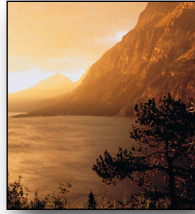


The Millennium: Experiencing the Peace of God



- *Is your life stressful? Do you long for peace, God's peace in your life?*

One writer observed: "Man has always dreamed of utopia. We aspire to create a great society, a paradise on earth, a return to the Garden of Eden. But both the Bible and the witness of history are clear that sinful man can never produce such a society on earth. Paradise is lost, and man in his own efforts can never regain it. However, God's Word tells us that the next great event after the Second Coming is just such a paradise. Jesus will establish on earth a thousand-year reign of glory and peace (Revelation 20:1-6). The millennial age will bring about the complete fulfillment of all that God has promised to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament." (Mark Hitchcock, *101 Answers to the Most Asked Questions about the End Times*, p.210.)

The Prophets of the Old Testament repeatedly promised a time when the Messiah would reign over the earth as King and establish worldwide peace and prosperity. Also, in the book of Revelation, six times this period is said to last for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:2-7). This period is called the Millennium taken from the Latin *milli* (one thousand) and *annum* (year). There are more references in the Bible to the Millennium than any other theme in prophecy.

The Millennium is a time when the whole earth will experience peace and prosperity because Jesus Christ is in control of the world. Jesus is called the Prince of Peace by the Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 9:6). The Apostle Paul wrote "... *we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.*" (Romans 5:1 NLT). This is referring to **relational** peace between us and God. Jesus can also help us have relational peace in our marriage, family, work, etc. Also, Jesus promised his followers: "*I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.*" (John 14:27 NLT). This refers to **emotional** peace. We can never fully experience the peace of God until we allow Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, to sit on the throne of our heart and life. *Who is sitting on the throne of your heart—self or Christ?*

The Central Lesson and Application:

We can never fully experience the peace of God until we allow Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, to sit on the throne of our heart and life.

Names and Titles for the Millennium

Names for the Millennium in the New Testament:

1. The kingdom of heaven (Matthew 3:2; 8:11).
2. The kingdom of God (Mark 1:14).
3. The Kingdom (Matthew 19:28).
4. A kingdom which cannot be shaken (Hebrews 12:28).
5. The world to come (Hebrews 2:5).
6. Times of refreshing (Acts 3:9).
7. The period of restoration of all things (Acts 3:21).

Three Views of the Millennium

1. The AMILLENNIAL view.

The term *amillennial* means literally "no Millennium." It is the view that the last 1,000 years is not literal, but figurative. The number 1,000 is said to represent "perfection" or "completion."

This view claims that the 1,000 years symbolizes the period between Christ's first and second coming. This view also allegorizes all the promises made to Israel and say they are spiritually fulfilled in the New Testament church. According to this view, we are presently in the millennium.

Many Bible teachers find fault with the amillennial position. Mainly, there is no reason to interpret the 1,000 years symbolically. There is nothing to suggest that the normal literal, historical, and grammatical method of interpretation should be abandoned. Furthermore, the amillennial view leaves all the Old Testament promises made to Israel unfulfilled. Israel will never occupy all the land promised them. They will never see a descendant of David, the Messiah, literally reigning over the earth from the throne of David in Jerusalem.

2. The POSTMILLENNIAL view.

The Postmillennial view, like the amillennial view, teaches that the last 1,000 years of Revelation 20 is not literal, but symbolic. The Postmillennial view sees the present church age as the millennium. This view teaches that the success of the church in converting the world to Christ and bringing about universal peace will compel Christ to return to earth. However, this view has lost popularity with the continued occurrence of new wars, the steady increase of crime and violence throughout the earth. The world is not progressively getting better, but worse. Also, this view does not allow for the literal fulfillment of the Old Testament promises made to Israel.

3. The PREMILLENNIAL view.

The Premillennial view teaches that Christ will literally and physically return to earth and set-up a worldwide thousand-year reign from the city of Jerusalem. It will occur literally as described in Revelation 20:1-6.

The Promise of the Millennial Kingdom

1. The Promise of the MILLENNIAL Kingdom (Zechariah 14:3-5, 9; 9:10; Rev. 12:5; Acts 1:6-7).

Zech. 14:9 *"And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day there will be one Lord—his name alone will be worshiped."* Zech. 9:10 *"...your king will bring peace to the nations. His realm will stretch from sea to sea and from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth."* Rev. 12:5 *"She gave birth to a son who was to rule all nations with an iron rod...."*

2. The Promise of JERUSALEM as the World's Center of Worship and Instruction (Micah 4:1-2; Zechariah 14:16-19; 8:20-23).

Micah 4:1-2 *"2 People from many nations will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of Jacob's God. There he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths.' For the Lord's teaching will go out from Zion; his word will go out from Jerusalem."* Zech. 8:20-23 *"22 Many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the Lord of Heaven's Armies and to ask for his blessing. 23 This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies says: 'In those days ten men from different nations and languages of the world will clutch at the sleeve of one Jew. And they will say, 'Please let us walk with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'"*

3. The Promise of the APOSTLES Ruling Over Israel (Matthew 19:27-28; Luke 22:14-18, 28-30).

Matt. 19:28 *"Jesus replied, 'I assure you that when the world is made new and the Son of Man sits upon his glorious throne, you who have been my followers will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'"*

4. The Promise of the SAINTS Ruling with Christ over the Earth (Rev. 5:8-10; 20:4, 6; 2:26).

Rev. 5:10 *"And you have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests for our God. And they will reign on the earth."* Rev. 20:6 *"Blessed and holy are those who share in the first*

resurrection...they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years.” Rev. 2:26 “To all who are victorious, who obey me to the very end, To them I will give authority over all the nations.”

Characteristics of the Millennial Kingdom

1. **PEACE** (Isaiah 2:4; 9:4-7; 11:6-9; Zech. 9:10) and **JOY** (Isaiah 9:3-4; 12:3-6; 14:7-8; 25:8-9; 30:29; 42:1; Jer. 30:18-19; Zeph. 3:14-17; Zech. 8:18-19; 10:6-7). During the Millennium there will be no wars. The world will be unified under the rule of the Messiah. Even the animal kingdom will exist peacefully (Is. 11:6-9). Joy will characterize the entire planet.

2. **HOLINESS** (Isaiah 4:3-4; 29:19; 35:8; 52:1; Eze. 43:7-12; 45:1; Zech. 8:3; 14:20-21). Holy means “set apart to God.” The whole earth will be set apart to God free of evil and defilement.

3. **GLORY** (Isaiah 35:2; 40:5; 60:1-9; Ezekiel 43:1-5). The glory of God will shine throughout the Millennial kingdom & the nations will see it.

4. **JUSTICE & RIGHTEOUSNESS**. People will still sin during the Millennium, but sin will be judged in perfect justice by the Messiah (Isaiah 9:7; 11:5; 32:16; 42:1-4; 65:21-23). The Messiah will rule with “*a rod of iron*” creating an environment of righteousness around the world (Isaiah 11:1-5; 60:21; Jer. 31:32; Eze. 37:23-24; Zeph. 3:1, 13).

5. **Deeper KNOWLEDGE** (Isaiah 11:1-2, 9; 41:19-20; 54:13; Jer. 31:33-34; Habakkuk 2:14). Christ will teach the world his ways and the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord.

6. **No SICKNESS or Deformity** (Isaiah 29:18; 33:24; 35:5-6; 61:1-2; Ezekiel 34:16). The Messiah will heal all diseases and deformities in the world. People will live extended life spans. A person who dies at the age of 100 will be considered to have died prematurely (Isaiah 65:20).

7. **Universal WORSHIP of God** (Isaiah 45:23; 52:1, 7-10; 66:17-23; Zeph. 3:9; Zech. 13:2, 14:16; Mal. 1:11). Worship during the Millennium will center in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. The whole earth will come to worship God. Animal sacrifices will be re-instituted in the millennial temple (Is. 56:6-7; 60:7; Eze. 43:18-27; 45:17-23; Zech. 14:16-21). Bible teachers believe that the sacrifices will not be offered to take away sin (Christ already accomplished this), but will be a powerful reminder of the sacrifice of Jesus (Hebrews 10:1-4).

8. **Economic PROSPERITY** (Isaiah 35:1-2, 7; 30:23-25; 62:8-9; 65:21-23; Jer. 31:5, 12; Ezekiel 34:26; 36:29-30; Joel 2:21-27; Amos 9:13-14; Micah 4:1, 4; Zech. 8:11-12; 9:16-17). The world during the Millennium will flourish and experience abundance under the reign of the Messiah. There will be no shortage of food or lack of life’s necessities.

9. **The PRESENCE of God & Jesus Christ** (Ezekiel 37:27-28; Zechariah 2:10-13). The greatest aspect of the Millennium is that Jesus Christ Himself will be reigning over the earth. People will be able to see him, talk to him, fellowship with him. The city of Jerusalem will be called *Jehovah Shammah*—“*the Lord is there*” (Ezekiel 48:35).

10. **REBELLION of the Last Generation**. Some of those who are born during the Millennium will rebel against Christ, especially when Satan is released from the pit (Rev. 20:7-10). The Messiah will settle all disputes during the Millennium (Isaiah 2:3-4) and rule sternly (Rev. 19:15). All who outwardly rebel against God will be judged quickly (Isaiah 2:4; 9:7; 11:1-4; Zechariah 14:16-18) and with finality (Rev. 20:9-10).

Purposes for the Millennium?

1. REWARD the Faithful.

Christ will reward believers for their faithfulness to him during this life. He will give them various positions of authority and the honor of ruling over the earth with him (Luke 19:16-19; Rev. 20:4-6). One Bible teacher explains:

“We will rule the nations with Christ for a thousand years on earth. We will even judge the angels. During this present age we are being tested by God to determine our future position of authority and responsibility in the Kingdom. According to Luke 19:11-26, we will be given rulership in the kingdom based on what we did with the treasures and talents God entrusted to us in this life. Some will be governors over ten cities; some will rule over five cities. We will all reign, but the extent and responsibility of that reign is being determined right now in your life and mine.” Mark Hitchcock, *101 Answers to the Most Asked Questions about the End Times*, p.226.

2. Fulfill the PROMISES or Covenants of God.

- **The Abrahamic Covenant** (God’s unconditional promise to Abraham—Genesis 12:1-3; 15:18-21). God promised Abraham three things: **descendants** (the nation of Israel), **land** (the full territory has never been possessed by Israel [Gen. 15:18-21], but will in the Millennium—Isaiah 60:21; Eze. 34:11-16), and **blessing** (Gen. 12:1-3).

- **The Davidic Covenant** (God’s unconditional promise to David—2 Samuel 7:8-16). God promised David three things: a **house** (David’s dynasty or royal family—v.11), a **throne** (David’s family will rule forever—v.13), and a **kingdom** (the nation of Israel will exist eternally—v.16). The promises to David are ultimately fulfilled by Jesus during the Millennium.

- **The New Covenant** (God’s unconditional promise to Israel—Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:24-38). God’s new covenant promise to Israel had three parts: the **forgiveness** of sins, the **indwelling of the Holy Spirit** (Eze. 36:24-26), and a **new heart** (Eze. 36:26). Christians today enjoy the benefits of the New Covenant in Christ’s blood (Matt. 26:28), the specific promises in Jeremiah 31:31-34 will ultimately be fulfilled for Israel in the Millennium.

3. Reaffirm the DEPRAVITY of Man and Humanity’s NEED for God’s Redemption.

The Millennium will be the final, conclusive proof of the total depravity of man and need of a Savior. Satan will be bound in a pit for the entire 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3). He will not be able to tempt or deceive people (Rev. 20:3). Yet, regardless of these perfect conditions, large numbers of people who are born and raised during the Millennium will reject the Lord. When the devil is released at the end of the Millennium, they will join in a great final rebellion against Christ (Rev. 20:7-10). When all humanity stands before God, the Millennium will prove beyond doubt that regardless of man’s heredity, circumstances, or environment, humanity is sinful by nature, desperately in need of God’s redemption and salvation.

Conclusion

We can never fully experience the peace of God until we allow Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, to sit on the throne of our heart and life.

The Millennium is a time when the whole earth will experience peace and prosperity because Jesus Christ is in control of the world. *Who is sitting on the throne of your heart—self or Christ? Will you surrender the throne of your heart to Christ today?*