

LEARNING TO INTERPRET REVELATION

Rev. 20:1-5

After seven years of tribulation upon the earth,

After the wicked, idolatrous rule of antichrist over the world,

After Christ returns at Armageddon leading armies of saints and angels,

After rebellious soldiers are instantaneously slain fighting the King of Kings,

After the antichrist and false prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire,

After the remnant of Israel are saved as they look upon the Returning Christ

to believe and trust in Him,

Revelation 20:1-6 1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Six times in Revelation 20, the text refers to a _____ years. This thousand year period has been named the _____. How this millennium is viewed is of such importance that one's interpretation of Revelation and of the end times in general is described in terms related to the millennium. Interpretations are often called premillennial, post millennial, or amillennial.

A post millennial view holds that Christ returns _____ the millennium. This interpretation implies that Christ's rule increases in the hearts and lives of men so that He rules the world by proxy through believers, and then He bodily returns to the earth to initiate the eternal kingdom.

An amillennial view holds that the millennium is _____, not a literal thousand years. Christ does not bodily rule on earth but this passage symbolizes the eternal state of believers with Christ in heaven for eternity.

The interpretation offered in this study has been premillennial. This view holds that Christ returns to the earth _____ the millennium begins and after seven years of tribulation on the earth are completed. This view comes from studying context and letting the plain sense make sense. We will briefly look at the evidence in the Bible that the thousand year reign of Christ should be taken literally, and why it should be viewed as coming after the tribulation.

I. THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM IS A REAL, EARTHLY KINGDOM.

A. Remember Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue.

God told Daniel that the statue represented 6 kingdoms:

STATUE	INTERPRETATION	HISTORICAL MEANING
Head of gold	Kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar	_____
Chest of silver	Inferior kingdom to follow	Medo-Persia
Midsection of bronze	Third kingdom to rule the earth	_____
Legs of iron	Strong fourth kingdom that crushes; eventually divided	Rome
Feet of iron mixed with clay	Another kingdom arising out of the fourth, a mixture of strength and weakness	The future _____ Roman Empire
Stone that grows into a mountain and crushes the kingdom of iron and clay	A kingdom established by God which shall replace all human kingdoms	The Millennial _____ of Christ

The first 4 of these kingdoms were literal and are now _____. The fifth kingdom is described in Revelation as _____ and in the future, historical. Why would the sixth not be literal and historical?

Daniel 2:44 And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

B. Christ's physical rule over the whole earth was prophesied in the _____.

1. Psalm 72:8, 11 8 "He shall have dominion ... to the ends of the earth. 11 " Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him.
2. Psalm 89:20-37 God promises that in spite of the sin of David's descendants, He will establish David's throne forever.

C. Christ's _____ rule over the whole earth was described in advance by the Prophets.

1. Jeremiah said that in the days when the Lord reigns as king _____ the earth, Israel will dwell in _____ in their own land.

Jeremiah 23:5-8 5 "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. 7 "Therefore, behold, the days are coming," says the Lord,

“that they shall no longer say, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ 8 but, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ And they shall dwell in their own land.”

2. Ezekiel, who lived during the days of the divided kingdom and hundreds of years _____ David had died, says that David shall _____ over a united Israel.

Ezekiel 37:21-25 21 “Then say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; 22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. 23 They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God. 24 “David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. 25 Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever.”

3. Other prophets echo the same theme:

Joel 3:20 But Judah shall abide forever, And Jerusalem from generation to generation.

D. The New Testament also predicts the _____ reign of Christ over all the earth.

1. Gabriel promised to Mary that Jesus would reign on _____ throne over a kingdom that would never end. **Luke 1:31–33 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”**
2. Jesus promised the disciples that when He sat on His _____, they also would be given thrones and would reign over the _____ of Israel. **Matthew 19:28 So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**
3. Paul writes to Timothy of the kingdom and assures him that _____ will reign with Christ. **2 Timothy 2:12 If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.**

Rev. 20 offers the fulfillment of all of these yet _____ promises in Christ's reign on earth of 1000 years, the Millennial Kingdom!

II. SATAN WILL BE BOUND AND IMPRISONED IN THE ABYSS.

This is the same abyss that held the _____ released at the fifth trumpet judgment. (In the next lesson, we will look at Satan’s brief release at the _____ of the millennium.)

III. DURING THE MILLENNIUM THE EARTH WILL UNDERGO MANY PHYSICAL CHANGES.

A. There will be topological changes to the earth.

1. Just prior to Christ's coming at Armageddon, a world-wide _____ will level every mountain and city (except _____) on the face of the earth (Rev. 16:18-20)
2. Jerusalem will be changed with new _____ and valleys. A river will flow from _____ to both the Mediterranean and Dead Sea. (Zech. 14:3-9)
3. Deserts will be transformed into _____; the territory of Israel will be transformed into a place of remarkable beauty and there will be miracles of healing, reflecting the glory of the _____ of the Lord.

Isaiah 35:1-7 1 The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; 2 It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, Even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, The excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, The excellency of our God. 3 Strengthen the weak hands, And make firm the feeble knees. 4 Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you." 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert. 7 The parched ground shall become a pool, And the thirsty land springs of water; In the habitation of jackals, where each lay, There shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

B. There will also be changes to the _____ kingdom. **Isaiah 11:6-9** 6 "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.

1. The _____ between animals and between animals and man will be removed.
2. Animals will all become _____.
3. Even _____ will be harmless to man.

In our next lesson, we will look at life in the millennium, including who rules, how ruling responsibilities are assigned, and who is ruled over.