

## The Messianic Millennial Kingdom

- a. **The Millennium** literally means a 1,000- year period. This is described as a time in which Jesus will rule the whole world and the kingdom of God will be openly manifest worldwide, affecting every sphere of life (political, social, agricultural, economic, spiritual, educational, law enforcement, family, media, arts, environment, social institutions, etc.).
- b. The reference to a thousand years comes from Revelation 20 where it is mentioned six times and where John sees the events during that time. This description gives us a framework for understanding many of the Old Testament prophecies that would otherwise not make sense if interpreted literally. Hence these passages have often been spiritualised down through church history and we have lived lives bound by our present earthly existence rather than the hope of our glorious future destiny.

### 2. Heaven on Earth

**Daniel 7:13-14** <sup>13</sup> "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. <sup>14</sup> And 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 one that shall not be destroyed.

**Matt. 25:31** <sup>31</sup> When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.

- a. As we saw before, when we looked at Jesus' teaching on the end of the age, Jesus clearly has the prophecies in Daniel in mind. His use of the phrase "Son of Man" consistently throughout his life is a constant reference back to Daniel 7. Thus, we see that Jesus clearly teaches that there is a day, yet to come, when Jesus will sit on a real throne, in a real city and rule the whole earth.
- b. However, because most of the church has mostly neglected and misunderstood this biblical teaching many have no grid for what is to come when Jesus returns. There are number of reasons for this:
  - i Most of us we have grown up with a **Greek mind-set** that has separated the earthly from the heavenly and seen the heavenly as something ethereal and without substance.
    - (1) This is based on Platonic thought. According to Plato, because Heaven could not be experienced by the human senses and there was nothing concrete or solid about it at all it was purely an abstract concept. This philosophy has greatly influenced the church down through the centuries and led to a disconnect between heaven and earth which means we rarely think of heaven as a real place.
    - (2) Therefore many Christians only have a view of heaven as some ethereal place where we escape to at the end of this life and live with Jesus for evermore as spirit beings. An eternal Kingdom on earth is not even part of their mind-set. Yet Paul is clear about God's eternal purpose – heaven is coming to earth:

**Eph. 1:9-10** making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ <sup>10</sup> as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

- (3) God created the universe in two distinct realms (Gen. 1:1).

(a) **Earth:** This speaks of the physical realm, where human process and physical sensation reach their fullest expression.

(b) **Heaven:** This speaks of the spiritual realm, where God's power and presence are openly manifest. Heaven is where believers have gone when they die for the last 2,000 years since Jesus' resurrection as a "temporary holding place" before they receive a resurrected body.

ii **The postmillennial view** which teaches that Jesus returns after (post-) His millennial rule.

(1) This view is based on the belief that we are living in the millennial age. During this time between Jesus first and second coming the Church establishes the Millennium by fully Christianising the world to be ready to receive Jesus on His return.

(2) This view means end-time prophecies are usually interpreted symbolically instead of literally or they are seen as already fulfilled or irrelevant as they are Old Testament prophecies relating only to Israel. This leads to a lack of understanding of the significance of Israel in God's eternal purposes.

(3) It was most popular during the Victorian age (about 1840–1900) when the Spirit was restoring the truths of social action and human rights. At that time, many believers thought things would just get better and better until Jesus returned. However, the two world wars in the 20th century caused postmillennialism to fall out of favour.

iii **The amillennial or "no millennium" view** teaches that Jesus' 1,000-year reign is not a literal earthly reign, but merely a spiritual victory over sin in the heart of the believer.

(1) Most amillennialists limit the kingdom on the earth as being mostly in the heart of a believer.

(2) Once again this means end-time prophecies are usually interpreted symbolically or fulfilled, and it ignores the significance of Israel in God's eternal purposes,

c. Understanding the biblical perspective of heaven as a real place which is coming to earth is important because it affects how we see our future, which affects how we live today.

d. The biblical text is clear - Heaven will come to earth at the time of Jesus' return. When Jesus rules the earth, the *natural human processes* will not be suspended, but will be significantly enhanced by the *supernatural dimension* of the Spirit. This truth is a key to understanding many end-time passages, including the saints reigning with Jesus over all nations.

e. The messianic kingdom is one of the major revelations of Scripture. It pertains to God's destiny for the earth and His people living on the earth. Jesus' core message was that God's kingdom is to be released on earth as it is in heaven (Mt. 6:10). The New Testament makes it clear that the kingdom is **already here** (in a limited way), but is **not yet fully here** until Jesus returns.

### 3. 1,000 years (Revelation 20)

**Rev. 19:20; 20:1-3** <sup>20</sup> And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur. <sup>1</sup> Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. <sup>2</sup> And he seized the dragon, that ancient

*serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,<sup>3</sup> and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.*

- a. Immediately after dealing with the armies that have gathered around Jerusalem Jesus begins to deal with the unholy trinity. The Antichrist and the False Prophet are thrown into the Lake of Fire and Satan is bound and thrown into the pit for 1,000 years. This incarceration is clearly given a time frame of 1,000 years and this time frame is repeated six times in this brief chapter.
- b. We are told:
  - i Satan is incarcerated so he cannot deceive the saints (v.3)
  - ii The redeemed dead come to life and reign with Christ (v.4)
  - iii The unredeemed dead do not come to life until the end of the thousand years (v.5)
  - iv The resurrected redeemed need not fear the second death and they will be priests of God and of Christ (v.6)
  - v There will be a second death for the unredeemed at the end of the thousand years (v.6)
  - vi At the end of the thousand years Satan will be released, deceive many and lead them against the saints in the glorious city. Fire from heaven will consume them and Satan will be thrown into the Lake of Fire with the Antichrist and the False Prophet.
- c. This one chapter in Revelation gives us a clear and succinct description of the beginning and end of this thousand year time span but to gain more understanding of what the bible teaches will happen during those thousand years, and what life will be like, we need to look at many other scriptures many of which are in the Old Testament.
- d. All through the Old Testament the prophets speak of a glorious future when God will reign from Jerusalem and the earth will be filled with peace and justice. What will life during this thousand years be like?

## 4. Who will live in the Messianic Kingdom

- a. The first question is therefore who are those who are alive as Jesus instigates His Kingdom?
  - i **The resurrected and glorified saints** – that is all those who were resurrected when Jesus returned along with those who were raptured. These resurrected saints, in resurrection bodies, will return with Jesus to the earth and reign with Him as a kingdom of priests.
  - ii **Christ's "brothers" (the faithful Jewish remnant), and the "sheep" (faithful Gentiles)** who survive the Tribulation and enter the kingdom to form its initial population. Children will be born to those who enter the kingdom in their natural bodies and life will be greatly blessed by the rule of Christ.

***Isaiah 65:20-23** No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. <sup>21</sup> They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. <sup>22</sup> They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. <sup>23</sup> They shall not labour in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the LORD, and their descendants with them.*

## 5. Four foundational aspects of the Messianic Kingdom

- a. There are four aspects of the millennial kingdom that are necessary for God's people to experience His fullness on the earth. They bring a supernatural, political, spiritual and physical dimension to the Father's eternal plan for His people on the earth.
  - i The **New Jerusalem** will come down to earth, bringing a *supernatural, eternal* dimension to the millennial kingdom. It will include the supernatural aspects of our resurrected bodies.
  - ii The **kingdom of David** will bring a *political and social* dimension to the Millennium. This will include governmental, economic, and social institutions. Righteousness and justice will be established in every sphere of life as the government of every nation on earth is brought under Jesus' authority.
  - iii The **Millennial temple** will bring a *spiritual* dimension to the kingdom. The millennial temple will be a global worship center from which Jesus will lead the nations in prayer. He will call His people worldwide to encounter God and to rule with Him from a place of worship and prayer (Isa. 56:7).
  - iv The **garden of Eden** will be restored, bringing a *physical paradise* dimension to the Millennium, with a fully renewed environment (agriculture, animals, atmosphere, etc.) including physical pleasures.

## 6. New Jerusalem: supernatural eternal dimension of the Kingdom

- a. The New Jerusalem will come down to earth, bringing a supernatural, eternal dimension to the millennial kingdom. This will release a greater measure of resurrection life on the earth. The New Jerusalem is the place where resurrected saints will live.

**Rev. 3:12** <sup>12</sup> *The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.*

- b. The heavenly Jerusalem will descend to earthly Jerusalem, connecting the two Jerusalems. Exactly how the two relate to one another isn't altogether clear but Mike Bickle gives four reasons why he believes the New Jerusalem is *close to* earthly Jerusalem and accessible to it, yet not *on the earth* until after the Millennium.
  - i **The size:** The size of the millennial Jerusalem is either about 10 square miles or 80 square miles depending on whether the measurement is 4,500 cubits or 4,500 rods (Ezek. 48:15-19, 30-35; 45:6). Since the New Jerusalem is 1,380 square miles (Rev. 21:16), it will be far too large to rest on millennial Jerusalem.

**Ezek. 48:16** <sup>16</sup> *These shall be its measurements: the north side four thousand five hundred cubits [rods], the south side four thousand five hundred [rods], the east side four thousand five hundred [rods], and the west side four thousand five hundred [rods].*

- ii **The leaves:** The leaves in the New Jerusalem are for the healing of the nations (Rev. 22:2). There is no need for healing leaves to heal in the New Jerusalem; they will be used to facilitate healing in the nations of the millennial earth. Thus, the New Jerusalem must be close enough to the earth so that people with natural bodies on the earth can have access to these healing leaves.

**Rev. 22:2** <sup>2</sup>...on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits... The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- iii **The kings:** The kings on the millennial earth will come into the New Jerusalem to bring their glory, which includes their national resources and accomplishments (Rev. 21:24-26; 22:14).

**Rev. 21:24-26** <sup>24</sup>The nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour into it...<sup>26</sup>And they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it.

**Rev. 22:14-15** <sup>14</sup>Blessed are those who do His commandments that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. <sup>15</sup>But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters...

- iv **The angels:** Angels seem to stand “guard” at the gates of the New Jerusalem to make sure that no one enters without the right of entry and right to the tree of life (Rev. 21:12, 27; 22:14-15). If this is so, the New Jerusalem must be close enough to the earth for this to matter. A parallel to this is the angels who guarded the entrance to Eden and the tree of life after Adam sinned (Gen. 3:22-24).

**Rev. 21:12** <sup>12</sup>...she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates...

**Rev. 21:27** <sup>27</sup>There shall by no means enter it [New Jerusalem] anything that defiles...but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

- c. This also shows us that those with resurrected bodies will move between both Jerusalems implying that our home will be in the New Jerusalem. Jesus' throne will be *both* in the millennial temple in Jerusalem *and* in the heavenly New Jerusalem. It is *one throne* with two expressions (Jer. 3:17; Ezek. 43:4-7; Zech. 6:12-13; Rev. 22:3).

**Jeremiah 3:17** <sup>17</sup>At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the LORD, and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of the LORD in Jerusalem, and they shall no more stubbornly follow their own evil heart.

**Ezekiel 43:6-7** <sup>6</sup>While the man was standing beside me, I heard one speaking to me out of the temple, <sup>7</sup>and he said to me, “Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel for ever.”

## 7. The kingdom of David: political and social dimension of the Kingdom

- a. God will rule in the person of Jesus Christ on the throne of David. The **kingdom of David** will bring a *political and social* aspect to the Millennium. This will include governmental, economic, and social institutions. Righteousness and justice will be established in every sphere of life as the government of every nation on earth is brought under Jesus' authority.
- b. Jesus will rule as a human, Jewish son of David sitting on the throne of David (2 Sam. 7:13, 16, 23:5; cf. Isa. 9:6-7; 55:3; Ps. 89:3-4; 34-37; Jer. 23:5-6; 30:8-9; 33:14-17, 20-21; Ezek. 37:24-25; Hos. 3:4-5; Amos 9:11). Jesus rules in heaven as the Son of God (in the heavenly Jerusalem) and will openly rule the earth as the Son of David (in earthly Jerusalem). He is the only Man with authority to bring both realms together (Mt. 28:18). The government of heaven and earth come together at the Second Coming.

**Matt. 28:18** <sup>18</sup>All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

**Isaiah 9:6-7** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Of the increase of his

*government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.*

- c. Christ's rule will extend both spiritually and literally over the entire earth – this is the time of “the restoration of all things”. The earth will have been ravaged by three and a half years of violence, bloodshed, plagues, pestilence, earthquakes, sea-life destruction, plant-life incineration, removal of mountains. Solar disruption, poisoned water supplies and depleted food resources.
- d. As Jesus brings together the heavenly and earthly realms so His government will progressively spread to all nations
- e. The natural processes of life will continue in ordering and establishing the infrastructure for every sphere of life in every city. This infrastructure will include life support systems (food, water, electricity), building projects (buildings, highways, bridges, etc.), economic systems (currencies, banking, etc.), education, agriculture, media and arts, technology, and social institutions, etc.
- f. King David will reign as a prince under Christ and the twelve apostles will represent Christ ruling over the twelve tribes. The Church-age saints will represent Christ ruling over the Gentiles.

**Ezekiel 34:23-24** <sup>23</sup>And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. <sup>24</sup>And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the LORD; I have spoken.

**Matt. 19:28** <sup>28</sup>Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

**Daniel 7:27** And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them.’

- g. Jesus will govern in partnership with resurrected saints who rule with Him (Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 5:10; 20:4-6; 22:5; cf. Mt. 19:28; 20:21-23; 25:23; Lk. 19:17-19; 22:29-30; Rom 8:17; 1 Cor. 6:2-3; 2 Tim. 2:12). This will include varying responsibilities and spheres of authority for each individual
- h. In the gospels, Jesus indicated that faithful servants would be given authority over cities (Luke 19:17-19). In the book of Revelation, Jesus said that overcomers would sit with Him on His throne, even as He then sat on His father's throne:

**Luke 19:15-19** <sup>15</sup>When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business. <sup>16</sup>The first came before him, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.’ <sup>17</sup>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.’ <sup>18</sup>And the second came, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made five minas.’ <sup>19</sup>And he said to him, ‘And you are to be over five cities.’

**Rev. 3:21** <sup>21</sup>The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.

- i. The earthly Jerusalem will be restored, blessed, and greatly expanded to serve as the seat of government and worship.

**Zech. 8:1-3** And the word of the Lord of hosts came, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. <sup>3</sup> Thus says the Lord: I have returned to Zion and will dwell

*in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain.*

**Psalms 132:13-14** *For the LORD has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his dwelling place <sup>14</sup>“This is my resting-place for ever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it.*

## 8. The Millennial Temple – the House of Prayer for all nations

- a. Scripture is clear – there will be a temple in the millennial Jerusalem. Ezekiel 40-47 gives us a full description of this worship center from which Jesus will lead the nations in prayer. He will call His people worldwide to encounter God and to rule with Him in context to worship and prayer (Isa. 56:7). Jesus’ government of the earth will flow out of worship and intercession.

**Isa. 56:7** <sup>7</sup>“For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

**Psalms 2:8** *Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.*

- b. Scripture reveals that Messiah will build this future Temple and reign there as both king and priest:

**Zech. 6:12-13** <sup>12</sup>“Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD. <sup>13</sup>It is he who shall build the temple of the LORD and shall bear royal honour, and shall sit and rule on his throne. And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”

**Ezek. 43:6-7** <sup>6</sup>While the man was standing beside me, I heard one speaking to me out of the temple, <sup>7</sup>and he said to me, “Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel for ever.

- c. Jesus’ throne will be in the temple (center of worship and prayer) and all the nations will go up to Jerusalem to the Feast of Tabernacles.

**Zech. 14:16** *Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths.*

- d. Ezekiel also tells us that sacrificial offerings will be resumed in the temple. After giving details concerning the size and appearance of the temple and the altar, the Lord then begins to give detailed instruction as to the animal sacrifices that will be offered (Ezekiel 43:18-27).
- e. The idea of animal sacrifices returning during the millennial kingdom seems strange to us for surely Christ has come and offered a perfect sacrifice for sin, and there is therefore no need to sacrifice animals for sin. However, it must be remembered that animal sacrifice never removed the sin that spiritually separated a person from the Lord.

**Hebrews 10:1-4** <sup>10</sup>For since the law was but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. <sup>2</sup>Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? <sup>3</sup>But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. <sup>4</sup>For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

- f. Most scholars agree that the purpose of animal sacrifice during the millennial kingdom is memorial in nature. As the Lord’s Supper is a reminder of the death of Christ to the Church today, animal sacrifices will be a reminder during the millennial kingdom.
- g. To those born during the millennial kingdom, animal sacrifices will again be an object lesson. During that future time, righteousness and holiness will prevail, but those with earthly bodies will still have

a sin nature, and there will be a need to teach about how offensive sin is to a holy and righteous God. Animal sacrifices will serve that purpose, "but in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year"

## 9. The garden of Eden: physical paradise aspects of the Kingdom

- a. The heavens and earth will be renewed to restore the creation to Eden-like conditions and repair the damage from man's long reign of abuse and the judgments of the Tribulation period. As the saints ruling and reigning with Christ we will be working with Jesus to restore and rebuild a devastated earth.

**Isaiah 61:4** *They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.*

- b. The *garden of Eden* will be restored, bringing a *physical paradise* aspect to the Millennium, with a fully renewed environment (agriculture, animals, atmosphere, etc.) including physical pleasures. We will live in a resurrected, physical body with supernatural capacities to enjoy an earthly paradise that is filled with beauty and pleasure. The food will be delicious with no negative side effects.
- c. God's original intention was to fill the whole earth with conditions of Eden. The sin of the first Adam put a temporary pause on this. Jesus came as the second Adam (1 Cor. 15: 47). Jesus will fulfill God's original purpose of the conditions of Eden spreading across the whole earth.
- d. Jesus will restore the agriculture and animal life to many of the conditions seen in the *garden of Eden* (Isa. 35:1-8; 51:3; Ezek. 34:29; 36:35; 47:6-12).

**Isaiah 35:1-2** *The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; <sup>2</sup>it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing.*

**Isaiah 51:3** *For the LORD comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.*

**Ezekiel 36:35-36** *And they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.' <sup>36</sup>Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I am the LORD; I have rebuilt the ruined places and replanted that which was desolate. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it.*

- e. Scripture begins and ends with God living face-to-face with His people in the garden of Eden. In Genesis 1-2, Adam walked with God in face-to-face fellowship in a garden. In Revelation 21-22, God lives with His people in face-to-face fellowship in a garden. The river of life and the tree of life seen in Genesis 1-2 are also seen in Revelation 21-22. What God originally intended in the first two chapters of the Bible will be fully restored as seen in the last two chapters of the Bible.
- f. The garden of Eden conditions will be established on earth as it is in the New Jerusalem, including the river of life and tree of life.

**Ezekiel 47:1-12** <sup>1</sup>*There was water flowing from under...the temple...* <sup>8</sup>*He said to me: "This water flows...when it reaches the sea [Dead Sea], its waters are healed..."* <sup>12</sup>*Along the bank of the river...will grow all kinds of trees used for food...they will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be food, and their leaves for medicine."*

**Rev. 22:1-2** <sup>1</sup>And he showed me a pure river of water of life...proceeding from the throne of God... <sup>2</sup>and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- g. When Adam sinned, all creation was subject to futility or weakness under sin's curse. Jesus reversed this in His salvation. The physical blessing of Abraham will be released on the earth. Harmony will be restored in the animal kingdom and between animals and humans (Isa. 11:6).

**Rev 8:19-21** <sup>19</sup>For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup>For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

**Isaiah 11:6-9** The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. <sup>9</sup>They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

- h. All implements of war will be destroyed in favour of implements of productivity. Nations will no longer go to war. Disagreements between nations will be judged by Christ from Jerusalem.

**Micah 4:3** He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide for strong nations far away; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore;

## 10. The importance of understanding the Messianic Kingdom

- a. We need to understand all four of these dimensions of the Messianic Kingdom to have hope established firmly in our life. Jesus is both King of the nations and head of the Church as fully God and fully man.
- b. Often Gentile believers only think of worshipping Jesus in the supernatural conditions of heaven, emphasizing His deity as the Son of God. The Jewish paradigm focuses on reigning with the Messiah in the natural conditions of the earth, emphasizing His humanity as the Son of David. Historically, Israel has focused on the earthly dimension of the kingdom without the heavenly. The Church has done the opposite in focusing only on the heavenly dimension without the earthly.
- c. Israel thinks of the Messiah coming to restore the throne of David with its worldwide government coming out of Jerusalem that will reform the whole world and restore it to the garden of Eden. They are not usually thinking of resurrected bodies and angels in heaven.
- d. The Christian concept of a heavenly kingdom in the New Jerusalem walking on streets of gold is very different from the Hebrew view of the Davidic Kingdom. They do not think much about reigning with Jesus on the throne of David over all nations and restoring the earth to the conditions of the garden of Eden.
- e. However, if we take time to study the scriptures we see the glorious truth – the two are coming together and the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray finally sees its fulfilment – “Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

## 11. The first and second resurrection

**Rev. 20: 4-6** *They (the redeemed) came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*

- a. As we know from our studies so far the redeemed who die before Jesus' return will be raised and join with the living redeemed to return to earth with Jesus. Jesus will then rule this world in partnership with the resurrected saints. Understanding this gives us insight into what the Lord is preparing His people for. What will resurrected saints do in relationship to people with natural bodies in the Millennium? How do eternal rewards affect our role in the kingdom on earth?
  - i **As priests**, resurrected saints will *worship, intercede, and communicate* the knowledge of God to others. The government of the millennial earth will flow from intercession.
  - ii **As kings**, resurrected saints will judge, or *evaluate*, the past as part of ruling with Jesus. Ruling includes evaluating, determining future action plans, appointing people to positions in the societal infrastructure, and training and managing people and the national resources under their authority.

**1 Cor. 6:2-3** <sup>2</sup> *Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? <sup>3</sup> Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!*

- iii Both the resurrected saints and those with non-resurrected bodies will continue to learn. As wisdom is gained and applied, many areas of life will progressively improve. There may be training institutions that will systematically teach Jesus' ways (political, economic, educational, agricultural, family, media, arts, technology, etc.).

**Isaiah 2:2-3** *It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it,<sup>3</sup> and many peoples shall come, and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. "For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

- iv The only resurrected saints who will share in the government of the millennial earth are those who are *considered faithful* during their life in this age (Rev. 2: 26-27; 3:21; 5:10; 20:4-6; 22:5; cf. Mt. 19:28; 20:21-23; 25:23; Lk. 19:17-19; 22:29-30; 1 Cor. 6:2-3; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rom 8:17). The Lord will select those who will work with Him to bring the nations to obedience in the Millennium, and He will choose those who consistently valued obedience during their life on earth.

**Matt. 25:23** <sup>23</sup> *You have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many...*

**Luke 19:17** <sup>17</sup> *Because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.*

**Rev. 2:26** <sup>26</sup> *He who overcomes...I will give power over nations...*

**Rev. 3:21** <sup>21</sup> *To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne...*

**Matt. 5:5** <sup>5</sup> *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."*

- b. This evaluation of the believers takes place after the seventh trumpet when we are raptured to join Jesus in the sky – the first resurrection. This is when we give a full account for our lives and receive Jesus' judgement.

**1 Cor.3:11-15** <sup>11</sup> For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— <sup>13</sup> each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. <sup>14</sup> If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

- c. Many will experience great loss at this time as they realise the worthlessness of much that they have given their lives to but no one is in danger of eternal separation (the second death).

## 12. At the end of the thousand years

**Rev.20:7-10** <sup>7</sup> And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison <sup>8</sup> and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. <sup>9</sup> And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, <sup>10</sup> and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

- a. After being incarcerated in the bottomless pit for a thousand years Satan is released. The Lord allows Satan, the “snake” of Genesis 3, back into the garden to offer the human race the opportunity to choose. As Satan once again seeks to deceive men the true nature of their hearts is revealed and ensures that God's justice in judgment is seen.
- b. God will openly manifest the truth about the depth of human sin and about Satan as being incurably evil. Satan will not be rehabilitated. God will demonstrate the justice of His eternal judgments by showing that rehabilitation will not occur and that men rebel even in an ideal environment because they love sin. Men will not be able to blame their sin on their difficult circumstances.

## 13. The Great White Throne

**Rev. 20:11-15** <sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. <sup>13</sup> And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. <sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

- a. When Jesus returned at the end of the Great Tribulation the redeemed were raised to life and gave account for their lives. Now, after a thousand years, the unredeemed dead are raised to face their judgement.
- b. This judgement is strictly for unbelievers – this is the second resurrection and it includes everyone who died an unbeliever. These individuals, who have rejected Christ and are not found in the Book of Life will join the devil, his angels, the Antichrist and the False Prophet in the Lake of Fire. This internment is called the second death.

## 14. New heaven and new earth

- a. Although the millennial earth will be renovated in order to recover from the judgments of the Tribulation and to restore Eden-like conditions, sin and death remained and the earth, in one sense, remains unclean. However, once all evil has finally been removed and consigned to the Lake of Fire the first heavens and earth are replaced by a new heavens and earth.
- b. Finally God Himself can descend to the earth and dwell with His people. There will be no separation because there is no longer any death. This is pre-Eden in its nature as the influence of Satan has now been completely removed. I believe the phrase “no more sea” refers to the final removal of the sea of glass that separated heaven and earth (But this is just my personal view)
- c. For the first time ever we will be introduced to our heavenly Father and it is His presence that will capture our hearts and imagination as we gaze upon His glory and delight in His beauty.
- d. The high point of history is the Father dwelling on earth with humans (Rev. 21:3). God’s purpose has always been to live together with His people face to face on this earth. The Father’s throne permanently coming to earth is the ultimate reality that God accomplished through Christ.
- e. The Eternal City is:
  - i a worshipping City with no temple (21:22; 22:4a);
  - ii an illuminated City with no sun (21:23; 22:5);
  - iii a governmental City with God’s Throne (21:24, 26; 22:3-5d);
  - iv a servant City that works (21:25b; 22:3c, 5a),
  - v and a holy City without any sin (21:27, 8; 22:14-15).

## 15. Conclusion

- a. Taking time to consider these things is important if we are to live our lives with the mind-set that Paul expresses to the church in Philippi.

**Phil.3:13-15** *But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.*

- b. This present life is but a short internship that prepares us for our eternal glorious destiny with our God. How we relate to Him and serve Him in this life impacts on our future destiny but it is not the fulfilment of all He has promised in His Word. **The best is yet to come!**