

Note

Revelation – Part 10 of 15

Summary

There are three views on the Millennial Kingdom: premillennial, amillennial and postmillennial.

Premillennialists believe that there is a 1000-year period where Christ reigns with the saints in the Millennial Kingdom; amillennialists and postmillennialists don't.

However, the Millennial Kingdom is mentioned in the 17 prophetic books in the Old Testament in addition to Revelations 20, with hundreds of verses describing the Millennial Kingdom and Christ as the Conquering King who rules the nations. God has prepared amazing things for His people.

Transcript

Revelation – Part 10 of 15

We continue on the subject of the Millennial Kingdom.

This topic of the Millennial Kingdom is very controversial. Christians, good people have different views, and it can be very divisive. So I would encourage you, whatever your view is, to be humble, and not to make it a point of unnecessary division. There are many things in the Bible we can agree to disagree. Contend for the faith strongly, but graciously. For all prophesy - humility, humility, humility.

Now there are three views on the Millennial Kingdom. They're conveniently called premillennial, amillennial and postmillennial. When you say Premillennial it means Christ comes before the millennium. That's quite obvious. You see in Chapter 19, the marriage supper of the Lamb, Chapter 18, the great war and how satan is defeated and so on, then Christ comes back, and then the Millennium. That's why it's called premillennial because Christ comes “pre”, before the Millennium. If you read Revelation as a book, not as chapters, then you would see that, Christ came before the Millennium. The premillennialist also says that. Premillennialists believe that there is a literal 1000-year period when Christ reigns in a very unique way with the saints, called the Millennial Kingdom. And this is exactly 1000 years because in Revelation (Chapter) 20, you find the word “thousand years” repeated seven times. That's a lot of times in 10 verses.

But on the other hand, to be fair to those who disagree, this is the only passage that mentions “thousand years” in the Bible. So, though it's mentioned seven times in these 10 verses, it is not mentioned elsewhere. The Millennial Kingdom is mentioned but not the thousand-year period.

Secondly, to be fair to those who disagree with the premillennial view, there are only three very simple events described - satan bound, saints rule for 1000 years, and satan released. Not much else is said. 10 verses, how much do you expect to see in 10 verses? So they say, "No, it's not a big part of the Bible."

The others say, "This thousand-year period-the word "thousand years" is figurative. It just means a long period, which is fair. So one group of this called amillennialists, don't believe in the Millennium - just figurative.

So what's the view of amillennialists? They believe that this period described in Revelation (Chapter) 20 is the period between Christ's ascension (He died and He rose-we are in this period now) and Christ's Second Coming. Christ will come back, and we all agree with that. There are many verses on Christ's Second Coming, far more than on His First Coming. So they say this 1000 simply describes what we call the Church period. The amillennialists say it's not literal, it's figurative and that we reign now, Christ reigns through the church. If you're a Catholic, the Roman Catholic Church would like this view because in effect, the Roman Catholic Church did reign on this earth, at least the Western world, for a long period of time, through the Pope. The Pope had power over the kings of Europe. And, therefore, in a sense, the Pope did reign. He calls himself, the "Vicar of Christ", the one on the throne of Rome, ruling the world, the Western world, the Holy Roman Empire, if you study history. So, for the Catholic Church, this is the view. There is no such thing as another time when Jesus will come and reign with the saints; we already have the Pope sitting up there, ruling the world. Up till today, Vatican still claims political power. Just for interest, Vatican is a state with political power, they have ambassadors just like countries have ambassadors. So the amillennial (view) is taken by the Roman Catholic Church quite happily.

Now, what about the postmillennial people? The postmillennials belief is exactly the same as the amillennials - that it's not a literal thousand years,

we are in that period now, just as the amillennials believe. The only difference is the postmillennials believe that right at the end, before Christ's second coming, there'll be a great revival, people will preach the Gospel, many will get saved, Jews will get saved, and then Christ would come. In other words, it's the same view except there's a kind of excitement at the last part, where this Gospel will be preached in a greater way, because they see 'we are actually not doing a lot now. We're not actually ruling now, the world is still very much pagan, etc.' And this view is taken by the main line Protestant denominations. So really, the vast majority of the "Christian world" (may I put inverted commas for those who are listening to the podcast), or Christendom believe in either the amillennial view or the postmillennial view. In other words, they don't believe there's a literal period of 1000 years where Jesus actually rules with the saints and the martyrs of Jesus Christ.

Now, if you read the Bible as a book and you read Revelation, not with chapter divisions, it is obvious that Christ comes and 1000-year reign. And then, later we see the new Heaven and new Earth, the eternal state, not 1000 years state. This 1000 years is not an eternal state. It is just 1000 years, how can it be eternal? After this, Revelation Chapters 21 and 22 comes the eternal state, the New Heaven and the New Earth that will last forever and ever. So if you read this, as I tried to read the Bible as a book, then I would take the premillennial view. To me, it's quite obvious.

Now, what was the view of people who read the Bible in the past, like the early church? The early church, very early church, first few hundred years, took the same view - premillennial. But then, as I have been repeatedly saying, and you may be a bit tired of hearing this, Greek philosophy came into Christianity and up to today, we are burdened with it. What is the Greek philosophy? A clear division between the spiritual and the physical, between the sacred and the secular, between the clergy and the laity. So, that view came into the church about maybe 300 years after Christ's death and resurrection, and it has infected the church, and of course for them,

how can Christ reign on a physical world? How can resurrected bodies of saints mix with natural bodies? That's not possible in their minds. Christ rose, it is a very spiritual thing. He came down once in a body, now He rises, then how can He come back be among people who are natural bodies? So that division, "Christ ruling as King of Kings over nations, over people on this physical earth, (not New Earth, not yet, Revelation (Chapters) 21 and 22 is a New Earth) this same restored, renovated earth. Cannot!" So that Greek mind rebelled against this and came up with "This is just figurative. Christ rose, that's it and it is settled. He's now spiritual." So that probably was the beginning of this rejection of the premillennial view and the literal view of the Millennial Kingdom.

Now, some of you will say, "But didn't you just say that there's only one little passage in the Bible that talks about 1000 years?" Yes, it's true. But there are so many passages in the Bible that describe the Millennial Kingdom, especially if you read the Old Testament prophetic books. In fact, there's more there than (Heaven), there's nothing about Heaven in the prophetic books. Interesting. There is nothing described about the eternal state, the New Heaven and New Earth, nothing. Everything is about the Millennial Kingdom. And there's so many verses that you cannot read all those prophecies and there's 17 prophetic books, without saying, "What are they talking about?" I've laboured through the 17 prophetic books, so that you will have some idea, because 99% of Christians don't read those prophetic books and even if they read them, they haven't a clue what it says. So for them, the Millennial Kingdom is only described in Revelation Chapter 20 and not anywhere else. Why? Because they have never read the prophetic books at all. To them, "Only one chapter, 10 verses, and you make a whole theory? Are you mad?" No, no! The prophetic books take up 30% of the Bible, it's about the Millennial Kingdom.

Some of us will say, "Aren't you being academic?" What's the purpose? This is for academics to argue about, right? Why are you labouring this? You are telling us about the beautiful book, you said this book is not for academics." This book is for average Christians, not scholars in the seminaries arguing on the nit and grit. I don't believe this is academic. I believe it's important for several reasons.

Number 1: I believe that if you read the whole Bible, you will realize that Israel is very special to God. Many Christians don't want to read the Old Testament because they think it's not relevant to them. I thought all scripture is given by inspiration of God for us.

If you don't have the Millennial Kingdom, ask yourself this question, "What happened to the 10 tribes? Vanished? Did God conveniently forget about them? Israel has been suffering for years. You say, "Israel is the Promised Land." It doesn't look like the Promised Land. It's terrible. David reigned for a little while, Solomon messed it up, and Rehoboam lost it all. And that's it? Let's look at Genesis 17:7, God made some promises. Did God really mean it? Did God really see Israel as His people or it's just talk?

Let's look at Genesis 17:7 - you have to decide for yourself. This is God talking to Abraham.

And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

Many people will say, "God is talking to Abraham here, yes, but when He meant offspring, He means spiritual offspring. He means those who believe in Jesus. Abraham believed God, so you believe God, you're Abraham's "spiritual offspring". So they come up with the Replacement Theory which says, God didn't really like Israel. He just left them after they messed it up, and replaced them with the church. That's called the Replacement Theory. So for these people who read the Bible, Israel is irrelevant. God made promises to Abraham, which to me sounds like Israel is special. Even to

Apostle Paul, Israel is special, he would die for Israel when he said that in Romans. But for the Replacement Theory people, "God just said, but actually, since they're naughty, He just forgot about them." No! It's an everlasting covenant. Then we see Deuteronomy 14:2. So if you do read the Bible, the Old Testament and you don't get troubled that if there is no Millennial Kingdom, then my goodness, Israel really got a bad deal! If God chooses me, I got a bad deal, all I did is suffer all my life. What's there for me?

Deuteronomy 14:2

For you are a people holy to the LORD, your God and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for His treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

Now, I have to read it like I read it. "Of all the peoples in the earth, you, Israelites are special to Me." I believe, when God makes a promise, I believe He keeps it. His name is Faithful and True. If God makes a promise to Israel, "You are treasured" and then after a while, says, "I'm sorry. You're replaced by the church", God cannot have the title Faithful and True. So when people conveniently replace Israel, saying it's just the saints that matter now, the church has replaced Israel, I cannot accept it.

Number 2: Israel was told they would own that Promised Land. It says "Occupation, another story" because they disobeyed God.

Look at Deuteronomy 30:1-5

And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you, and return to the LORD your God, you and your children, and obey His voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart with all your soul, then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and He will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. If

your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will take you. And the LORD your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And He will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers.

Now, they are scattered. God said, "I will gather you, wherever you are. People say you are lost tribes. No, no, no! From the uttermost part of the world, I will find you and bring you back to the Land." Now has that happened? Or is it now, "Oh, sorry, I told you it's Israel but now it is the church." That sounds more like satan to me, the deceiver. That's not my God. My God will gather Israel again, as He promised. And I'm only reading to you only 2 out of many verses. His promises to Israel are too many to count. So you want to replace Israel just like that? Then your god is a god I would be nervous to worship. Because I don't know when He would just replace me like that (snap of a finger) one day.

Then if you read the Old Testament, there are so many verses describing the Millennial Kingdom, Christ coming as King conquering, sitting on the throne of David and ruling the nations. It has to be a Millennial Kingdom.

Now, when Jesus came the first time, (Listen to me carefully on this, many of you are not even aware of this) why did the Jews reject Him? They saw His miracles, saw His life for three years. Amazing miracles - He raised the dead, He fed thousands and He stilled the storms. Why did the Jews reject Him? The major reason is, the Jews were aware of all the prophecies of the Millennial Kingdom. Listen carefully. And the Millennial Kingdom showed Christ coming and conquering the nations, putting down "Babylons" everywhere and ruling on the throne of David, with Israel. And when Christ came in, after three years, sitting on a donkey, not a white horse and then He entered the city, they said, "Hosanna, Hosanna!" They expected Him to come and overthrow the Romans. Then His donkey,

instead of turning to the place where the Roman battalion was in Jerusalem, where the Roman troops were, He turned the other way and went to the Temple and threw out all the hypocrites, the Pharisees and Sadducees. They were so disappointed, "The prophets told us that You would come and conquer the nations, we would rule!" Have you read the Prophets? They were anticipating a conquering Christ. And then they saw Him go to the temple and later saw Him on the cross, not conquering, but dying. And they said, "How can we accept this as our Messiah?" We read the Prophets, we read Zechariah, we read Ezekiel and we read Isaiah. We read every one of them, it shows Christ as King ruling on earth, on the throne of David!" And then, He goes to the cross, that's why they rejected Him. You see, there's far more on Christ as King in the Millennial Kingdom in the prophecies. Can I repeat that to you? If you read the Prophets, and please go back and read them again, you will find far more on Christ ruling on the throne of David as King on earth. The Jews regathered back to their Land, Israel back to be the focus of the world, the centre of the world again, Jerusalem back to be the headquarters of the world. I am not talking about New Jerusalem that came down from Heaven. I'm talking about Jerusalem now. Then you can understand why the Jews rejected Jesus. Because there's so little about Jesus, as the Suffering Savior. Isaiah has it in Isaiah 53 but not a lot, and they were overwhelmed with the Millennial Kingdom view of Jesus. They didn't realize the best way to conquer the world is not military power. It's love, God's way of conquering the world. Jesus conquered the world by dying for us. That's God's way. God is holy. Holy means separate, different from all of us. God is love - giving, sacrificing. And because He conquered the world, on that cross, He gained the seat on the throne that God has. God's throne is also a throne of love and love conquers. I hope you get it now, that if you throw out the Millennial Kingdom, you better take your scissors and cut out all the prophetic books and a lot of the Old Testament because it doesn't make any sense to you. It's just false promises unfulfilled. But, if you don't read the whole Bible, it's a non-issue, you could be an amillennialist today or a postmillennialist and be perfectly happy.

Even if you don't read the Prophets, I think all you read the Psalms. Can I read one or two Psalms to you? Look at Psalms 2.

Psalms 2:5-9

Then He will speak to them in His wrath, and terrify them in His fury, saying, "As for Me, I have set My King on Zion, My holy hill." I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to Me, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will make the nations Your heritage, and the ends of the earth Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

What does this mean to you when you read it? If you don't have the Millennial Kingdom, Psalms 2 is (just) poetry. Let's read Psalms 72.

Psalms 72:7-11

In His days may the righteous flourish, and peace abound, till the moon be no more! May He have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth! May desert tribes bow down before Him, and His enemies lick the dust. May the kings of Tarshish and the coastlands render Him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts! May all kings fall down before Him, all nations serve Him!

What does this mean to you? What's all this? Where is this happening? Now, if you do read, even the Psalms, and you don't have the Millennial Kingdom view, then you will begin to wonder, is this beautiful poetry or religious poetry with a few nuggets I can pick out of Psalms and the rest don't make a lot of sense to me? Maybe that's how you read it.

And lastly, I say, what we believe affects our behaviour. If I believe that I'm just going to heaven and sit on a cloud, and play my harp, then I don't need to prepare anything for heaven. Just get saved by the skin of my teeth. Just trust Jesus, live my own life now and one fine day, we are all going to sit up there, on our little clouds, playing our little harps, and twiddling our thumbs for the next zillion years. That's how most Christians think. They don't have a view of heaven and they don't have a view of the Millennial Kingdom, so what preparation is needed? So it affects our behaviour. But if you know one day, you will reign with Christ on earth, let me repeat that, in the Millennial Kingdom, not the new earth, and you will rule over real people, then you have to prepare for life-1000 years! Most of us prepare for a work life of about 30-40 years. Will we not prepare for a 1000 years of life?

Let's look at Luke 19:17-19. This about the servants that were given the 10, 5 and 1 talent.

And he said to him, "Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities." The second came saying, "Lord, your mina has made five minas." And he said to him, "And you are to be over five cities."

So he says, "You've been faithful. You worked hard during this life, you invested everything. You didn't sit down and bury your talents, then when you come to the Millennial Kingdom, I've got nothing for you to do. But if you invested your time, your talents well, then one day, you will rule over 10 cities." To me, this life is preparation for the Millennial Kingdom and eternity. And now we are talking about the Millennial Kingdom, preparing for the Millennial Kingdom, and later we will talk about eternity. This life is not an intermission. It's a preparation. But how can you prepare when you don't even know the end? 90% of Christians don't know the end. They don't know Revelation (Chapters) 20, 21 and 22. Even if I wanted to prepare, how to prepare? So what is all these-premillennial, amillennial, post

millennial? Is it academic? No! It's critical. How you spend the next thousand years- that's a long time. And the next zillion years, that's a long time. There's no promotion. You can't go there and start learning. It's called the eternal state after that.

So you prepare now for your position there. I hope I'm getting across that this is not an academic subject. The Millennial Kingdom is not an academic subject. We will go on later to describe it and I hope you get to see a little bit of how the OT (Old Testament) is so true. Everything God said that sounded so incredible is true.

If you don't understand the Millennial Kingdom, why bother to read the Prophets? Because it looks like it's talking nonsense. Why bother? And that's why most people don't, because they don't believe in the Millennial Kingdom. They don't believe the prophecies, which are largely about the Millennial Kingdom, written to Jews, that they are not forsaken, they will never be forsaken. God has prepared some amazing things for you. God has prepared some amazing things for Israel, the Promised Land. God has prepared some amazing things for Jerusalem. And the throne of David is not some figment of imagination, it is not a spiritual throne. So I hope that this will help us see the whole beautiful book and the beautiful promises of God. And most of all, the Faithful and True God.