

Revelation

Revelation 20:1-21:8

Introduction

The Millennial kingdom is called by many names in Scripture.

- Matthew 19:28 “the regeneration”.
- Acts 3:19 “times of refreshing”.
- Acts 3:21 “the period of restoration of all things”.
- Ephesians 1:10 “an administration suitable to the fullness of times”.

“The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool” (Ps. 110:1). The Hebrews say, “Yahweh said to Adonai” or the Father said to the Son.” Revelation is the fulfillment of this messianic prophecy.

In this lesson we will attempt to combine the teaching of Revelation with numerous other Scriptures that speak of this kingdom. In my opinion the face value of these teachings leads to a premillennial view of the return of Christ. This simple means that Christ will return and then establish a literal kingdom on earth, which will last for a thousand years.

Some things we know from other passages concerning the millennial kingdom!

- A. Isaiah 2:1-3 & Ezekiah 17:22-24 – Israel will be the superpower of the world and Jerusalem will be the capital His government.
- B. Isaiah 2:1-5 – It will be a time of perfectly administrated enforced righteousness.
- C. Isaiah 2:1-5 – There will be no more war.
- D. Isaiah 11:6-9 – The way animals will relate to other animals and humans will be reversed from Genesis 9:2-3.
- E. Isaiah 55:3-5, Jeremiah 30:4-11, Ezekiah 34:23-31 – King David will have a prominent place.
- F. Zachariah 13:1-9 – It will be a time of purity and devotion to God.
- G. Ezekiel 40-48, Amos 9:11, Ezekiel 20:39-44 – There will be a rebuilt temple.
- H. Luke 19:11-27, 1 Corinthians 6:2-3 – Saints in their resurrected state will be given responsibility.

Purposes of Christ in Millennium!

- A. To demonstrate Jesus' victory and His worthiness to rule the nations.
- B. To reveal the depths of man's rebellious nature in a perfect environment.

Though not an exhaustive description of the earthly kingdom, Revelation 20:1-10 caps off the biblical revelation of the millennium by revealing four truths about it.

A. The Removal of Satan!

(20:1-3)

1. This will dramatically change the world. By this time God will have destroyed all human rebels. The antichrist and false prophet have already been thrown in the lake of fire (19:20). The final step is the removal of Satan and his demons.
2. Satan is not all-powerful evidenced by his removal by an unnamed angel.

B. The Reign of the Saints!

(20:4-6)

1. With Satan, his demons, and all God rejecting sinners out of the way, the millennial kingdom of peace will be established.
2. In his vision, John sees God's people resurrected, rewarded, and reigning with Christ.
3. Who will reign? The Church and tribulation saints (20:4).
4. "The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed" (20:5).
5. Two resurrections separated by a thousand years (John 5:28-29).
6. The first resurrection is the granting of resurrection life in resurrection bodies to all those who are dead in Jesus.
7. The second death is eternal hell.
8. No child of God will ever face God's eternal wrath (Romans 5:9).

C. The Return of Satan!

(20:7)

1. After a thousand years Satan will be released for a short time.
2. Some will come into the millennial reign who have not died and are believers.
3. Each generation throughout the thousand years will be made up of sinners needing salvation.
4. This is a sad reality of human depravity.

D. The Revolt of Society!

(20:8-10)

1. John gives these enemies of God the symbolic title “Gog and Magog”, naming them after the invasion forces that will assault Israel during the tribulation (Ezekiel 38 and 39).
2. These rebel forces will be defeated instantly with “fire coming down from heaven”.

The Great White Throne Judgment

A. This judgment is for unbelievers only.

(20:11-12)

1. This proceeds the vision of the new heaven and earth (21:1).
2. Scripture teaches that Jesus will judge sinners (John 5:22,26,27).
3. These unbelievers will be resurrected and united with the soul and spirit as they arise from their place of torment and stand before the throne for their final sentencing.

B. The Standard for Judgment!

(20:12-13)

1. God keeps books (20:12).
2. Sinner’s deed will be measured against God’s perfect, holy standard, which Jesus defined in Matthew 5:48. **“Therefore, you are to be perfect, as your Father is perfect.”**

C. The Sentence!

(20:14-15)

THE CITY OF GLORY!

(21:1-22:21)

We have looked at the Church Age, the Tribulation Period, and the Millennium. Now we turn to what lies beyond. Is heaven a real place? What about eternity? These are questions we will now try to answer.

Chapter twenty-one and twenty-two contain almost all the Biblical records concerning the eternal state. Most of the prophetic passages in the Old Testament referring to euphoric times on earth are concerned with the thousand-year reign of Christ which precedes these events. Very little is said about heaven in the Old Testament. But in these chapters John saw a whole new creation spring into being (21:1-4).

The Bible makes it clear that we should focus on heaven. Phillipians 3:20 tells us that we are citizens of heaven: ***“our citizenship is in heaven.”*** Colossians 3:1-2 gives us this advice: ***“Keep seeking the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.”***

Heaven is an actual place, not a state of spiritual consciousness. This is where those who are alive at the rapture will go. (1 Corinthians 15:51-55; 1 Corinthians 4:13-19)

A. THE NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH! 21:1-8

1. Genesis 1:1 says, ***“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*** That creation is called here, ***“the old heavens and earth.”*** They shall pass away, but a new heaven and earth are coming. 2 Peter 3:10 tells us how this will happen. Jesus will reign in the new heaven and earth and the vast universe of God.
2. The first aspect of this new order is the descent of the **HOLY CITY**, the **NEW JERUSALEM** from God out of heaven (v.2). Isaiah is rich in his description!
 - Isaiah 52:1 - She is exhorted to put on her beautiful garments.
 - Isaiah 65:17- God’s promise.
 - Isaiah 65:19- The old will not be remembered, nor the voice of weeping.
 - Isaiah 65:18- It will be a city of rejoicing.
 - Isaiah 66:2 - The seed of the covenant will live there.
 - Isaiah 61:10- God will cloth the redeemed with righteousness.
 - Psalm 102:25-27
3. The Bible uses the word **heaven** in three senses.
 - The earth’s atmosphere or the **“blue sky.”**
 - The outer space or the **“night sky.”**
 - The place where God lives in His glory.
 - A new heaven means a new **“blue sky”** and a new **“night sky”**, but not a new heaven where God dwells.

B. THE APPEARANCE OF THE NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH!

1. The Law of Thermodynamics, which is present in our world, will be reversed.
2. This law says that the earth is wearing down and dying, but it will begin to be renewed.
3. One aspect of the new is that there will be **“no more sea!”** Life on this planet, as it is now, would be impossible without oceans that purge, cleanses and preserves it.

C. THE CAPITAL OF THE NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH! 21:2

1. Here is where the church will spend eternity.
2. The concept of a city.
3. New Jerusalem will live in harmony contrary to the evil of cities now.
4. It is called a **holy city** or a city **without sin**.
5. Scriptural implications are that it already exists (Hebrews 12:22-23) and that believers who die go to the **“heavenly Jerusalem.”**
6. The city is pictured as a **“bride” (made ready as a bride adorned for her husband)** because it contains the bride and takes on her character.

D. “GOD WILL TABERNACLE WITH MEN, AND HE WILL DWELL WITH THEM!” 21:3

E. HEAVEN IS A PLACE OF “NO MORE.” 21:4

1. Heaven is distinguished by what it does not have. No tears, no sorrow, no death, no pain, no temple, no sacrifice, no sun, no moon, no darkness, no sin and no abomination.
2. What will that be like?
3. **“He will wipe every tear from their eyes”** does not mean crying will occur in the heavenly city. Things will be so different, there will no need for tears, because there will be no death, loneliness, depression, pain or suffer. There will be no concern for failure of the former life. The emphasis here is on comfort, not remorse. Everything associated with human sorrow will pass away.

4. All things will be made new (21:5).

Conclusion

There are two qualifications to enter that city: 21:6-8

- Thirst!
- Overcome!

John concludes this overview of the New Heaven and the New Earth with a serious warning. He distinguishes those who will be excluded from heaven.

- The Cowardly.
- The Unbelievers.
- The Abominable.