

## 53. THE MILLENNIUM or RULE OF CHRIST ON EARTH: WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE

**Bible Reading:** Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:19-25; 66:15-24; Micah 4:1-6. Zech. 14:1-9,12,16-21; Rev. 20:1-10.

**Aim:** To see what Christ's rule on earth will be like. To be encouraged by God's plans for this earth.

To be motivated to serve Christ while we have time.

### Introduction:

The Millennium is Christ's 1000 year rule on earth, in person, after His return. The key events are:

1. The seven year Tribulation ends with Antichrist's armies attacking Israel.
2. Christ returns to defeat Antichrist's armies.
3. Jews are converted on seeing Jesus Christ's wounds.
4. Jesus Christ enters Jerusalem to proclaim His Kingdom.
5. Satan and his demons are bound in the pit.
6. Sheep and goat nations are judged. Matthew 25:31-46.
7. Nature and world conditions are restored.
8. Peace prevails on earth. (Isaiah 2:4).
9. At the end of 1000 years, Satan is released from the pit, and deceives the nations to attack Jerusalem. They do so but are destroyed.
10. The earth is then destroyed by fire.
11. Unsaved people are resurrected, judged and cast into the lake of fire with Satan and his demons.
12. God makes a new heaven, a new earth, and a new Jerusalem.

I. **We will study the Millennium** as regards to:

### 1. JESUS CHRIST

Christ's feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives. After winning Armageddon, He will then sit on the Throne of David. Zechariah 14:1-9,12-21."Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him." Psalm 72:11.

Three things will characterise His kingdom:

- a) Universal peace. Isaiah 2:4;
- b) Universal righteousness. Jeremiah 23:5,6
- c) Speedy judgment on sin. Zech. 14:17-19; Psalm 2:8,9.

### 2. CHURCH will reign with Christ over the Gentile world.

"The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." Zechariah 14:5.

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" I Corinthians 6:2.

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." 1 Timothy 2:12.

"Thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities." Luke 19:17.

"I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them." Revelation 20:4,6.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." Revelation 3:21.

### 3. ISRAEL. Notice 6 things:

- a) Israel is to be regathered - initially in unbelief. Ezekiel 37:1-6; 39:22. The 1948 founding of Israel is the forerunner to Israel's final regathering.
- b) Israel will repent and be converted. Zechariah 12:8,9,10; 13:6,8,9; "So all Israel shall be saved." Romans 11:15,25,26.
- c) The Temple and its worship will be restored. Isaiah 66:20-24; "I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore." Ezekiel 37:26,28. The Old Testament sacrifices were typical and pointed to Christ. The Millennial sacrifices will be memorial and point back to Christ.
- d) Palestine will be divided east/west among the 12 tribes. Ezekiel 47,48.
- e) Israel will have judges. Isaiah 1:26; Matthew 19:28.
- f) Israel will evangelise the Gentiles who are born in the millennium. Isaiah 61:6; 66:19; Zech. 8:21-23; "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the earth with fruit." Isaiah 27:6.

### 4. NATIONS will be judged for their sin. Isaiah 24:1,5,6,19-23; 26:9,21.

The sheep nations will inherit the kingdom. Nations will come weekly to worship at Jerusalem.

### 5. SATAN and his demons will be bound in the abyss for 1000 years. Rev. 20:1-3,7-10; Matthew 8:29.

### 6. NATURE will be regenerated, and the social order will be set right.

- a) The nature of ferocious animals will be changed. Isaiah 11:6-9; Romans 8:19-22.
- b) Great topographical changes will occur. Zechariah 14:4,5,8.
- c) Rain and soil fertility will be restored. Joel 2:22-27; Isaiah 35:1; Amos 9:13-15.
- d) Crop failure will be for those refusing to worship at Jerusalem. Zechariah 14:17-19.
- e) Human life will be prolonged, as before the flood. Isaiah 65:20-24.
- f) Sickness will decrease.

### 7. CONDITIONS IN GENERAL

- a) Great joy and happiness. Isaiah 35:10.
- b) Physical healing will come to many. Isaiah 35:5,6.
- c) Great material prosperity and security. Micah 4:4,5; Isaiah 65:21.
- d) Earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord. Isaiah 11:9.
- e) No more wars. Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3.
- f) Man's headship in creation will be restored.

### II. The **Error of Amillennialism** was born out of Roman Catholic theology that:

- 1) Augustine taught that the Kingdom is the church which is reigning on earth now.
- 2) Augustine taught that the millennium is to be interpreted spiritually as fulfilled in the church.
- 3) Augustine taught that the binding of Satan occurred during Christ's earthly ministry. (Luke 10:18)
- 4) Augustine taught that the first resurrection is the new birth of a believer. (John 5:25).
- 5) Augustine believed in a literal 1000 year millennium between Christ's first and second comings. Since Christ did not return around 1000AD, modern Amillennialists think that 1000 years is a symbolic reference to the time between Christ's first and second comings.

### III. Titles of the Millennium

- 1) The world to come (Hebrews 2:5 “unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come”)
- 2) The Kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:10 “theirs is the kingdom of heaven”, 6:10 “Thy kingdom come”).
- 3) The Kingdom of God (Luke 19:11 “they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.”).
- 4) The Kingdom of Christ (Revelation 11:15 “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ”).
- 5) The Regeneration (Matthew 19:28 “in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory”). “Regeneration” occurs here and in Titus 3:5 concerning the new birth. It means “re-creation.” The Millennium will be to the earth what salvation is to the sinner.
- 6) Times of Refreshing (Acts 3:19,20 “When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ.”)
- 7) Times of Restitution (Acts 3:21 “Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things”)
- 8) Dispensation of the Fullness of Times (Eph. 1:10 “he might gather together in one all things in Christ”).

### IV. Purpose of the Millennium

- 1) To Reward believers. “For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with his angels and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” (Matthew 16:27).
- 2) To Fulfil the Lord’s Prayer, “Thy Kingdom come.” (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4).
- 3) To Deliver Creation from the Bondage of Corruption. (Romans 8:19-22).
- 4) To Fulfil three Old Testament Covenants:
  - a) Abrahamic Covenant promising that Israel would become a mighty nation (Genesis 12:1-3) and that Israel would own the land forever (Genesis 17:7,8).
  - b) Davidic Covenant that from David would come an everlasting throne (2 Samuel 7:12,13) an everlasting Kingdom (2 Chronicles 13:5), and an everlasting King (Luke 1:31-33).
  - c) New Covenant that God would forgive Israel’s iniquity (Jeremiah 31:31-34), give Israelites new hearts and use Israel to teach the Gentiles (Isaiah 42:6,7; Hebrew 8:8-13).
- 5) To prove that despite man’s environment or heredity, unregenerate man will fail as seen by his rebelling against Christ’s perfect rule at the end of the 1000 years. (Revelation 20:7-10).
- 6) To Glorify believers. “If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.” (2 Timothy 2:12).  
“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” (Romans 8:18).

### V. Millennial Temple Sacrifices will be reinstated.

“The Levites...shall slay the burnt-offerings and the sacrifice for the people (v.11). They shall eat the meat-offering, and the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering.” (Ezekiel 44:11,29).  
“This is the place where the priests shall boil the trespass-offering and the sin-offering, where they shall bake the meat-offering.” (Ezekiel 46:20).  
“All they that sacrifice shall come and take of them and seeth therein.” (Zechariah 14:21).

Q: Why the need for animal blood sacrifices in the Millennium? Wouldn’t this mean a retrogression in God’s program? Doesn’t Hebrews 9 and 10 say that blood sacrifices ended with Christ’s death?

“Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.” (Hebrews 10:18).

Answer: These animal blood sacrifices will be reinstated as:

- a) A reminder of the need of the new birth.
- b) An object lesson of the costliness of salvation.
- c) An example of the awfulness of sin.
- d) An illustration of the holiness of God.

During the millennium, millions of children will be born and raised in an age that will know no sin, sorrow, suffering, war, sickness, fear, Satan, hatred, jail or drugs. In spite of their perfect environment, these children will still need the new birth. Animal blood sacrifices will illustrate an object lesson teaching them the above four truths to remind them of their need to be saved.

### VI. Early Christians who believed in a literal 1000 year Millennium.

Amillennialists such as Philip Mauro attack Premillennialism by denying any historical evidence of Premillennialism before Schofield:

“if it had been possible to produce from the copious writings of the “Church Fathers” any proof that the doctrine concerning the Kingdom of God taught by the Schofield Bible and by certain Bible schools of our day was ever held by Christians, real or nominal, in times past, it would have been produced long ago.” (The Gospel of the Kingdom, Mauro, p.104).

Answer: Well Mr. Mauro, here is your Premillennial proof. It’s a pity you never bothered to check.

- 1) Justin Martyr (110-165AD): “But I and others, who are right-minded Christians on all points are assured that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be built, adorned and enlarged as Ezekiel, Isaiah and others declare.” (Vol. 1, p.239).
- 2) Papias (70-155AD): “There will be a millennium after the resurrection from the dead, when the personal reign of Christ will be established on this earth”. (Vol. 1, p.154).
- 3) Tertullian (145-220AD): “We do confess that a Kingdom is promised to us upon the earth...it will be after the resurrection for a thousand years in the divinely-built city of Jerusalem....After its thousand years are over,...there will ensue the destruction of the world...” (Vol. 3, p.342,343).
- 4) Commodianus (240AD):  
“For then after a thousand years they are delivered over to Gehenna.” (Vol. 4, p.211).  
“according to God’s command, living again in the world for a thousand years...they who make God of no account when the thousandth year is finished shall perish by fire.” (Vol. 4, p.218).
- 5) Lactantius (260-330AD): “the dead will rise again,...when again restored to life, they may reign with God a thousand years.” (Vol.7, p.218).  
“that righteous King and Conqueror will institute a great judgment on earth respecting the living and the dead,...and will build the holy city, and this Kingdom of the righteous shall be for a thousand years. But when the thousand years shall be fulfilled, and the prince of the demons loosed, the nations will rebel against the righteous.” (Vol.7, p.254).
- 6) Victorinus (died 304AD): “I do not think the reign of a thousand years is eternal,...they cease to reign when the thousand years are finished.” (Vol.7, p.359).

## **VII. What led to a decline in Premillennial beliefs?**

- 1) When **Constantine** (272-337AD) united church and state, the church received wealth and worldly honours. To hope for a coming King and an earthly Kingdom would have been extremely displeasing to Constantine. This worldly patronage of the church diminished the hope of a soon coming Christ.
- 2) The Rise of the **Alexandrian School**. Origen openly attacked Premillennialism (Chiliasm) and introduced the allegorical method of interpretation where he interpreted millennium passages spiritually and not literally. Dionysius of Alexandria, Origen's disciple continued his teachings.
- 3) **Augustine** (354-430AD), bishop of Hippo taught that "The first resurrection is the rising of dead souls into spiritual life beginning with Christ's ministry, from which the millennium dates; the devil is bound and expelled from the hearts of Christ's disciples; the reign of the saints is their personal victory over sin and the devil; the beast is this wicked world and his image is hypocrisy; the millennium will end in 650AD, ending history's 6000 years, and introducing the rise of Antichrist." This nonsense was rejected by people such as the Waldensians, the Paulicians, William Tyndale (1480-1536), Nicholas Ridley, Hugh Latimer (1555 died), the Huguenots in France, Anabaptists, Moravians, John Wesley and many others who adopted a literal interpretation of prophetic scriptures.

## **VIII. Doctrinal Errors of Amillennialism:**

- 1) Amillennial spiritualising of scripture tacitly denies the verbal, plenary, inspiration of scripture.
- 2) Amillennials ignore the exact meaning of words such as "a thousand years". If God inspired the words of scripture, then we must accept their common meaning.
- 3) Amillennials ignore the near and remote context of scriptures which demand a premillennial interpretation. Every scripture must be interpreted in conformity with all other parts of scripture.
- 4) Amillennialists have not yet produced an outlined system of Amillennialism that they all agree on.
- 5) Amillennials accept a literal interpretation for most of the Bible, but in eschatology they resort to spiritualization. They hence use 2 different and contradictory principles of interpretation.
- 6) Amillennials allegorical or spiritualising methods of interpretation did not spring from piety, but from Origen (185-254AD), who borrowed it from the heathen theories of Plato.
- 7) It is sometimes correct to say that Israel typifies the church as premillennials rightly do, but it is wrong for amillennials to teach that Israel is the church. Figurative language does not negate literal interpretation.
- 8) Fulfilled prophecy forms the pattern in interpreting unfulfilled prophecy. Since fulfilled prophecy has come true literally, so will unfulfilled prophecy come true literally.

- 9) Amillennials using allegorical interpretation of prophecy disagree with and discredit each other.
- 10) Amillennial, allegorical interpretation favours modernism. It is almost impossible to find a Premillennial Modernist, but most modernist protestantism is amillennial. Hence, amillennial allegorism is a step towards modernism.
- 11) Amillennial allegorism leaves large portions of Scripture unexplained. It cannot explain many scriptures, such as Zechariah 14, Ezekiel 37-39. All prophetic scriptures are easily explained by the premillennial literal interpretation approach.
- 12) Amillennialism fails to understand Daniel's 70 Week Prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27). If these 490 years were fulfilled literally, so will the future 1000 year millennium be fulfilled literally.