



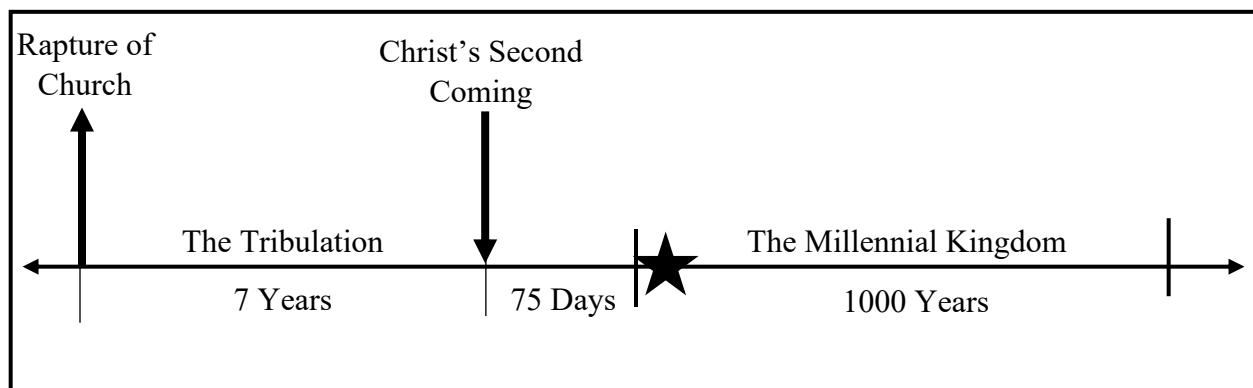
Eschatology – A Study of the End Times

Lesson 22: The Millennial Kingdom

Introduction

After the second coming of Christ, there will be some key events that take place during a 75-day period. We looked at those key events in the last lesson. After the 75-day period, Jesus is going to set up His kingdom on earth where He will rule and reign for 1,000 years. In theological circles, this is known as the millennial kingdom. In this lesson, we are going to look at what takes place during the millennial kingdom.

Timeline of End Times



The Millennial Kingdom Begins¹

In the chronology of the book of Revelation, the millennial kingdom clearly follows the second coming of Christ. Revelation 19 and 20 are chronological, with the second coming of Christ described in chapter 19 and the millennial kingdom described in chapter 20. With a literal reading of chapters 19 and 20 we conclude that at the second coming of Christ there will be a destruction of the armies gathered against God in the Holy Land (Rev. 19:17, 21), the antichrist and the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20), Satan will be bound for a thousand years (Rev. 20:2), the tribulation saints will be resurrected to reign with Christ for a thousand years (Rev. 20:4), and Christ will reign on the earth for a thousand years (Rev. 20:3-6).

¹ The following is adapted from *The End Times in Chronological Order* by Ron Rhodes.

The Tribulation Saints Enter the Millennial Kingdom

Following the second coming of Christ, and during the 75-day period, the Gentiles will face Christ at the judgment of the nations, also called the sheep and goat judgment (Matt. 25:31–46). The unbelievers (goats) will be judged and will go away into eternal punishment (Matt. 25:46). They will not enter into the kingdom since the kingdom will be characterized by righteousness (Isa. 61:11), peace (Isa. 2:4), holiness (Isa. 4:3–4), and justice (Isa. 9:7). However, the believers (sheep) will enter into Christ’s millennial kingdom (v. 34, 46) and be with their King.

The book of Daniel tells us that only the saints enter into God’s kingdom. Daniel 7:18 says, “But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.” The word *saint* in Daniel is from an Aramaic word that is derived from a Hebrew root that has a connotation of a divine claim and ownership of the person. It connotes that which is distinct from the common or profane. In other words, profane people do not enter into the millennial kingdom, but only those who are “owned” by God enter in.

At the beginning of the millennial kingdom, only those who believe in Christ and worship Him will be in the kingdom. When these believing Gentiles enter into the millennial kingdom, they will enter in their mortal bodies. Likewise, the redeemed remnant among the Jews will be invited to enter into the millennial kingdom in their mortal bodies as well (Ezek. 20:34–38). Therefore, mortal Gentile and Jewish believers who survive the tribulation period will enter into the millennial kingdom under the reign of the King.

What will the saints be like?

In the millennial kingdom, the curse will be reversed but it won’t be fully removed until the eternal state (Rev. 22:3). Scripture reveals that longevity of life will characterize the saints in the millennial kingdom. Just as in the days before the flood of Noah, both mortal Jews and Gentiles will live long lives but will continue to age and die in the kingdom. Many physical infirmities and health concerns will also be eradicated (Isa. 29:18; 33:24). Although death will happen in the kingdom it will not occur as early as modern times. In fact, anyone who dies at the age of one hundred will be considered to be young (Isa. 65:20).

Scripture also reveals that married couples among both Jews and Gentiles will continue to have children in the kingdom (Isa. 11:8; 65:20). The fact that only saints enter into the kingdom does not mean that all of the children of the saints will be believers. Children born during the millennial kingdom will have the responsibility to repent and place their faith in Christ, the same as all people of past ages. After a few years have passed, there will be people born during the early days of the millennium, who will grow to adulthood rejecting the Savior-King in their hearts. Some of these will eventually participate in the final revolt against God that takes place at the end of the millennium under Satan’s lead. Satan will be released for a short period of time and will deceive the nations and gather them together for a final war (Rev. 20:7–10).

What happens to those who die during the millennial kingdom?

The mortal unbelievers who die in the kingdom will go to hell and await their final resurrection at the end of the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:12–13). If mortal believers die during

the kingdom, it is most likely that they will receive their new body and remain in the kingdom since that is where Christ and all the saints of the ages will be living. Therefore, any mortal person who becomes a believer in the kingdom will remain in the kingdom following their physical death.

The Resurrected Saints Enter the Kingdom

Living alongside the mortal saints in the kingdom will be immortal resurrected saints. These resurrected saints will be living in their glorified, eternal bodies at the same time earthly, natural saints will be living in the kingdom. These resurrected saints who enter into the millennial kingdom can be divided into three subgroups: (1) the church, whose bodies were either resurrected or changed at the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13–18; 1 Cor. 15:21–23, 51–53); (2) tribulation martyrs, who are resurrected after the second coming of Christ to the earth (Rev. 20:4–6); and (3) the Old Testament saints, who we assume are resurrected at the same time (see Dan. 12:2).

How will these resurrected saints live alongside mortal saints? The absence of sickness and deformity along with the increased life spans will create less variation between those in the millennium with mortal bodies and those with resurrected bodies.² Dr. Paul Benware writes of these two groups:

It must be remembered that not all participants in the millennial kingdom will have earthly, mortal bodies. Millions of believers from the Old Testament era, the Church Age, and the Tribulation will have resurrected, immortal bodies. But there is no reason to think that these two groups will not be relating to one another and interacting with each other during the Millennium. The resurrected Lord Jesus had no problems teaching and fellowshiping with His disciples during the forty days after His resurrection.³

Israel Is Restored to the Land

A pivotal prophecy that deals with the new covenant and promises the regeneration of Israel is Jeremiah 31:31–34.

“Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the Lord, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the Lord, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

² Timothy J. Demy and Thomas Ice, *Answers to Common Questions About the End Times* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2011), 113.

³ Paul Benware, *Understanding End Times Prophecy: A Comprehensive Approach* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 284.

This covenant promises the necessary internal power for the Jews to obey God’s commands—something the Mosaic covenant of the law could never accomplish. This covenant promises a complete national regeneration of Israel, and every Jew in the millennial kingdom will personally know the Lord (Ezek. 36:24–28; Rom. 11:25–27).

Not only will Israel experience spiritual regeneration in fulfillment of the new covenant, but there will also be a physical regathering to the land. The land covenant in Deuteronomy 29–30 is eternal and unconditional. God promised that even though Israel would be dispersed all over the world, He would gather them and restore them to the land (see Isa. 43:5–7; Jer. 16:14–18). This final regathering will take place in the millennial kingdom.

Key Prophetic Passages Regarding the Land

Genesis 15:18–2: On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite.”

Genesis 26:3–4: Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

Genesis 28:13–14: And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, “I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Psalms 105:8–11: He has remembered His covenant forever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations, *the covenant* which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac. Then He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion of your inheritance.”

It is clear, then, that after God gathers the Jews from around the world, they will finally and completely come into full possession of the land that God promised them. The fulfillment comes thousands of years after the promise was initially made, but God is utterly faithful. Israel will be in full possession of the land just as God said they would be. This will happen at the beginning of Christ’s reign in the millennial kingdom.

Application:

1. Praise the Lord for the future hope we have in Christ. All believers will be with Christ in His kingdom worshipping Him as our King.
2. Praise the Lord for His faithfulness. Although Israel broke God’s law, He is faithful to His promises and will make sure Israel lives in the land He promised to give them.