The family unit, the basic building block of any stable society, should provide all people with love, stability, care and a solid foundation on which to build their lives.

Under Christ's rule, this commandment will serve as a central building block in the restoration of families and society.

The Millennium's first generation—those who survive the Great Tribulation—will have peaceful conditions in which to “build houses and inhabit them” (Isaiah 65:21). And “they shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble; for they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them” (verse 23). The many children who are born will be blessed with long, healthy lives for obeying this commandment (verse 20; compare Ephesians 6:2-3).

Having loving, stable families and a godly education will lead to a



wonderful result: “Great shall be the peace of your children” (Isaiah 54:13). Parents will learn to be good examples to their children of living in harmony and building a home together.

Many who suffer mental health issues—depression, anxiety, substance abuse, etc.—were abused as children, often by a parent. Having healthy families led by mothers and fathers living by God’s law will create a world with radically better mental health.

Society’s entire culture, top to bottom, will be transformed to be safe for children. Once God’s laws permeate society, no longer will crime and kidnapping be the concern they are now. Instead of parents worriedly guarding their children from dangers, they will send them to play safely in the streets free from concern (Zechariah 8:5).

No longer will parents or children need to fear predators (human or animal). Instead, the happy laughs and shouts of playing children will fill neighborhoods. Some of their most joyous play, in fact, will be with formerly dangerous animals. (See “The Nature of Animals Will Be Changed” on page 60 about the amazing prophecy of Isaiah 11:6-8.)

Imagine a world where families are balanced, loving and strong, where children grow up with the best foundation possible. The effects of such families will reverberate across generations, as stable, godly children grow into stable, godly adults—and, in turn, build stable, godly families. This dynamic will be one of the greatest causes of the peace and security the world will enjoy.

“You shall not murder”

The Sixth Commandment not only instructs us to value and preserve human life, it teaches that we are not even to hate others (1 John 3:15). Its intent is to teach us to love one another (Matthew 5:43-44).

Today hatred causes so much of the world’s pain—wars, crime, broken relationships, violence and prejudice. Hatred is a main reason we have always lacked peace, and why we won’t have peace until a fundamental change occurs in human hearts.

Consider the consequences of obeying this commandment on the national level. When people begin to trust that they can live in safety and that national aggression is the way of the past and no longer allowed, one of their first actions will be dismantling militaries and weapons of warfare:

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:4).

In modern terms, this means the weapons of warfare—guns, ammunition, missiles, explosives, tanks—will be disassembled and their raw materials converted into implements for agricultural production. Weaponry designed to kill will be converted into devices to sustain life! Military training centers will close and be repurposed.

Most people have never experienced that kind of culture. It's impossible to know how many have died in wars throughout human history, but an estimated 108 million-plus died in 20th-century wars alone.

Of course, war's impact goes far deeper. It robs society of the potential of the young men and women who die for their country, lowers birth rates, increases the number of widows and orphans, destroys infrastructure and agriculture, brings famine and results in long-term post-traumatic stress.

What effect will ending warfare and violence have on people? Micah prophesied, "But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken" (Micah 4:4). People will live in peace and safety—free from the terrors of war, crime and violence.

This will apply to even the most vulnerable members of our society—unborn children. Abortion, a violation of the Sixth Commandment, will become a relic of the past.

Under Christ, no one will fear harm because everyone, living by the Sixth Commandment, will value and protect human life. Instead of hating others because of their race or ethnicity or appearance or language, people will learn to love, appreciate and value others. People will learn to not even "think evil in your heart against your neighbor" (Zechariah 8:17).

Imagine a world where all forms of violence—from nations waging war on other nations to children bullying others—will not be tolerated because the dominant feature of the world's culture under Christ's rule will be godly love and concern!

"You shall not commit adultery"

The Seventh Commandment prohibits adultery, but its principles extend much further to all forms of sexual infidelity. This commandment is meant to govern all aspects of human sexuality by protecting the sanctity of the God-ordained institution of marriage between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24). God designed marriage as a type of His loving and faithful family (Ephesians 5:22-33), in which we can produce "godly offspring" (Malachi 2:15).

Yet His gift of marriage has been under attack for many years, mostly due to the beguiling idea of sexual freedom. Truth is, that idea has caused untold suffering and cultural instability, as so many problems plaguing people today stem from breakdowns in the family structure.

Millions of children grow up in single-parent households due to either being born out of wedlock or having their parents divorce. Divorce dumps many negative pressures on children, including increased psychological problems, depression, anxiety and decreased academic performance. Studies also show that 70 percent of those in the prison system come from broken families. These are only a few of the many damaging consequences.

But under Christ's rule, marriage will be treasured and safeguarded. The truth of Hebrews 13:4 will form the basis of a new cultural view of sex and marriage: "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge." Teaching people how to have a happy marriage will be a priority.

Sex will occur within the safety of the sacred marriage covenant, not only strengthening the marital bonds, but leading to generations of secure and emotionally nourished children.

Instead of millions of children being born into ill-equipped and unprepared home environments, from their beginning, they will be in stable, nuclear families with a father and a mother who eagerly awaited their arrival.

As godliness increases, problems such as sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancies, abortion and rape will no longer be the problems they are today. Sex will no longer be used to peddle pornography or illicit products or as forms of selfish entertainment.

Imagine a world where marriage is nurtured and protected, and sex is enjoyed only within the marital bond. Marriages will be strong, and children will be raised within the safety of the God-ordained family unit.

"You shall not steal"

The Eighth Commandment prohibits all forms of theft. Its core spiritual intent is to promote *giving*, a word that summarizes God's way of life.

Stealing has always been one of humanity's biggest evils. We spend vast amounts of money annually on many forms of theft prevention—locks, building security systems, cyber and information security software, fraud prevention and detection products, policing, etc.

On a larger scale, nations build militaries to protect their own territory—or to take it from another country. History's deadliest war—World War II—

essentially started due to Hitler's taking other nations' land. Many wars have this basic sin as their cause—taking something that isn't one's own (James 4:1).

But under Christ's rule, stealing will become an increasingly rare vestige of the past. People living in "secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places" (Isaiah 32:18) won't fear thieves. People will respect others' property because of learning to love their neighbor as themselves (Matthew 22:39).

Consider the economic impact of ending theft. Since companies won't need to invest millions in security systems, their costs will decrease significantly, leading to lower prices.

It will transform workplace relationships. Employers will no longer need to use surveillance to see if their employees are stealing, nor will employees need to worry that their employer will cheat them. Pickpockets, robbers and thieves, kidnappers and human traffickers—no one given to such sins will be allowed to practice these evil ways.

As people internalize the Eighth Commandment, Ephesians 4:28 will characterize the world's culture: "Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need."

Most of the world today practices another unnoticed form of theft by neglecting to tithe. The Bible labels not tithing as a form of stealing from God Himself (Malachi 3:8).

In the Millennium, people will learn to tithe to God—which will be one of the causes of the abundant physical blessings the earth will eventually enjoy (verse 10).

Imagine living in a world without locks on doors or bars on windows, without need of passwords or security systems. With the anxiety and fear of theft gone, and the focus on giving to others, just imagine how people will live more relaxed and peaceful lives.

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor"

The Ninth Commandment instructs us not to lie. Its spiritual intent is that we learn to be completely honest in everything we say and in how we live.

Lying has always permeated the world. Politicians lie to get elected. Advertisers lie to sell products. Governments issue propaganda to deceive their citizens. It seems everybody lies!

Often it's to cover up sins or to make someone appear better than he or she is in reality. Sometimes it's to hurt others and damage their reputation.

People even tell “white lies” thinking it will benefit others. Religions lie to their adherents, usually unintentionally, by preaching false doctrines.

God listed lying among the seven things He hates (Proverbs 6:16-19), and no liar will be allowed in His family (Revelation 21:8; 22:14-15). One of the reasons He hates lying is because it engenders a culture of mistrust and cynicism. It’s a major reason many relationships, including marriages, are destroyed.

Referring to the standards of the Millennium, Zechariah prophesied, “These are the things you shall do: Speak each man the truth to his neighbor; give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace” (Zechariah 8:16).

Truth will eventually characterize the speech of all people—starting with Israel: “The remnant of Israel shall do no unrighteousness and speak no lies, nor shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth” (Zephaniah 3:13).

Christ will require honesty from all levels of society (Ezekiel 45:9-12). Honesty will transform business transactions. No longer will anyone have to worry about being lied to and defrauded by those in supervisory roles or those trying to sell inferior products to them. Lengthy, complex contracts, and the lawyers required to defend them, will no longer be necessary. People will no longer swear to assure they are speaking truth. Instead, they will simply give their word (Matthew 5:33-37). As cynicism and wariness about the claims of others disappear, a culture of trust will develop.

Imagine a world where true and honest words are spoken, transforming the culture and strengthening human relationships. Trust—a key element for strong relationships—can only be built when people consistently speak truthfully and honestly.

“You shall not covet”

The 10th Commandment deals directly with our thoughts and intentions. It shows that God is not concerned just about our outward actions, but also about our hearts. Coveting—yearning and lusting for something that’s not ours—is at the root of nearly all other sins.

Consider all the negative impacts of coveting in our world. Sexual immorality comes from covetous lust. People engage in casual sex, watch pornography and cheat on their spouses because of coveting.

Theft is the ultimate consequence of coveting someone else’s property (Joshua 7:21). Lying often comes from coveting the approval of others. Many people reject God’s Sabbath because they covet the profits of working on Saturday. Coveting can lead us to idolize things we desire (Colossians 3:5).

Coveting often drives the world's economic and political systems, and it causes wealth to be accumulated by the few. And, on the national level, wars occur because countries covet land, resources and power.

Applying this law will totally change the world's culture of covetousness to one of contentment. People will learn, as Paul said he learned, "in whatever state I am, to be content" (Philippians 4:11).

Coveting wealth—and all the evils that come from the lust for money (1 Timothy 6:9-10)—will no longer drive any nation's economy. People will learn to work hard and enjoy the fruits of their labors, but not in a system that creates vast income disparities and tensions between regular workers and greedy business owners, nor in a system that allows the unmotivated to live off the labor of others. The teaching and enforcement of the 10th Commandment will fashion an economy that works for the benefit of everyone—and one in which everyone benefits from his or her work.

Many other societal problems will disappear as people learn to be content with what they have and rely on God for what they don't (Hebrews 13:5). They will discover that contentment brings happiness (1 Timothy 6:6).

Imagine a world not driven by greed and materialism, where people work for what they have and are content with the blessings God gives them. Instead of coveting, people will desire to give and share. This change alone will transform people's hearts and minds—and transform society into a safer and happier place to live.

A new heart and mind

We've explored how the 10 Commandments alone, when taught and practiced throughout the world, will bring about monumental changes. Space doesn't permit examining how all the other aspects of God's law will further change society. We hope you will continue thinking about the many other positive effects that will result from following God's way.

But it won't be God's law alone that will cause this transformation. The 10 Commandments, by themselves, cannot change the human heart. Ancient Israel had God's law yet constantly sinned and suffered. The problem wasn't with the law, but with the people (Hebrews 8:8).

So another element is necessary to truly change the human heart, one God explained through the prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah:

- "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (Jeremiah 31:33).

- “Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God” (Ezekiel 11:19-20).

The missing dimension is a New Covenant relationship with God and the help of His Holy Spirit. It's only through receiving the Holy Spirit that one can have God's laws written on his or her heart and mind. It's that spiritual mind that helps us, from the core of our being, to internalize and live by the 10 Commandments. In order to enter a New Covenant relationship with God, one has to repent of his or her sins, be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit.

Those who have done this, who have entered into a New Covenant relationship with God, are writing His laws on their hearts and in their minds. But that group of people has always been a very tiny minority. The vast majority of the world is spiritually blinded (John 12:40; Romans 11:7; 2 Corinthians 4:4), and a person cannot develop a spiritual relationship with God until that veil of blindness is removed (2 Corinthians 3:14).

But the good news is that after Christ returns, He will begin removing that blindness from all people!

As we learned in chapter 4, He will begin with Israel. They will respond and enter into a New Covenant relationship with Him (Ezekiel 36:26-27) and then model for the entire world what a truly *converted* nation is like.

Isaiah wrote about the removing of this veil of deception: “And He will destroy on this mountain the surface of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations” (Isaiah 25:7).

Spiritual deception will fade, as all nations are drawn to God the Father through Jesus Christ. As individuals respond to God's calling, they will receive His Holy Spirit and have the 10 Commandments written on their hearts and minds. Their lives will be “transformed by the renewing” of their minds, and they will obey God's law from the heart (Romans 6:17; 12:2).

The teaching of God's law, combined with the working of His Spirit to convert the hearts of humans, is what will transform this world from a place where sin and suffering are universal to a wonderful world characterized by righteousness and peace!

The Nature of Animals Will Be Changed

Isaiah wrote two inspiring prophecies that have become iconic images of millennial peace—the nature of wild animals being changed. These prophecies teach wonderful lessons about the Millennium.

“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them . . . The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den” (Isaiah 11:6, 8).

Here we see three carnivorous animals (wolf, leopard and lion) dwelling peacefully with three herbivores (lamb, goat and calf), as well as venomous snakes posing no danger to humans.

Of course, this doesn’t occur in the wild today! Carnivores eat animal flesh out of necessity, for survival. Their digestive systems are designed for meat; their sharp teeth are designed for ripping and tearing the flesh they need for food. Herbivores are designed quite differently to digest plants—from the shape of their flat, grinding teeth, to the bacteria and enzymes their systems produce for breaking down plant matter, to their longer intestinal tracts for nutrient absorption.

Animals like wolves, leopards and lions eat meat because that is their nature. Humans have tried to tame wild carnivores, with limited success, but they still must be handled with caution, as their inherent aggressive nature can reappear at any time—especially when they feel threatened.

According to Dr. Marc Bekoff, a former professor of biology and ecology at the University of Colorado: “When you’ve got these hard-wired behavior patterns, like predatory behavior, or hunting, or maternal behavior, or anti-predatory behavior—it doesn’t take much to trip them. And I myself . . . was almost killed by a mountain lion and almost killed by a wolf because I did something unbeknownst to me that triggered something really hard-wired in their brain. The animal does what the

animal does” (“‘They’re Natural Born Killers’: Wild Animals in Captivity Inherently Dangerous,” ABC News, April 13, 2009).

Isaiah’s prophecy shows us that what man cannot do, God can. After Christ returns, He will transform the nature and anatomy of wild predators. Formerly dangerous and deadly beasts will become docile and playful animals, posing no harm to anyone. This will actually be a restoration of how life was in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:19; Acts 3:21).

Isaiah 65:25 shows that carnivores’ digestive systems will be changed, allowing them to be nourished by peaceful means: “‘The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,’ says the LORD.”

Imagine a world where all animals are tame and safe! Imagine children rolling around in the grass playing with a lion or a bear, the same way they might play today with a house dog. Imagine a little baby giggling as a cobra slithers around the child—tickling its skin, but doing absolutely no harm. This vision will be reality in the world to come!

But changing the nature of animals teaches us another important truth: peace can only come when a miraculous change of nature occurs. Just as wildlife will live peaceably only when the nature of predatory animals is changed, humanity will live peaceably only when the nature of human beings is changed!

The greatest dangers we face today are not from wildlife, but from our fellow man. Why? Because human nature is carnal and resists God’s law of love (Romans 8:7). Carnal human nature can only be tamed by the miraculous change of mind that comes by God’s Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5; 8:6). When the nature of men and women is transformed by God’s Spirit writing His laws on their hearts and minds, humans, too, will finally have peace!



CHAPTER 6

How the Earth's Physical Environment Will Be Transformed

“The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose” (Isaiah 35:1).

Peter described Christ's rule as "the times of restoration of all things" (Acts 3:21). The word *restoration* implies returning the world to its original condition, referring to the time of creation when Adam and Eve walked in harmony with God in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 2 describes the garden's beautiful environment as ideal for human life. It was watered naturally, its temperature was fine-tuned for human comfort, and all animals were docile and living in harmony. God, who created and maintained this perfect environment, was there and had a close relationship with Adam and Eve.

But all that changed when Adam and Eve succumbed to Satan's pernicious influence and chose to sin. That sin severed their close relationship with their Creator and removed them from this ideal paradise (Genesis 3:24). After that, God no longer directly governed them or their offspring and took some of His blessings from the earth. The perfect conditions of Eden gave way to the disorder of our world today (verses 17-19).

Nowadays the majority of the earth's dry land is uninhabitable—large portions are arid deserts, frozen ice caps or rugged mountains. Only about 13 percent of the earth's surface can support agriculture. Many of the places on earth that can support human life are susceptible to natural disasters—hurricanes, tsunamis, cyclones, wildfires, tornadoes, floods, heat waves, droughts, dust storms, avalanches and blizzards. Water is a limited resource for which people have fought wars. And, of course, many animals are extremely dangerous.

But Christ promises to "restore the earth" (Isaiah 49:8). He will heal the environmental destruction of the wars, natural disasters and man's mismanagement that preceded His coming and restore the perfect environment that existed in the Garden of Eden (Isaiah 51:3; Ezekiel 36:35). His return and the revealing of the children of God will liberate the entire creation "from the bondage of corruption [decay]" (Romans 8:21).

Like many of the other changes that Christ will bring, this may happen gradually. As the people of the world are spiritually transformed, the earth they live in will be physically transformed—and vice versa.

What else does the Bible reveal about this coming transformation of planet earth?

Uninhabitable lands will be healed

Roughly 33-35 percent of the earth's surface is virtually uninhabitable desert. The largest is the polar desert of Antarctica, which represents

5.4 million square miles of barren land. The largest hot desert is Africa's Sahara, stretching over 3.3 million square miles. The desert with which people of the Bible were most familiar is the Arabian, covering over 900,000 square miles.

With extreme heat and lack of rain, hot deserts cannot support the vegetation and animal life we rely on for nutrition. The only way human societies can flourish is by clustering along water systems, like rivers.

One of the spectacular changes Christ will bring to the earth will be healing the deserts. Isaiah beautifully described this amazing transformation:

"The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even with joy and singing" (Isaiah 35:1-2).

Land that had formerly been desolate—so dry or cold that it couldn't support vegetation—will be healed and "blossom as a rose." Christ will accomplish this by modifying the climate and adding the vital ingredient water.

"For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes" (verses 6-7).

Abundant springs will burst forth in the deserts, perhaps fed by newly created aquifers, carving new rivers (Isaiah 43:19-20).

Water and agriculture will then allow another major change to the former deserts—human life! Healing the deserts will add millions of square miles of inhabitable land, allowing people to spread out and not be confined to cramped dwellings in overcrowded cities.

This change will facilitate Micah's prophecy that "everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree" (Micah 4:4). (This also indicates that people will have the ability to possess their own land, which will produce a positive economic impact.)

With arable, fertile land and good government that is truly concerned about everyone's welfare, the problems of hunger, starvation and famine will be solved (Isaiah 49:10; Ezekiel 34:29).

Ezekiel also pointed out another area designated for healing—the Dead Sea and the adjacent, parched Judean Desert. The Dead Sea is 10 times saltier than ocean water, meaning neither fish nor aquatic plants can live in it.

But from the new temple in Jerusalem a river will flow east toward the Judean Desert and the Dead Sea, and "when it reaches the sea, its waters

are healed” (Ezekiel 47:8). Its saline waters will become crystal clear and fresh, a source of abundant freshwater fish (verses 9-10). The river will also bring trees and greenery to the Judean Desert, providing delicious fruit and medicinal leaves (verse 12).

Mountains lowered

Isaiah also talked about raising valleys and lowering mountains (Isaiah 40:4; 41:15). Lowering mountains often represents governments being humbled and submitting to Christ’s rule (Isaiah 2:2). These and other scriptures also indicate a physical fulfillment—that Christ will alter the earth’s terrain, making possible both additional living areas and improved weather patterns.

It seems many mountain ranges that have very harsh climates and desolate conditions will be lowered and reshaped to allow people to live and farm on them.

Prophecies show beautiful mountains and valleys will continue to exist for man to enjoy, but they will be restructured to maximize their use and beauty for man’s benefit and will contribute to the quality of life: “And it will come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drip with new wine, the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water” (Joel 3:18).

Consider the effect mountain ranges have on the climate of surrounding lands. Large mountain ranges often obstruct moisture-carrying winds essential for rainfall. The side of a mountain range facing the prevailing winds often has abundant rainfall and is lush and green, while the other side is dry. This is called a rain shadow.

The Himalayas, for example, cast a rain shadow causing the arid conditions of the Gobi Desert. Could one reason for lowering mountain ranges be to allow moisture-carrying winds to move freely around the earth, bringing life to its deserts?

Good weather and agricultural blessings

Even in areas that can support human life today, many are dependent on consistent rain and sunshine for their food. They’re vulnerable to weather extremes, from droughts to devastating storms that can easily destroy crops and lead to hunger.

But in the Millennium, as God’s way of life fills the world, God will bless the lands with timely, gentle rainfall. Just enough rain—but not so much



as to cause flooding—will cause agriculture to flourish. He will provide the perfect amount of rainfall in its season (Ezekiel 34:26; Joel 2:23), allowing agricultural production to boom. “The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil” (verse 24).

Amos wrote, “The plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it” (Amos 9:13).

But the rain God gives will depend on people’s relationship with Him. Those who do God’s will and ask for the blessing of good weather will receive it (Deuteronomy 28:2, 12; Zechariah 10:1). When people defy and rebel against Him, He will withhold it to teach them a lesson (Zechariah 14:17-18). This type of correction will likely occur in the early decades of the Millennium and become unnecessary as people learn to faithfully obey God.

Another factor leading to agricultural abundance will be the reinstituting of the sabbatical year. God instructed the people of ancient Israel to plow their fields and harvest their crops for six years, but cease in the seventh and let the land lay fallow (Leviticus 25:3-4).

It wasn't until thousands of years later that scientists discovered the brilliance of this law. Letting soil rest replenishes essential nutrients, allowing the soil to maintain its fertility and reducing the risk of erosion.

Although agricultural experts today seldom follow the precise formula God gave, they do recognize the value of such practices as rotating crops, planting cover crops that return nutrients to the soil, and letting land rest for one planting cycle.

When God—the Master Gardener—reinstates His system, every seventh year the land will rest and be replenished. With His blessings of abundance (Leviticus 25:19-22), food will be stockpiled in the sixth year and then used in the seventh year. Perhaps the extra leisure time people will have during the sabbatical year may provide extra opportunities for personal rejuvenation, spiritual education, travel and creativity.

The combination of weather blessings and the application of God's law will cause “an abundance of grain in the earth” (Psalm 72:16).

No more weeds

One of the blessings Adam and Eve enjoyed in the Garden of Eden was the ease of caring for the land. They didn't have to spend inordinate amounts of time and energy clearing all the natural impediments to cultivation. But after their sin, God removed this blessing, and consequently, they had to contend with “thorns and thistles” and labor hard to work the land (Genesis 3:17-19).

To this day, farming is difficult work, made easier by modern farm machinery perhaps, but still challenging, especially in less-developed areas. However, in the Millennium, “instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree” (Isaiah 55:13). Thorns and briars—representative of nuisance plants—will no longer be an issue. Instead, the earth will naturally yield useful plant life that doesn't hinder, but benefits productivity.

Instead of toiling long, people will have more time to do things that build their lives and society.

An entirely new lifestyle and culture

Throughout history, nearly all major societies and cities have risen and flourished around bodies of water, adjacent to rivers, lakes, seas and oceans.

This has clumped together many people into densely populated cities. Modern economic factors and industrialization have accelerated

urbanization, and today roughly 55 percent of the world's population lives in cities. The United Nations projects this will rise to 68 percent by 2050.

Due to poverty, millions live in cramped, unsanitary city slums. An estimated 100 million-plus people are homeless around the world, and over 1.6 billion lack adequate housing. For millions, life is a virtual rat race to survive.

God never intended for people to live this way. He wanted humans to multiply and spread throughout the earth instead of being squeezed together in overcrowded cities (Genesis 9:1; 11:9; Isaiah 5:8).

Healed deserts and lowered mountains will facilitate humans spreading out and living comfortably.

“
People will
learn that sin
complicates
all aspects
of life, but
obedience
simplifies it.”

That doesn't mean urban life will be abolished. Cities will exist during the Millennium (Ezekiel 36:33; Amos 9:14; Zechariah 1:17), but they will be different.

Instead of being concrete jungles of businesses and cramped, high-rise apartments, they will be designed to balance efficiency and beauty.

Efficiency will be gained by designing cities God's way—they will be well-planned, orderly and peaceful (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40). Since city planners will be motivated by concern for the inhabitants, towns will be wisely designed to promote their citizens' well-being. Urban populations will surely have less pollution and less stress than today.

Many of the cities in Israel could have great populations: “Like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men” (Ezekiel 36:38). Even Jerusalem will be heavily populated (Zechariah 2:4).

The difference between cities now and cities then is that they will be planned and designed to comfortably house their populations without people being forced to live in inhumane slums or squeezed together in densely packed tenements.

Urban design will reflect God's standards of beauty and quality. When vast sums of money will no longer need to be poured into military, police

or security systems, resources can be invested into bettering society in many ways. Buildings will likely be interspersed with beautiful parks and green spaces, providing tranquil places where people can exercise and children can play.

Since all animals will be tame and safe, instead of zoos, one can imagine parks with lions wandering around, like squirrels do today, being fed treats from the hands of children. Ezekiel's prophecies about the future Jerusalem show its design includes common land to be used by everyone (Ezekiel 48:15-19).

All of the newly inhabitable land will allow cities, towns and villages to be built as people spread out and develop the new frontiers opened up to them.

Work and recreation in the Millennium

Life and work will be much different than in today's world. People will put in a solid day's work, but without the stress of working inordinate hours just to make ends meet or to have more possessions. People will enjoy their work and be content with what they have.

Burnout and exhaustion will no longer be issues to deal with. Life will be balanced and peaceful, as God intended (Psalm 4:8; Isaiah 26:3; 32:17). Imagine how much people will enjoy slowing down and relaxing in nature (Psalm 23:2). Cities won't just be for the hustle and bustle of commerce, but will be places where children can play and the elderly can relax (Zechariah 8:4-5).

Every seventh day all work and commerce will stop as people rest and rejoice on God's Sabbath. In this family-centered society, people will spend leisure time with their relatives and nurture strong friendships with other families. Chatter and laughter will be heard throughout towns as families and friends share meals and enjoy each other's company.

There's no reason to believe technology will cease to exist—in fact, there is every reason to believe it will flourish—but people will learn how to control any of its potentially negative effects.

A slower pace of life will allow more time for creativity. Isaiah wrote that during this time “the whole earth is at rest and quiet; they break forth into singing” (Isaiah 14:7). Since God loves music and the arts, these cultural elements will surely flourish. The Millennium will likely produce a new renaissance of inspiration and creativity—good music, brilliant literature, wholesome entertainment and beautiful art.

And all will be within the liberty of God's law. Entertainment and arts will

no longer feature every form of decadence man can devise (and its resulting horrible effects), but will celebrate the best of what life has to offer.

The physical will reflect the spiritual

These are just a few ways the earth will be changed during the Millennium. And nearly all these changes have great spiritual symbolism. God often uses the physical to teach us about the spiritual, and the transformation of the earth's physical environment will reflect the spiritual transformation of human beings and society.

Introducing water to the parched deserts of the earth reflects the renewal human beings will experience when they receive the “rivers of living water” of the Holy Spirit (John 7:38-39). Minds and lives that were formerly like a desert, parched of God's knowledge and spirit, will be renewed and revived. Just as the desert will “blossom as the rose,” the lives of people will blossom with the fruit of God's Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

The taming of wild, predatory animals offers an interesting parallel to another miracle that will be taking place—the taming of man's nature. The Bible often likens powerful and war-making nations to beasts, but the formerly violent, beastlike nations of the earth will become friendly. Nations that once attacked smaller and vulnerable peoples will dwell peacefully together—just as lions will dwell peacefully with children and lambs.

The lowering of mountains and smoothing of rough places likewise teach us the high and mighty in our age will be brought down, just like the mountains (Isaiah 2:2), while the lowly and humble will be raised up (Matthew 23:12).

These changes also teach that all obstructions to understanding and living God's way of life will be removed. Just as mountains block the movement of people and life-giving rain, Satan's deceptions prevent people from knowing the true God and His way of life. But after Satan is banished and Christ rules supreme, all obstructions to knowing God will be removed.

The Millennium's beautiful weather reflects life's peacefulness. Today, many people suffer emotional storms and upheaval, just as our world constantly experiences storms and natural disasters. But during the Millennium, life will become peaceful and simple because many of life's complications and difficulties, often a result of sin, will be replaced by the tranquility that comes from following God. People will learn that sin complicates all aspects of life, but obedience simplifies it. Just as consistent rain comes as a blessing for obedience, God will pour out His Holy Spirit on those who obey Him.

Removing the thorny weeds reflects “the cares of this world” being wiped away and replaced by God’s peace and the simplicity of His way of life (Matthew 13:22).

Again, these are just a few ways God will change this earth and people’s lives. The physical and spiritual changes that will transform this world will happen gradually, as people respond to God. And as they obey and are changed from the heart, their blessings will only increase.

But what will happen when this time is over? In the next chapter, we’ll explore what will occur in the postmillennial age.

Health and Healing During the Millennium

A prophecy from Malachi reveals another change Christ will bring when He returns—healing! “The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings” (Malachi 4:2).

With so many problems to repair, healing will appear in different forms. Part of the healing, as we’ve seen, will be of the physical environment. But He will also bring healing to people—physically, mentally and spiritually.

First, consider the physical, of which Isaiah prophesied: “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing” (Isaiah 35:5-6).

Jesus partially fulfilled this prophecy in the first century by healing many people (Matthew 11:5; 15:31). But its ultimate fulfillment will be after His return, when He brings healing on a global scale!

As people come to Him, they will experience physical healing (Hosea 6:1). Jeremiah prophesied that Christ will “restore health” (Jeremiah 30:17). Eventually the whole earth will be healthy (Isaiah 33:24).

No conceivable afflicting illness is incurable to God. He has the power to wipe out all forms of disease—infectious, deficiency, hereditary and physiological. Epidemics and pandemics will become things of the past. People will live long, healthy lives, just as God originally intended (Psalm 91:16; Proverbs 3:1-2; Isaiah 65:20).

In addition to instant healing, many factors will promote health and extend life spans. A clean and unpolluted environment will provide fresh air and pure water. People will be taught God's principles of good health and nutrition and learn to stop health-harming practices like smoking, drug use and eating unclean foods (Leviticus 11). By avoiding sexual promiscuity, people will no longer contract sexually transmitted diseases.

Christ will bring spiritual and emotional healing as well.

He knows and can heal all the underlying causes of mental health issues, ranging from chemical imbalances to genetic and environmental factors. He promises to "heal the brokenhearted" (Isaiah 61:1)—those burdened by depression, sorrow and emotional anguish. He will bring rest and peace to those who are "heavy laden" with sadness (Matthew 11:28).

But the greatest form of healing Christ will offer is the healing of spiritual blindness. Upon receiving God's Spirit, people will be given the power of "a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7). When He removes the curtain of blindness, spiritual sight will enable them to see the truth (Isaiah 25:7). He will be "a light to the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house" (Isaiah 42:6-7).

Jesus Christ's government will open people's eyes to the light of His truth and set them free from the shackles of sin and Satan's influence!



CHAPTER 7

What Happens After the 1,000 Years?

“There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light” (Revelation 22:5).

We've explored scores of scriptures showing the wonderful conditions existing during the 1,000-year reign of Christ and the saints. During this time, the renewed world will flourish under perfect government, righteous law, a healed environment and a spiritually transformed people.

But that 1,000 years will eventually end. Then what?

Satan temporarily released

The apostle John wrote: "Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog" (Revelation 20:7-8).

Satan's imprisonment will have been a major factor contributing to the wonderful conditions of the Millennium. Removing his deceptive and rebellious influence will remove many of the temptations that lead people to sin. But restraining him will not remove all sinful human nature from humanity or convert people to following God. It appears that while many people will live in the millennial age and experience its blessings, not all will be converted and faithful believers. These people may modify their outward behavior to avoid punishment, but inwardly harbor hostility to God.

If so, they will be tragically susceptible to Satan's deceptions when he is released.

We may ask, how could anyone living under Jesus Christ's direct rule and seeing all the blessings it brings choose to listen to and be deceived by Satan's reasoning?

For the answer, we need look no further than Genesis 3. Adam and Eve also lived under God's direct rule in a perfect environment, yet they were still led astray. And the book of Exodus shows that most of the Israelites, only weeks removed from seeing God's many miracles, including their own personal deliverance through the Red Sea, fell victim to distorted reasoning and went back into idolatry (Exodus 32).

Simply put, having God's presence and seeing His miracles does not automatically convert someone or make him or her faithful. Because God knows this, He will allow this final test on humanity to determine who is and isn't truly committed to Him.

It's sad to say, but Satan will succeed in deceiving large numbers of people from all over the world and "gather them together to battle" against Christ in Jerusalem (Revelation 20:8-9). Through cunning and clever reasoning,

he will not only delude them to reject Jesus Christ as King, but convince them that they can overthrow His government.

Though many will follow Satan, we hope they will represent only a small fraction of the entire population.

This attempted rebellion will end quickly, before they are even able to attack Jerusalem. John records, “Fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them” (Revelation 20:9). Satan and his demons will be captured again and eternally imprisoned in “the blackness of darkness” (2 Peter 2:17; Jude 1:13), never again able to deceive or harm anyone.

A second resurrection

After this disastrous rebellion is squelched, a period even more amazing than the Millennium will begin with another resurrection—that of “the rest of the dead” (Revelation 20:5). This will be the billions of people who have lived throughout human history without knowing or being called by God. Nobody knows how many have lived throughout history, but some estimate the number at over 100 billion.

Imagine all the people who lived and died through history without ever hearing the name of Jesus or seeing a Bible. Imagine all the babies and children who died prematurely, never having the chance to grow up. Imagine people you have known who died—people who were possibly very good in many ways, but never really had a chance to know God the Father and Jesus Christ.

This prophecy assures us they will all live again.

Here’s how John described this massive resurrection: “And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God” (verse 12). This resurrection includes everyone—from the common and lowly to the powerful and wealthy. Jesus referred to this resurrection during His ministry and mentioned examples of gentile nations from history that will be included in it (Matthew 11:21-24; 12:41-42).

In Ezekiel 37, the prophet described these people being resurrected to physical life: “I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live” (verse 6). Although the people in this prophecy are identified as coming from “the whole house of Israel” (verse 11), this event is representative of what God will do for all people.

As for what will happen when these people are resurrected, John said that then two books will be *opened* to them—“the books” and “the Book of Life” (Revelation 20:12). “The books” (in the Greek, *biblion*) represent the Bible; “opened” means understanding is unlocked; “the Book of Life” signifies the opportunity for eternal life.

In this time period, sometimes called the Great White Throne Judgment (verse 11), everyone who has ever lived and died without a real chance for salvation will be given a new physical life in order to have an opportunity to receive God's calling, understand His Word and live by it. As God said, at this point they will, for the first time, "know that I am the LORD" and have the opportunity to receive God's Spirit (Ezekiel 37:6, 14).

They will be able to see the stark contrast between the way the world was under Satan's sway and the way the world will have become under the rule of Jesus Christ. It will stand as a graphic lesson of how much better life is when we live by God's laws. The suffering of the past contrasted with the peace of Christ's rule will help people see that God's way is truly the best way to live.

These billions of people will obviously need a place to live. Perhaps one of the biggest projects of the Millennium will be building and preparing homes for them. Christ will assure the best possible environment so they can learn, live and fulfill their God-given potential.

God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). This is the time where all men and women throughout history will be given their first real chance to achieve their ultimate purpose.

Whether they will choose to accept His truth and be saved will be up to them. Those who do will have their names inscribed in God's Book of Life. We hope, and believe, the vast majority will make the right choice and have their names written in that book—and ultimately live forever in God's eternal family!

Regrettably, not everyone will make that choice.

The last sad reality we must address is the fate of those who in stubbornness will reject God and snub His calling: "And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

It's truly tragic that some will choose the way of death instead of life, but their end will be mercifully quick. They will be burned up in the lake of fire, gone for eternity. They will experience the ultimate wage of sin—not some horrific, everlasting, burning torture, but sudden and permanent death (Romans 6:23).

After these people are destroyed, everyone remaining will be spirit-composed children of God. The family of God will be expanded to include, most likely, billions of sons and daughters (2 Corinthians 6:18).

All things become new

When no flesh-and-blood humans remain, there will be no need for the physical elements designed to sustain physical life. The physical earth, as beautiful as it will be, will have fulfilled the purpose for which it was created.

So Peter writes that “all these things will be dissolved . . . the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat” (2 Peter 3:11-12). He then describes what will replace them: “Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (verse 13).

The apostle John saw a vision of this transition:

“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Revelation 21:1-2).

New Jerusalem—the city where God the Father dwells—will descend from heaven, and God the Father will reside for eternity with His firstborn Son, Jesus Christ, and the sons and daughters of His family. At this point, God the Father will be “all in all”—all will be in His family and subject to Him (1 Corinthians 15:28).

“Then comes the end, when He [Christ] delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power” (verse 24).

Revelation 21 and 22 describe the beauty and majesty of this coming new heaven and new earth under God the Father. What a glorious picture is painted in chapter 21, verses 3-4:

“And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.’”

The entire family of God will dwell together in love, God promising His children “they shall reign forever and ever” (Revelation 22:5).

The Bible only hints about what God and His family will do for the rest of eternity (Hebrews 2:5-10; Isaiah 9:7), but we do know that God’s nature is always to create, expand and move forward. Perhaps He also gives a slight hint of that in Revelation 21:5, where “He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’”

The best way to discover what will happen next is to be there and find out!

Epilogue:

A Vision of Hope

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope” (Romans 15:4).

We introduced this booklet by highlighting many of the problems our world faces and seeing how the solutions mankind has proposed and tried have failed. Many recognize that something major needs to change, but are at a loss to figure out what can work. So our world remains an increasingly dangerous place and people continue to face debilitating problems.

This could lead us to despair and hopelessness. Perhaps that’s why so many recent books and movies portray a dystopian vision of the future. An overall feeling that the world will continue to get worse and worse, not better, seems pervasive.

And, the truth is, the short term is bleak. God’s Word tells us conditions for the majority will yet worsen, even bringing humanity to the edge of self-destruction.

But, God be thanked, the light of His Word also shines on a long-term, incredibly better picture! The message Jesus Christ brought—the gospel of the Kingdom of God—assures us that He will return to this earth and establish His perfect government.

Under the rule of His Kingdom, a new world will rise from the rubble of the old. It will not just be new—it will be immensely better. As we have seen, the Bible’s many prophecies about this new world of tomorrow provide us an incredibly positive and exciting vision of the future!

This vision provides us with something we all need in these times: *Hope*.

What Does All This Mean for You?

“Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness?” (2 Peter 3:11).

We sincerely hope that what we have explored—the many changes God promises our world will experience after Christ returns—will have a lasting, life-changing impact for you.

Here are five action steps you can take:

1. Change your life in the same way the world will be changed.

In chapter 5, we explored many of the effects God’s law will have on life when people finally obey Him. The 10 Commandments, combined with the power of God’s Spirit, will transform the world into a safe and joyful place.

You can experience that same transformation on a personal level today. By learning His truth, repenting, being baptized, receiving the Holy Spirit and striving to obey all 10 Commandments, you can make your life better and prepare for God’s Kingdom. Study more about the conversion process in our booklet [*Change Your Life*](#).

2. Be in the Kingdom.

We hope you’ve been inspired by the beautiful prophecies of the Millennium. Those who respond to God today will have the amazing opportunity to be in God’s Kingdom as *spirit* beings. As members of God’s family, they will lead and guide the physical human beings alive during the Millennium.

If you are being called by God now, your calling is to be in His Kingdom. If you strive to “seek first the kingdom of God” (Matthew 6:33) and to “lay hold on eternal life” (1 Timothy 6:12), you can be a part of the solution to this world’s problems and, as part of God’s family, lead people into God’s way of life.

3. Learn how to serve and lead today.

God is preparing people today to serve and reign as “kings and priests” in His Kingdom. God’s qualifications for leaders are not based on things like political skill, societal status or a high IQ. The primary qualification He is looking for is spiritual character.

You can develop that character by living according to the principles of God’s Word today. Strive to live by the 10 Commandments now so

you can teach them later. Learn the way of peace so you can help others find it. Overcome sin and evil in your life so you can help others resist. Become like Jesus Christ so you can serve under Him.

4. Continue learning about the Kingdom of God and the Millennium.

Though we covered hundreds of scriptures in this booklet, there is so much more to learn about this future time. We encourage you to continue studying the prophecies about the Millennium. Take time to look up in your own Bible the scriptures quoted, read their context and dig even more deeply to discover other millennial prophecies.

5. Build more hope in your life.

If you read many of the Old Testament prophecies in context, you'll find they were often given to Israel and Judah in their darkest hours. God warned them of punishment and captivity for their sins, but at the same time, He also inspired His prophets to deliver messages of hope.

He wanted to assure them that, despite the trouble they were facing, they had a long-term future and hope. Hope is such a powerful, necessary force in our lives. It keeps us moving forward when the world says to stop, keeps us sane during insane times, and motivates us to overcome instead of surrendering to the sin around us.

The apostle John wrote about the ultimate power that hope should have on our lives: "And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:3).

We pray this booklet has helped strengthen your motivation to turn to God, to strive to live in the purity of His way of life and to always "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33).

Recommended Reading From LifeHopeandTruth.com

- *The Mystery of the Kingdom*
- *God's Purpose for You*
- *God's 10 Commandments*
- *From Holidays to Holy Days: God's Plan for You*
- *How to Understand Prophecy*
- *Finding Hope in a Hopeless World*

About **LifeHope&Truth**

LifeHopeandTruth.com exists to fill a critical void in this world: the lack of understanding about the purpose of life, the lack of realistic hope for a better future and the lack of truth!

Neither religion nor science has satisfactorily addressed these issues, so people today are of divided opinions, confused or, worst of all, don't care anymore. The ancient words of the prophet Isaiah ring so true today: "Truth is fallen in the street." Why? Is it because God was right when He warned that humans are inclined to reject Him and usually choose not to know Him?

We are here for people who are searching for answers, who are ready to prove all things or who are hungry for more than what they've been taught most of their lives about God, the Bible, the meaning of life and how to live. We want to help you truly understand the good news of the gospel and fulfill Jesus Christ's admonition to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

LifeHopeandTruth.com is sponsored by the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc. It is supported by the generous contributions of donors and members of the Church around the world, who make it possible for everything on this site to be free of charge based on Jesus Christ's statement, "Freely you have received, freely give." You will never be charged or made to feel obligated for anything on this site.

The Church of God, a Worldwide Association, has congregations around the world in more than 50 countries, with headquarters in the United States near Dallas, Texas. To learn more about the Church, please visit our website **cogwa.org**.

More from LifeHopeandTruth.com



Wake up to daily inspiration right in your inbox! Subscribe at **LifeHopeandTruth.com**.



Get the latest blogs from Life, Hope & Truth as soon as they're posted. Subscribe at **LifeHopeandTruth.com**.



Never miss a post! Subscribe at **LifeHopeandTruth.com** to receive the week's latest articles and updates.



Read our bimonthly magazine that will give you refreshing and practical answers to the questions that affect your life! Subscribe for free at **LifeHopeandTruth.com**.

Connect With Us!



LifeHopeTruth

Life, Hope & Truth

LifeHopeandTruth

info@cogwa.org

