

The Commencement of Eternity
“THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM”
Revelation 20:4-6

Theme: At last, the people of God who have awaited the fulfillment of the promises will see them gloriously fulfilled!

I. A CENSUS OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE KINGDOM – 20:4-5

A. *The Presence of All the Righteous* – v. 4

1. One of the most consuming subjects in the Bible is the reality of the teaching concerning life after death.
2. In this passage, we see the realization of that truth:
 - a. First the church is presented as ruling – *“Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them.”* – cp. *Matthew 19:27-30; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 2:26; 3:21; 5:10*
 - b. Second, the martyred Tribulation saints will be there: *“...And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the world of God.”*
 - c. Third, the survivors of the Tribulation will be there: *“...and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand.”*
 - d. Fourth, there is a summary statement talking about these and the OT saints who come alive and enjoy the blessings of the Millennium – *“...and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”* – cp. *Daniel 7:18, 27*

B. *The Phases of the First Resurrection* – v. 5

1. We are informed that there are two resurrections identified in Scripture – the “first resurrection” that climaxes here, and another resurrection 1,000 years later – *“The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.”*
2. The later resurrection refers to when the ungodly from all the ages are raised for the purpose of standing before Christ Jesus at the Great White Throne Judgment – cp. *Revelation 20:12ff*
3. The *“first resurrection”* however, would therefore be exclusive to the process whereby God raises those who are deceased and rewards them with participation in the Millennium.

4. Because of what we see the Scriptures to teach, this resurrection culminates here, but begins with Jesus' own resurrection (which is called the First-fruits):
 - a. Phase 1 – the Resurrection of Jesus Christ – *1 Corinthians 15:20ff*
 - b. Phase 2 – the Rapture of the Church – *1 Thessalonians 4:16-17*
 - c. Phase 3 – the Resurrection of the Martyred Saints – *Revelation 20:4*
 - d. Phase 4 – the Resurrection of the Old Testament Saints – cp. *Daniel 12:1-2*

II. A CHARACTERIZATION OF THE PROSPERITY IN THE KINGDOM – 20:6a

A. *The Promise of Prosperity – cp. Isaiah 65:17-25*

1. Jerusalem will be a place of rejoicing – no weeping – *vv. 18-19*
2. The life-span will be increased as in the days of Noah – the wicked dying if they don't receive Christ by the time they reach 100 years of age – *v. 20*
3. It will be a time of fruitful productivity – *vv. 21-22*
4. It will be a time of economic stability – *v. 23*
5. It will be a time of intimacy with Christ – *v. 24*
6. It will be a time of peace – *v. 25*

B. *The Participation in Prosperity*

1. The blessings of the Kingdom are restricted to those who are the participants in the first resurrection – *“Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power.”*
2. Thus, one must be made righteous through the sacrifice of Christ before they can anticipate these blessings.
3. This brings exemption from the Second Death – cp. *v. 14*

III. A COMMISSION OF THE PRIESTS IN THE KINGDOM – 20:6b

A. *The Priority on Service*

1. The function of the priest is one of facilitating the worship coming to God with sacrifices of praise – *“...but they will be priest of God and of Christ...”*
 - a. Each of us who know Christ were made priests – cp. *Revelation 1:6; 1 Peter 2:9*
 - b. The function of the priest is to “carry on things pertaining to God” – cp. *Hebrews 2:17; 5:1*

An Exposition of The Revelation

2. Thus, our focus will not be on ourselves and the benefits that we receive, but on Christ.

B. *The Privilege of the Saints*

1. Nevertheless, it will be our blessing to reign 1,000 years – “... *and will reign with Him for a thousand years.*”
2. We will witness the fulfillment of all things – cp. *Revelation 5:9-10*
3. This is the time of prosperity that has always been promised to the people of God – cp. *Matthew 19:27-30; Acts 3:19-21.*