

God's Eternal Plan #31
The Triumphant Millennium
Revelation 20:1-6

In our study of God's Eternal Plan, we have come to the subject of the Millennium. And it is introduced to us this way in verses 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. But after these things he must be released for a little while." **Immediately there are two things that stand out: (1) the binding of Satan, and (2) the final stage of the first resurrection.**

Look first at the binding of Satan. In the verses Satan is called by four different names: "dragon," "serpent," "Devil" and "Satan." **From these names and from the fact that can be bound, we know that he is a person, because you cannot bind an influence or a principle of evil.** In spite of the fact that Satan is the author of so much destruction on the earth today, in the end it takes only *one* angel to bind him and throw him into the bottomless pit.

Look second at the final stage of the first resurrection. Verses 4-6 tell us, "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

We know there are three stages to the first resurrection. The first stage was when Christ was raised from the grave, as seen in 1 Corinthians 15:20-23, "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power." **The second stage is when the Church is raptured, as seen in 1 Thessalonians 4:16,** "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first." **The final stage of the first resurrection is when the Old Testament and Tribulation saints**

are raised, as seen in verse 4, “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands.” **A careful study of verse 4 will reveal these two groups of believers.** Notice he begins by saying, “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them.” Revelation 4:4 says, “Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes...” **When the rapture takes these people are already in heaven, but who are they?** Jesus gives us the answer in Matthew 19:28, “So Jesus said to them, 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.” **These are the representative of the Old Testament saints.** Then, obviously, there are the Tribulation saints, as seen in verse 4, “Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands.”

As we move on to the Millennium we will simply cover what we can with the time we have. As long as the human race has lived, there has been a dream of a golden age. It is found in the literature of all the families of the earth. **And the Word of God is no different.** Prophet after prophet, apostle after apostle, book after book will you find it recorded here in God’s Holy Scripture. There is more said in the prophetic Scriptures regarding this millennial age than of any other one thing that the prophets beheld.

The English word “millennium” comes from two Latin words: “mille,” which is a thousand, and “annum,” which is a year. So, the combination of the two words gives us “mille-annum,” or “millennium,” which simply means “a thousand years.” In other words, it is a time period, just like an hour is a time period; a year is a time period; a century is a time period. The Millennium is a time period, but because it is so preeminent, and so celestially glorious, that we have come to refer to it as *the Millennium*.

It begins after Satan is bound, after the great battle of Armageddon, and it ends after a thousand years, when Satan is loosed for a little season. It is a new age. It is a new order. **It is so glorious that it is hard for the average person to comprehend it.** For example, cannot conceive a world without sin, where Satan is bound, where righteousness reigns. These things are to us inconceivable, because we have never known a world that was not weighed down by sin.

The government of the millennium, like the eternal state, is a theocracy, that is, ruled by one individual – Jesus Christ the King. Isaiah 9:6-7 gives us

the prophecy of the reign of Christ, “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.” Daniel 7:14 says, “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.” His regal authority is given by divine appointment and is universal.

The people that will inhabit the earth during the Millennium will include all of the Jews and Gentiles who were saved during the tribulation. Because they were saved during the Tribulation period, they will be in their natural, physical bodies. In other words, all who enter that heavenly and holy era, that new age of God, shall be saved, shall be washed by the blood of the Lamb.

Now, in preparation for their entrance into the Millennium, there are two judgments the people in this earth must go through.

First, Israel must go through a judgment, God’s chosen people, who now live in unbelief, and who gather in their services in rejection of Christ. Why? Because no Israelite who refuses the Lord Christ will be able to enter the Millennium. Ezekiel 20:33-38 gives us this insight, “As I live, says the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness... and there I will plead My case with you face to face. Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead My case with you, says the Lord God. I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country... but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.” This is the great judgment of the people of Israel before the days of the Millennium.

Second, there is the judgment of the Gentiles. As is the case of the Jews, no Gentile shall enter the kingdom that has not acknowledged Jesus Christ as Savior. And the judgment of the Gentiles is described in Matthew 25:31-34, “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

These two judgments will be necessary to prepare the world for the establishment of the millennium and their participation in it.

Because those entering into the millennium will be in their natural bodies that will have children, just as we have children today. The earth’s population will increase, and a fully developed industrialized society, will provide for the needs of the King’s subjects, as seen in Isaiah 62:8-9, “The Lord has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength: surely I will no longer give your grain as food for your enemies; and the sons of the foreigner shall not drink your new wine, for which you have labored. But those who have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; those who have brought it together shall drink it in My holy courts.” Isaiah 65:21-23 continues, “They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. 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.”

The Millennial Kingdom will be marked by the adoration given to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord himself put it this way in Isaiah 66:23, “And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me, says the Lord.”

A great deal of Old Testament prophecy deals with the fact that we will worship our great Savior in the newly rebuild temple. A large portion of the prophecy of Ezekiel is devoted future use of the temple; its structure, its priesthood, its ritual, and its ministry during the millennial reign of Christ. Therefore, we not only know who will be the object of our worship, we also know the place where we will come together for corporate worship.

And now we come to an amazing revelation of the human heart, as seen in Revelation 20:7-9, “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, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.” **What in the world is going on here? Why is God in His sovereignty allowing Satan to be released from his imprisonment?** To find the answer we must backtrack in our minds.

Remember, those people saved during the Tribulation Period populate

the millennial kingdom. You also will remember we said they were in their *natural, physical bodies* and would repopulate the earth. You must also remember these are *not* people of the resurrection, that is, they have never been a part of the *first resurrection*, therefore, they still have a *sin nature*. **If they still have a *sin nature* that means they have to be saved to enter into the *eternal state*.** How to they get saved in the Millennium? By receiving Jesus Christ as the *true Messiah* and accepting His blood sacrifice that was poured out on Calvary.

Remember, the millennial kingdom will last for a thousand years (it has only been a little over 2,000 years since Christ was on the earth), so many people will be born and not all of these will receive Christ as their Messiah/Savior. Isaiah 65:20 gives us an amazing insight into the sinfulness of the human heart and the swift judgment of God, “No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.” This passage of Scripture has a two-fold subject: the longevity of life and the judgment of God on the unsaved. This truth is seen much clearer in the Hebrew, “No longer will babies die when only a few days old. No longer will adults die before they have lived a full life. No longer will people be considered old at one hundred! Only the cursed will die that young!” Look again at what we have been told, “...but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed (die).” The Hebrew says, “only the cursed will die that young.”

Here is the setting. Those born during the millennial reign of Christ will, because of their sin nature, need to be saved by faith in Christ. For a hundred years they will *see* Him in the flesh, *hear* Him in the flesh, and *know* Him in the flesh...but if they have not received Christ as their Savior by the time they reach their hundredth birthday they will instantly die. That is why the second resurrection is not until after the millennial reign of Christ.

But look again at the sinfulness of the human heart in Revelation 20:7-9, “When the thousand years come to an end, Satan will be let out of his prison. He will go out to deceive the nations - called Gog and Magog - in every corner of the earth. He will gather them together for battle - a mighty army, as numberless as sand along the seashore. And I saw them as they went up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded God’s people and the beloved city. But fire from heaven came down on the attacking armies and consumed them.” **How many people will Satan deceive?** “...as numberless as sand along the seashore.”

But verses 9-10 tell us their end is swift, “But fire from heaven came down on the attacking armies and consumed them. Then the devil, who had deceived them, was thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur, joining the beast and the false prophet. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

The battle rages on but the war has been won!!