

Session 1 An Overview of the Millennial Kingdom

I. THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM: JESUS' 1,000-YEAR REIGN ON EARTH

- A. Understanding the biblical perspective of heaven is important, because it affects how we see our future, which affects how we live today. If we do not think *rightly* of heaven, then we end up not thinking of heaven at all. Heaven will come to earth at the time of Jesus' return. He will join the heavenly and earthly realms together when He returns (Eph. 1:10). This truth is a key to understanding many end-time passages, including the saints reigning with Jesus over all nations.
- B. There are over 150 chapters in the Bible focused on the end times. They reveal Jesus' power and plans at the time of His second coming, when He returns to take over the leadership of the earth. The Gospels (89 chapters) give us a record of Jesus' power and leadership at His first coming.
- C. This session will give an overview of the Millennium, a 1,000-year period in which Jesus will rule this world in righteousness. *Millennium* is from the Latin word *mille*, meaning a thousand.
⁴I saw thrones, and they [saints] sat on them...they reigned with Christ for a thousand years...⁶They shall be priests of God...and shall reign with Him a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4-6)
- D. At that time the kingdom will be openly manifested worldwide, affecting every sphere of life (political, social, agricultural, economic, educational, media, arts, technology, etc.; Rev. 20:1-6; cf. Deut. 8; 28; Ps. 2:6-12; 110:1-7; Isa. 2:1-4; 9:6-9; 11:1-16; 51:1-8; 60-62; 65:17-25; Mt. 6:10; 17:11; 19:28; Acts 1:6; 3:21). This period will be initiated by Jesus' coming. The result will be 1,000 years of unprecedented blessing as Jesus restores 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).
- E. Jesus, the King of kings, will personally govern a worldwide kingdom from Jerusalem. In the Millennium, all the kings of the earth will be saved, will worship Jesus, and base their national governments on Scripture (Ps. 72:11; 102:15; 138:4; 148:11; Isa. 62:2; Rev. 21:24).
¹¹Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him. (Ps. 72:11)
- F. The millennial 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.
- G. Daniel saw the heavenly coronation of Jesus as king over all dominions and spheres of society.
¹³One like the Son of Man [Jesus]...came to the Ancient of Days [Father]...¹⁴To Him [Jesus] was given...a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him...²⁷The kingdom...shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. (Dan. 7:13-14, 27)
- H. Jesus will rule in partnership with resurrected saints (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).
¹⁰...and have made us kings and priests...and we shall reign on the earth. (Rev. 5:10)

II. CENTERPIECE OF GOD’S PURPOSE: BRINGING HEAVEN AND EARTH TOGETHER

⁹*...having made known to us the mystery [hidden plan] of His will...¹⁰that He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. (Eph. 1:9-10)*

- A. The centerpiece of God’s eternal purpose is for Jesus to come back to establish His kingdom over all the earth and **join** the heavenly and earthly realms together.
- B. God’s purpose has always been to live with His people on earth. The earth will continue forever (Ps. 37:29; 78:69; 104:5; 105:10-11; 125:1-2; cf. 1 Chr. 23:25; 28:8; Isa. 60:21; Ezek. 37:25; Joel 3:20).

³*Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them. (Rev. 21:3)*

- C. God created the universe in two distinct realms, earth and heaven (Gen. 1:1). **Earth**: this speaks of the physical realm, where human process and physical sensation reach their fullest expression. **Heaven**: This speaks of the spiritual realm, where God’s power and presence are openly manifest. Heaven is the place to which believers have gone when they die for the last 2,000 years since Jesus’ resurrection; it is a “temporary holding place” before they receive a resurrected body.

- D. 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.

- E. We see an aspect of the natural and the supernatural dimensions operating together when Jesus appeared in His resurrected body to teach the apostles for forty days (Jn. 20-21; Acts 1:3).

³*He also presented Himself alive after His suffering...being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3)*

³⁹*“Behold My hands and feet...handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have...”⁴¹He said to them, “Have you any food here?”⁴²So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish...⁴³And He took it and ate in their presence. (Lk. 24:39-43)*

III. THREE TYPES OF PEOPLE WILL BE ON EARTH WHEN JESUS APPEARS IN THE SKY

- A. The **redeemed** will be raptured at the time of Jesus’ royal procession across the sky (Rev. 1:7).
¹⁶*The Lord Himself will descend from heaven...and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up [raptured] together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. (1 Thes. 4:16-17)*
- B. The **reprobate**, who took the mark of the Beast, will be gathered, judged, and killed. There may be millions or even billions such people still alive when Jesus returns. They will not just disappear.
- C. The **resisters** are the unsaved survivors of the Tribulation who refused to worship the Antichrist. They can be saved, and then populate the millennial earth. Resisters will stand against evil governments, even without faith in God, like some in the French Resistance who fought the Nazis in World War II. Scripture refers to “those who are left.” (Isa. 4:3; 10:20; 11:11; 49:6; 65:8; 66:19; Jer. 31:2; Ezek. 20:38-42; 36:36; Amos 9:9-10; Joel 2:32; Zech. 12:14; 13:8; 14:16).

IV. THE NATURAL PROCESSES OF LIFE WILL CONTINUE ON EARTH FOR 1,000 YEARS

- A. Jesus will rule the millennial earth, which will have natural and supernatural dimensions. The *supernatural element* will be seen in the length of human life being restored to that of Noah's day (Isa. 65:20, 22) and animals no longer preying on each other (Isa. 65:25). The *natural element* will be evident in people continuing to sin (Isa. 65:20) and in building and planting (Isa. 65:21).
²⁰“For the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed. ²¹They shall build houses...and they shall plant vineyards...²²As the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people...²⁵The wolf and the lamb shall feed together.” (Isa. 65:20-25)
- B. Harmony will be restored in the animal kingdom, and between animals and humans (Rom. 8:20-21).
⁶“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb...the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. ⁷The cow and the bear shall graze...” (Isa. 11:6-7)
- C. Jesus' government will progressively spread to all nations (Isa. 9:7). The natural processes of life will continue as Jesus orders and establishes His kingdom, with the necessary infrastructure for every sphere of life in every city. Normally infrastructures 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.
⁷Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end...His kingdom to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. (Isa. 9:7)
- D. Many people will come to Jerusalem to learn of God's ways from Jesus.
³Many people shall...say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD [Jerusalem], to the house of the God of Jacob; He [Jesus] will teach us His ways.” (Isa. 2:3)
- E. I highlight five aspects of God's kingdom are necessary for His people to experience His fullness on the earth for all eternity (Eph. 3:19). These aspects will converge in the Millennium.
- F. The *New Jerusalem* will come down to earth, bringing the *supernatural, eternal* dimension to the millennial kingdom. It will include the supernatural aspects of our resurrected bodies.
- G. The *garden of Eden* will be restored, bringing a *physical paradise* aspect to the Millennium, with a fully renewed environment (agriculture, animals, atmosphere, etc.) and physical pleasures.
- H. The *kingdom of David* will bring the *political and social* dimension (governmental, economic, social institutions, educational, family, arts, etc.). Righteousness and justice will be established in every sphere of life as every national government on earth is brought under Jesus' authority.
- I. The *house of prayer* will bring a *spiritual* dimension, in that the millennial temple will be a worship center in which people encounter God and partner with Him in ruling based on worship and prayer.
⁷“For My house [the temple] shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.” (Isa. 56:7)
- J. The *family of God* will bring a *relational* dimension with profound love and unity (Jn. 17:21-26).

V. HEAVENLY JERUSALEM AND EARTHLY JERUSALEM BROUGHT TOGETHER

- A. The New Jerusalem will descend to earth (Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10), **both** at the beginning (Rev. 21:10) and at the end (Rev. 21:2) of the Millennium. When this happens, heaven will literally be on the earth, and the resurrected saints will live there, in the New Jerusalem.

¹²“...*the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God.*” (Rev. 3:12)

- B. Jesus’ throne is 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).

³*The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it [New Jerusalem].* (Rev. 22:3)

- C. The New Jerusalem will descend and connect to earthly Jerusalem in the Millennium creating what I refer to as a vast “governmental complex,” which is Jesus’ throne of glory (Mt. 19:28; 25:31).

³¹“*When the Son of Man comes...He will sit on the throne of His glory.*” (Mt. 25:31)

- D. There are **four reasons** why I believe the New Jerusalem is *close to* earthly Jerusalem and accessible to it, yet not *on the earth* until after the Millennium. Visit mikebickle.org for more; click on the “End Times and Eternity” category (top left), then on “Millennium and New Jerusalem.”

VI. THE SAINTS WILL RULE WITH JESUS AS KINGS AND PRIESTS

- A. The two functions most emphasized for the saints are *priests* and *kings* (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6). Saints with resurrected bodies will be made kings and/or rulers over different spheres of life (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).

¹⁰“...*have made us kings and priests to our God...we shall reign on the earth.*” (Rev. 5:10)

1. *As priests*, resurrected saints will *worship, intercede, and communicate* the knowledge of God to others (non-resurrected people will be on earth in the Millennium with the saints).
2. *As kings*, resurrected saints will judge, or *evaluate*, the past as part of ruling with Jesus.

²*Do you not know that the saints will judge [evaluate] the world?...³*Do you not know that we shall judge [evaluate] angels?* (1 Cor. 6:2-3)*

- B. The saints will occupy the *highest position* of government in the Spirit on earth in the Millennium. This will be parallel to the position and role of angels in the government of the nations in this age. Jesus will rule a worldwide kingdom in partnership with two types of kings: **kings of the earth** with non-resurrected bodies and **resurrected kings** with resurrected bodies (Rev. 1:5-6).

- C. Being faithful now in “a few things” will lead to ruling over “many things” in the age to come. I compare life to a 70-year internship, preparing us for our assignment on earth in the age to come.

²¹“*You were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things.*” (Mt. 25:21)

¹⁷“*You were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.*” (Lk. 19:17)