

The End Times and The Last Days – What to Expect and How to Prepare

Lesson 31 “The Millennium”

As we saw in the last lesson, Jesus returns to earth in the Second Coming to set up His earthly Kingdom and the period will be called The Millennium.

- This is the beginning when Jesus will take total reign over His creation.

The questions on the Millennium are about how and when this will occur.

- Is it present or future, will it be a literal thousand years, or does it symbolize a prolonged period of time?

The One Thousand Year Reign-

Mankind has always had dreams of utopia, a great society, a paradise on earth, a return to the Garden of Eden.

- Both the Bible and the experience of recorded history tells and shows us this won't happen with man's own strength and ingenuity.
- The Bible tells us this one-thousand-year reign of Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords will be a time of flourishing, unrestricted peace, and prosperity.
- Immediately at Jesus' return to earth, He destroys the Anti-Christ and his armies – Rev. 19:11-21.
- satan is bound and Jesus reigns 1,000 years – Rev 20:1-6.
- The word “**a thousand**” appears six times in Rev. 20:1-7

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven. He had in his hand a key to the hole without a bottom. He also had a strong chain. ²He took hold of the dragon, that old snake, who is the Devil, or Satan, and chained him for **1,000 years**. ³The angel threw the devil into the hole without a bottom. He shut it and locked him in it. He could not fool the nations anymore until the **1,000 years** were completed. After this he must be free for a while.

⁴Then I saw thrones. Those who were sitting there were given the power to judge. I saw the souls of those who had been killed because they told about Jesus and preached the Word of God. They had not worshiped the wild animal or his false god. They had not received his mark on their foreheads or hands. They lived again and were leaders along with Christ for **1,000 years**. ⁵The rest of the dead did not come to life again until the **1,000 years** were finished. This is the first time many people are raised from the dead at the same time. ⁶Those who are raised from the dead during this first time are happy and holy. The second death has no power over them. They will be religious leaders of God and of Christ. They will be leaders with Him for **1,000 years**.

⁷When the **1,000 years** are finished, Satan will be free to leave his prison.”

Ten Texts on the Millennium:

Rev. 20:1-6 is the only passage that records the length of Christ’s reign on earth, but it’s not the only passage on the Messianic Kingdom.

Isa. 2:1-5, Isa 11:1-16, isa 32:1-20, Isa 35:1-10, Isa 60:1-22, Jer 31:1-40, Jer 33:1-26, Ezek 37:14-28, Amos 9:11-15, Zech 14:6-21.

Seven Titles of the Millennium:

A title on an event helps to shed light on the nature of the event.

It summarizes in a word or phrase the essence of the event.

So, the Lord gave several Biblical titles that capture the essence of the coming Messianic Kingdom:

1. The Kingdom of Heaven – Matt. 3:2; 8:11
2. The Kingdom of God – Mark 1:15
3. The Kingdom – Matt 16:28
4. The world to come – Heb 2:5
5. Times of refreshing – Acts 3:19
6. The period of restoration of all things – Acts 3:21
7. A Kingdom that cannot be shaken – Heb 12:28

Three Main Views of the Timing and Nature of the Millennium

1. Are we in the Millennium Now? Three Main Views of the 1,000 Year Reign

In the Bible, the Millennium kingdom is that period when Jesus rules and reigns in God’s Kingdom.

The three main views of how to interpret the timing of this reigning are dependent upon which view of the Millennium one believes:

A-millennial, Pre-Millennial, or Post-millennial – “Millennium means one thousand years.”

Derived from Latin words “mille – thousand” and “annus – year”

Two main points of agreement:

1. Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, and He rules or will rule over a glorious Kingdom.
2. Jesus Christ will one day return to this world, physically, visibly, and gloriously as the Judge of all the earth.

These points are non-negotiables that unify all believers that Jesus is Lord and our coming King.

Three main points of disagreement:

1. When will Jesus reign - Is it present or yet to come?
2. How will Jesus reign - spiritually from heaven or literally on earth?

A-Millennium View:

1. When will Jesus Reign?

This belief thinks the Kingdom of Christ is unfolding during the present age, between when Jesus came to earth as a babe and till His Second Coming touching the earth.

- The prefix A before the word millennium denotes the opposite of the word millennium and so literally means “no-millennium.”
- A-millennialist do believe in a millennial kingdom of Christ, but it is not a future, literal, earthly kingdom.
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2. How Will Jesus Reign?

For the amillennialistic, Jesus IS reigning in a present spiritual Kingdom.

- They deny the reign of Jesus will be a literal, physical kingdom on earth, instead being a spiritual reign over the church in the hearts of believers and in heaven over the souls of the redeemed.
- This position is simple and streamlined saying Jesus will someday return to judge all humanity and usher in eternity.
- They deny both a literal seven-year Tribulation before the second coming of Christ and a literal 1,000-year reign after His second coming.
- This view is the prevailing view of the Roman Catholic church, the Greek church, and many in Protestantism.

The Premillennial View

1. When will Jesus Reign?

This view teaches Jesus will return before [Pre] the millennium Kingdom. Jesus begins the millennium kingdom in His return to the earth after the seven-year Tribulation.

2. How will Jesus Reign?

- This view believes the millennium kingdom will be a physical, earthly kingdom of 1,000 yrs with Jesus reigning over the earth from His earthly throne in Jerusalem.
- Unlike amillennialism and post millennialism, the millennial kingdom will not be gradually cultivated by the conversion of souls over an extended period of time until the situations on earth are so improved, Christ comes to reign.
- Jesus will establish His kingdom suddenly and powerfully in His glorious coming to earth.
- Satan is bound during those 1,000 yrs., the curse will be reversed, the Abrahamic Covenant, and Christ will reign over the earth in righteousness, peace, and joy.
- This view does agree with the other views that Jesus is presently ruling over His church in this age as He reigns in the hearts of His people.

Future Events According to the Premillennial System:

1. Increase in apostasy as the church age draws to a close.
2. The Rapture of the Church.
3. Seven-year Tribulation on earth
4. The campaign of Armageddon
5. The second coming of Christ to earth
6. The 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth as Satan is bound
7. The release of Satan
8. The Great White Throne Judgment
9. The creation of a New Heaven and new earth
10. Eternity

The TimeLine of Premillennialism



Christ's 2nd Coming



Present age -
? Years

Tribulation
7 Years

Millennial Kingdom
satan bound – 1,000 yrs

The Eternal
State

The Postmillennial View

1. When will Jesus Reign?

Postmillennialism maintains Jesus Christ will return to earth **after** [post], the Millennium.

- To them, this means the Millennium is the entire period of time between the first and second comings of Jesus.
- Christ returning after the Millennium is completely over.

2. How will Jesus Reign?

- They believe in a spiritual and political reign, not being a 1,000 yrs but a golden age that the church will usher in during this present age by preaching the gospel.
- This age will gradually evolve as the church spreads throughout the earth and the entire world being Christianized.

3. How will Jesus Reign?

- They believe in a spiritual and political reign, not being a 1,000 yrs but a golden age that the church will usher in during this present age by preaching the gospel.
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Who's Right?

Which of the three views most accurately reflects teachings found in the Bible?

- The Pre-millennial view is the best view for six main reasons:

1. Premillennialism best fulfills God's promises to Abraham and David.
2. It offers the clearest interpretation of the Resurrection in Rev. 20:4-6
3. Premillennialism is the earliest view established.
4. It provides the most natural reading of Rev. 20:1-6
5. It best explains Satan's current role and his future incarceration during the Millennium.
6. It maintains the consistent literal interpretation of Scripture.

1. Promises of God to Abraham and David-

God promised Abraham three things in Gen. 12:1-3 & 15:18

"The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. ²I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. ³I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

Gen 15:18

So the LORD made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt^[a] to the great Euphrates River—

1. God would bless Abraham personally and the entire world would be blessed through him.
2. God would give Abraham many descendants.
3. God would give Abraham and his descendants a specific piece of land forever.
4. God promised in 2Sam. 7:12-16 to King David that one of his descendants would sit on his throne and reign over his kingdom forever.
5. Luke 1:32-33 announcement of Christ ruling on that throne.
6. Acts 1:6-7 Jesus reaffirmed the kingdom would be restored to Israel in the future.

2. Resurrection in Rev 20:1-6

Rev 20:4-6 give details of the Resurrection pointing to Premillennialism.

"Then I saw thrones, and the people sitting on them had been given the authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony about Jesus and for proclaiming the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor accepted his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They all came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

⁵This is the first resurrection. (The rest of the dead did not come back to life until the thousand years had ended.) ⁶Blessed and holy are those who share in the first

resurrection. For them, the second death holds no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years.”

“**They came to life**” is properly interpreted that “the physical bodies experienced a resurrection,” not just a spiritual resurrection.

3. The Earliest View

The early church believed in a premillennial view for the first two and three centuries of church history.

Briefly to say, all the historic church fathers held to this view as the most common belief of premillennialism.

4. It's the most natural reading of Rev. 19-22

It's the most natural reading to interpret the events of Rev. 19-22.

The order of sequence has the millennium following the return of Christ to earth.

5. Imprisonment of satan

The binding of satan in Rev 20:1-3 is the bedrock at the heart of millennial belief.

Both Amillennialism and Postmillennialism believe satan was bound when Christ came to earth the first time until now.

- For them, satan's activity are restricted in this present age.
- This contradicts the way satan is pictured in the N.T. – he is called the ruler of this world – John 12:31; 14:30, the god of this world – 2Cor 4:4, an angel of light – 2Cor 11:14, the commander of the powers in the unseen world – Eph. 2:2, a lion seeking whom he may devour – 1Peter 5:6.

Rev 20:1-3 is very specific in its description of satan's binding:

1. He is laid hold of by an angel.
2. Bound.
3. Thrown into the abyss
4. Sealed and shut over him

This did not happen in the first coming of Jesus but will at the Lord's Second coming.

6. Literal Use of Numbers

Rev 20:1-7 specifically mentions “a thousand years” six times.

- Why numerously repeat a number if it's not a literal number?

- There is no indication anywhere in Rev. that this is not a literal time period of 1,000 yrs.
- Apostle John, in Revelation, if speaking of a time period being general would identify it with a phrase such as: “a little longer” Rev. 6:11 or “little time” Rev 12:12.
- Rev. 20:3 says at the end of the 1,000 yrs., satan will be released for “a little while.”
- If the 1,000 yrs symbolize “a little while” why didn’t John just say so?

Rev 5:9-10 speaking of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders in heaven fall down before the Lord and sing a new song:

“And they sang a new song with these words: “You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For You were slaughtered, and Your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

¹⁰And You have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests for our God.

And they will reign on the earth.”

The final words of this heavenly hymn are instructive:

They speak of a reign that is future [will reign] and earthly [on the earth].

Only the premillennial view does justice to those words of Revelation from God.

Taking all the relevant evidence into account: it is best to interpret the 1,000 yrs. reign of Rev. 20 as a literal Millennium when Jesus will reign with His saints on the earth after His second coming.

So, what will be the purpose of His reign on earth?

Why does there need to be a Millennium in the program of God?

Why doesn’t Jesus just eliminate His enemies, judgment begins, and we go straight into eternity?

WHY THE MILLENNIUM?