

DOCTRINE OF THE MILLENNIUM

I. Introduction and definition.

- A. The term **Millennium** does not occur in the Word of God; it is derived from the Latin *mille*, (a thousand) and *annum* (year).
- B. It is applied specifically to the 1,000 years mentioned in Revelation. 20:2,3,4,5,6,7, and constitutes the final 1,000 years of human history.
- C. It begins some 75 days after the Second Advent and extends to the time just prior to the release of Satan. Dan. 12:11-12; Rev. 19:21-20:1, 20:7
- D. The Millennium constitutes the bulk of the day of the Lord, which begins at the middle of Daniel's 70th week and extends through the end of the 1000 years.
- E. The Word of God predicts that certain dire conditions will exist during the day of the Lord, which will be fulfilled in Daniel's 70th week. Isa. 13:6-9; Ezek. 30:3; Joel 2:1,11,30ff; IThess. 5:2
- F. The Millennium is the time when Christ visibly rules planet earth in righteousness and peace, fulfilling the promises of the Davidic covenant. Isa. 9:7; Ezek. 17:22-24; Dan. 2:44
- G. It is to be distinguished from the Day of God, or the Eternal State, which does not begin until after the Great White Throne judgment. Rev. 20:12, 21:1

II. Views of the Millennium.

- A. There are four general theological views relating to the return of Christ and the period of history known as the Millennium.
- B. The first is the non-literal view, which denies that Christ will return in a literal, bodily, personal way.
 - 1. This view is based on obvious rejection of what the Word of God makes explicit. Matt. 16:27; Acts 1:11
 - 2. It sees the Second Advent as being fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem, or on the day of Pentecost, or in the death of the saint, or in any other "act of God".
 - 3. It does not accept the literal view of the Millennium, but rather views the 1,000 years as being figurative for "a very long time".
 - 4. Many of those that espouse this view are **preterists**, who are people that hold to a system of hermeneutics that promotes the idea that the events predicted in Matthew 24 and the Book of Revelation were all literally fulfilled by 70 AD.
- C. The second view is the amillennial.
 - 1. The term literally means **no Millennium**.
 - 2. This group believes that there will be no literal Millennium on the earth following the Second Advent.
 - 3. This view came into vogue under Augustine (354-430 AD), after Origen (185-254 AD) had laid the foundation of **non-literal interpretation**, which effectively rejected sound hermeneutic principles, and sought to interpret the Bible allegorically.
 - 4. In his work "The City of God", Augustine set forth the idea that the visible church was the Kingdom of God.

5. He taught that the Millennium was to be interpreted spiritually as being fulfilled by the Church.
 6. The binding of Satan took place during the earthly ministry of Christ. Lk. 10:18
 7. The new birth corresponds to the first resurrection.
 8. The Millennium corresponds to the Church Age.
 9. He denied that the Millennium would follow the Second Advent.
 10. He taught that the church is the promised Kingdom and that there would be no literal fulfillment of the promises made to Israel through the Old Testament prophets.
 11. It is generally the position of liberal Protestants, the Roman Catholic Church, and Covenant theologians.
- D. The third view is called the postmillennial view.
1. This view arose following the Reformation; it was essentially an attempt to deal with the fact that amillennialism could not be reconciled with the facts of history.
 2. The followers of this view hold to a literal Second Advent and a literal Millennium.
 3. The two basic groups of postmillennialists include the biblical and the evolutionary.
 - a. The biblical postmillennialists seek their material in the Scriptures.
 - b. The evolutionary postmillennialist bases his views on confidence in man to achieve progress through natural methods.
 4. It is based on the figurative interpretation of prophecy, permitting wide latitude in explaining difficult verses.
 5. The Kingdom is spiritual and unseen, and fulfilled during the inter-advent period.
 6. The Church will essentially triumph in human history, with the gospel bringing about the conditions of the Millennium.
 7. The return of the Lord is seen as the assuming of the Kingdom on earth, which had been already established by the triumph of the gospel.
 8. Some proponents view the Millennium as the Kingdom of Heaven.
 9. This view has fallen out of favor since:
 - a. WWII.
 - b. It also fails to square with the facts of history.
 - c. A new trend toward amillennialism is growing.
 - d. Realism forces people to admit that mankind is incapable of bringing about the age anticipated in the Millennium.
- E. The fourth and correct view is premillennialism.
1. This view holds that Christ will return to earth literally and bodily before the Millennium begins; by His presence a kingdom will be inaugurated over which He will reign on planet earth.
 2. This kingdom on earth will last 1000 years and all of the covenants to Israel will be literally fulfilled during that time.
 3. This position has exponents from the apostolic age until the present.
 4. It is based on the literal interpretation of the Word of God, sound exegetical principles and sound hermeneutic principles.
 5. The two general positions of premillennialists include:

- a. Historic premillennialism.
 - 1.) This group believes that the world will not be converted before the Second Advent.
 - 2.) However, they accept the false doctrine of imminence, which is the view that Christ could have returned at any time during the Church Age.
 - 3.) Those that espouse this position also do not have the rapture in their theology. IThess. 4:13ff
- b. Pretribulational premillennialism.
 - 1.) This view differs from historic premillennialism only slightly, in that it teaches that Christ may come at any time for His saints at the rapture.
 - 2.) The rapture is then followed chronologically by the period of time known as Daniel's 70th week.
 - 3.) At the end of Daniel's 70th week, Jesus Christ will return visibly and publicly with His saints.
 - 4.) This is the correct view, except for the false doctrine of imminence; certain events must come to pass, and certain things must be in place before Jesus Christ can return and Daniel's 70th week can commence. Dan. 7; IThess. 2:3-10; IITim. 3:1ff; Rev. 17,18

III. Synonyms for the Millennium.

- A. Thousand years. Rev. 20:2-7
- B. Summer. Matt. 24:32
- C. Wedding supper. Rev. 19:9; cf. Matt. 22:1ff
- D. Kingdom. Dan. 2:44, 7:22,27; Isa. 9:7; Matt. 25:1ff; IITim. 4:1
- E. Day, that day, or Day of the Lord. Zeph. 3:8ff; IThess. 5:1-2; IIThess. 2:2; Heb. 10:25
 - 1. A day is exactly one-seventh of a week.
 - 2. God's timetable for the human race and the resolution of the angelic conflict is one prophetic week, or approximately 7000 years. IIPet. 3:3-9
 - 3. From Adam to Abraham was a period that lasted approximately 2000 years.
 - 4. From Abraham to Christ was a period that lasted approximately 2000 years.
 - 5. From Christ to the present has been approximately 2000 years.
 - 6. The final 1000 years is the Day of rest, the Millennium.
- F. Fullness of times, the final dispensation. Eph. 1:10
- G. The period of restoration. Acts 3:21
- H. While it is not a strict title, the term **rest** is used as a chief characteristic of the Millennium. Isa. 14:3,7; Jere. 50:34

IV. The chronology of the Day of the Lord, which begins at the middle of Daniel's 70th week and extends for slightly over a thousand years.

- A. Just as many events can occur in a single day of human history, even so many events will occur in the Day of the Lord.
- B. Just prior to the day proper, the daystar (Venus, the morning star is a reference to Christ) arises, which symbolizes the return of Christ for His church; this event occurs just prior to the events of Daniel's 70th week. Rev. 22:16
- C. The events of the first half of Daniel's 70th week will come to pass just prior to the dawning of the Day.

- D. The Day of the Lord technically begins at the middle of Daniel's 70th week, and the first portion of that day is characterized by great tribulation and distress for those living on planet earth. Isa. 13:6,9; Ezek. 30:3; Joel 1:15, 2:11; Amos 5:18-20; Zeph. 1:14-18
- E. The day proceeds with the visible, bodily return of Jesus Christ to the planet to destroy His enemies at Armageddon. Rev. 19:11-21
- F. While this battle is treated as an event, there is some indication that the final mopping up phase will take some 30 days. Dan. 12:11
- G. There are an additional 45 days that involve significant activity, before the glory of the Kingdom is fully manifested. Dan. 12:12
- H. At this time the massive cleanup from this incredible war will begin, Satan will be bound (Rev. 20:1-3), believers will experience their resurrection (Rev. 20:4), the earthly thrones of the apostles will be established (Rev. 20:4), the judgment of the sheep and goats will take place (Matt. 25:31ff), and the Kingdom will be officially enthroned after 45 days, lasting for a period of 1000 years.
- I. His first action upon returning to the planet will be casting the Antichrist and the False Prophet into the lake of fire. Rev. 19:20
- J. His next action will be binding Satan for the duration of that day, 1000 years. Rev. 20:1-3
- K. He then resurrects all dead saints from the Age of Israel, which includes those who lived in the final seven years during Daniel's 70th week and have suffered physical death or martyrdom. Rev. 20:4
- L. The judgment of the sheep and goats occurs, and the thrones of the apostles are formally established on their thrones, ruling over Israel.
- M. The primary event following all these activities will be the wedding supper of the Lamb. Rev. 19:7-9; Matt. 22:1-14
 - 1. The Jews were invited, but rejected invitation. vs 3
 - 2. They were not only disinterested, but repaid the invitation with hostility and violence. vs 4-6
 - 3. The invitation was then extended to the Gentiles. vs 8-10
 - 4. Unbelievers, who will live on planet earth in their physical bodies during the Millennium, will not be able to attend this party; if they attempt to "crash the party", they will be dealt with swiftly and severely. vs 11-14
 - 5. Abraham, as well as other resurrected Old Testament saints, will be present. Matt. 8:11-12
 - 6. Believing Jews will be granted entrance. Matt. 25:1-10
- N. At the end of the Millennium, Satan will be released to deceive those that are negative to the gospel. Rev. 20:7-9
- O. Satan, and those he leads, will be summarily defeated and he will be cast into the lake of fire, ending the Gog and Magog revolution. Rev. 20:10
- P. The second resurrection occurs, the resurrection of all unbelievers, who must appear before the Great White Throne. Rev. 20:11-15
- Q. The original creation will be spoken out of existence, just as it was spoken into existence. IIPet. 3:10-13

- R. A new creation will be spoken into existence. Rev. 21:1ff
- S. The New Jerusalem will descend from Heaven, which is the residence of the glorified Church and Israel. Rev. 21:2,9
- T. Nationalism will continue to exist at some level and the nations will bring their glory to the place where God and the Lamb dwell. Rev. 21:22-26
- U. At some point in the proceedings, Christ delivers the kingdom to the Father, and the day of God begins. ICor. 15:24-28

V. Christ and the Millennium.

- A. His Kingdom is inaugurated following the Second Advent. Dan. 2:44; Micah 4:1-4; Rev. 20:4
- B. He will become the ruler of the entire world. Ps. 2:8; Isa. 9:6-7; Zech. 14:9
- C. He will rule from Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. Ps. 2:6; Isa. 24:23; 52:7-10
- D. He will sit on the throne of David, fulfilling the Davidic covenant, and exalting the tribe of Judah. Gen. 49:10; IKings 9:5; Isa. 9:7; Lk. 1:32
- E. He will rule in righteousness and justice; that rule is characterized by the concept of the rod of iron. Ps. 2:9; Isa. 11:1-5, 16:5, 42:1-4; Rev. 12:5
 - 1. This will result in a lack of warfare between nations. Isa. 2:2-4; Micah 4:2-4
 - 2. Oppression and manipulation on a personal level, as well as on the national level, will be prohibited. Ps. 72:1-4,12-15; Isa. 25:3-5
- F. He will be exalted as per His SG₃ reward. Isa. 53:10-12; Phil 2:9-11; Rev. 2:26-27

VI. The Church Age believer in the Millennium.

- A. Based on the doctrine of positional truth, the believer shares the destiny of Christ. Rom. 6:5, 8:16-17
- B. Church age saints will return visibly and bodily with Jesus Christ at the Second Advent. Rev. 19:14
- C. Each believer will be assigned his position in the Millennial kingdom based on his Ph₂ application in the plan of God. Lk. 19:12-27; Rev. 2:26-27
- D. The twelve apostles will rule over the twelve tribes of Israel. Matt. 19:27-29; Rev. 20:4
- E. The believer in his glorified body will mingle with resurrected Old Testament saints and those that live in the Millennium, administering the rule of the rod of iron. Matt. 8:11; Rev. 2:26-27
- F. The wedding feast will also occur during this time. Isa. 25:6ff; Matt. 22:2ff, 25:1ff; Rev. 19:7-9
- G. Principle: If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. IITim. 2:12

VII. Israel in the Millennium.

- A. The Millennium is the time in history when the unfulfilled promises of the Abrahamic covenant are fulfilled. Gen. 13:14-17, 15:18, 17:8, 26:3-4, 28:13, 35:12
- B. This period will be the time of the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant. Jere. 33:14-22
- C. The New covenant with Israel will be realized during the Millennium. Jere. 31:31-34
- D. In spite of the previous dispersions, the final restoration of the Jews will be permanent. Isa. 11:11-13; Jere. 16:14-16, 23:3-8, 31:7-14, 35:40; Ezek. 34:11-16, 25-31, 37:1-28; Amos 9:13-15; etc.

- E. The enemies of Israel are reduced to nothing. Isa. 41:8-16, 49:22-26
- F. The shame over their historic negative volition will be removed. Isa. 54:4-8, 62:1-4; Ezek. 36:1-15
- G. The positive remnant will be forgiven and restored. Isa. 30:18-22; Ezek. 36:24-28; Joel 2:32
- H. The negative will be purged from the land. Zeph. 1:12-18, 3:11-13; Mal. 3:1-5; Matt. 25:1-13
- I. Israel will enjoy unprecedented glory among the nations. Isa. 49:22-23, 60:1-14
- J. The nation will experience a tremendous population explosion and longevity will be increased. Isa. 49:19-20, 54:1-3, 60:22
- K. The territory of Israel will be expanded and divided among the tribes. Gen. 15:18; Ezek. 47:13ff, 48
- L. Due to the lifting of certain aspects of the curse, the nation will enjoy unprecedented prosperity. Isa. 35:1-10, 65:18-25
- M. The topography of the land will be changed at the Second Advent. Zech. 14:4-11
- N. All Old Testament saints will be resurrected at the beginning of the Millennium, including those that suffered martyrdom in Daniel's 70th week. Dan. 12:2-3,13; Rev. 20:4
- O. The temple will have been rebuilt and cleansed, and the priesthood with its attendant sacrifices will be instituted once again. Jere. 33:17-18; Ezek. 40-44, 46; Dan. 9:27
- P. Positive Israel will live in maximum peace, safety, physical and spiritual prosperity with the Lord in their midst. Zeph. 3:14-20

VIII. Gentile nations during the Millennium.

- A. All unbelievers from all nations are purged at the beginning of the Millennium. Mal. 4:1-3; Matt. 25:31ff
- B. Only believing Gentiles will survive the baptism of fire. Matt. 3:10-12, 25:41
- C. Each nation will continue to exist under the principles of nationalism, with the exception of the United States and others in the western hemisphere. Dan. 7:3,12; Rev. 19:15, Rev. 18
- D. Each nation will be tested under perfect establishment rule, given the chance to respond to the plan of God. Zech. 14:16
- E. Those nations that are positive will receive rain accordingly; those nations that manifest negative volition will be disciplined with drought. The rain, or lack thereof, representing their attitude toward Bible doctrine. Zech 14:16-21; Heb. 6:7
- F. Gentiles are to be evangelized and taught by the nation Israel. Isa. 2:2-3; Micah 4:1-8
- G. Jerusalem, where Christ will rule, will become the center of worldwide worship. Isa. 2:2; Micah 4:2,8
- H. World-wide prosperity will be the norm as exhibited by the following:
 - 1. No war. Isa. 2:4
 - 2. Criminal activity is suppressed. Isa. 14:3-6
 - 3. Animals lose their ferocity. Isa. 11:6-9
 - 4. Increased longevity. Isa. 65:20

- IX. Satan, evil and sin during the Millennium.
- A. Satan will be bound at the beginning of the Millennium, and unable to interfere with mankind. Rev. 20:1-3 cf. Isa. 14:12-17
 - B. He will be released for a brief period after the 1000-year reign of Christ, and will immediately instigate a revolution against the Lord's rule. Rev. 20:7-9
 - C. He will be summarily defeated and cast into his final abode, the lake of fire. Rev. 20:10
 - D. At the beginning of the Millennium, only believers will inhabit the earth; all unbelievers will be removed during the judgment of the sheep and goats. Matt. 25:31-46
 - E. However, mortal believers still possess the genetic sin nature, which will be passed on to their progeny at procreation; they will continue to reproduce and repopulate the earth with sinners.
 - F. Under the excellent conditions that will exist on the planet at that time, population will increase dramatically, as observed in the passages concerning Israel.
 - G. Even under the visible rule of Christ and almost perfect environment, mankind will still have its share of negative volition.
 - H. Christ permits negative volition to the gospel and negative volition to Bible doctrine as long as criminal activity, and aggression is not involved.
 - I. The Millennium starts with believers only; however, within 1000 years an incredible number of negative unbelievers will populate the planet.
 - J. These, as is typical of those that are negative, are deceived by Satan and join his rebellion; nevertheless, they will be destroyed by a supernatural judgment of God. Rev. 20:8-9
 - K. One reason God allows this during the Millennium is to demonstrate the fact that environment does not determine volitional response.

Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

Rev 20:6