

# The Two Future Kingdoms on Earth

(Chapter 4 of *The Christians Hope, The Anchor of the Soul*, by John W. Schoenheit.  
The book can be purchased at Amazon.)

## The Millennial and Eternal Kingdoms

The Bible indicates that there will be two kingdoms on earth in the future, one following the other. The first kingdom will last 1,000 years and is therefore referred to as the "Millennial Kingdom" (from mil one thousand, and annus, year). The second kingdom is referred to by the author as the "Everlasting Kingdom." In the Millennial Kingdom, Yehoshua<sup>1</sup> Christ will rule as King after he fights and wins the battle of Armageddon at the close of the Tribulation (Rev. 19). The Everlasting Kingdom will begin after the close of the Millennial Kingdom when the Devil and his demons are destroyed and the Final Judgment has taken place (Rev. 21). The sequential order of these two kingdoms is apparent through a reading of Revelation 19-22. Following is a brief summary of the events recorded in these chapters.

At the end of the seven-year Tribulation period, Yehoshua Christ, followed by his armies, rides a white horse down out of heaven to fight the battle of Armageddon. He wins the battle and conquers the earth (Rev. 19). After the battle, the Devil is "chained" and the "First Resurrection" occurs (Rev. 20). The First Resurrection includes the following people: a) believers, saved individuals, who lived in Old Testament times and died before the Day of Pentecost recorded in Acts 2; and b) believers, saved individuals, who lived and died during the seven-year period of the Tribulation. The people in both these categories are brought back to life and reign with Christ for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:4-7) together with the previously caught up Christians. After the 1,000-year reign of Christ, the Devil is loosed from his "chains" and gathers another army to fight against Yahweh's<sup>2</sup> people. This time, instead of Christ fighting and winning the battle, the Devil's army is destroyed by fire from heaven (Rev. 20:7-10). Following the victory, the Second Resurrection and the Final Judgment take place. After the Final Judgment, Yahweh sets up the Kingdom that will last forever, the Everlasting Kingdom.

Throughout the Bible there are prophecies concerning both kingdoms, but Yahweh does not label the prophecies as "Millennial Kingdom" or "Everlasting Kingdom." The only way to determine which kingdom is the subject of the prophecy is by studying the prophecy in detail, keeping in mind that the Bible cannot contradict itself. For example, some prophecies concerning a future kingdom refer to a temple (Ezek. 40-48), while other prophecies concerning a future kingdom indicate that there will not be a temple (Rev. 21:22). In regard to the Temple, it is relatively easy because Revelation 21, which indicates there will not be a temple, is describing a kingdom that exists after the 1,000-year reign of Christ. The only kingdom after the 1,000-year reign of Christ is the Everlasting Kingdom. So, the prophecy in Revelation 21 applies to the Everlasting Kingdom. Ezekiel's prophecy, which describes the Temple in great detail, applies to the Millennial Kingdom.

Another example of an apparent contradiction involves prophecies concerning death. According to some prophecies, there is death in a future kingdom (Isa. 65:20, "... he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth ...") while other prophecies indicate there will be no death (Rev. 21 :4, "... There will be no more death ..."). One key to resolving the apparent contradiction is knowing that "death" and "Hades" (Sheol) are destroyed after the Millennial Kingdom ends and shortly before the Everlasting Kingdom

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<sup>1</sup> I have substituted Yehoshua for Jesus.

<sup>2</sup> I have substituted Yahweh for God and the Lord

begins (Rev. 20: 14). Another key to resolving the apparent contradiction is determining who is present in each kingdom.

The Millennial Kingdom will be populated by three "groups" of people: a) Christians who were transformed and made immortal at the Parousia<sup>3</sup> of the Lord; b) believers who were resurrected and made immortal during the First Resurrection, and c) believers who survive the Tribulation and are allowed to enter the kingdom because they are judged righteous. The last "group" will enter the kingdom as mortals and will, therefore, eventually die. Furthermore, they will have children who, like all mortals, will be subject to death. In contrast, the Everlasting Kingdom will be populated only by immortals, namely: a) those who were already immortals during the Millennial Kingdom; b) believers brought back to life and transformed into immortals during the Second Resurrection, which occurs at the conclusion of the Millennial Kingdom; and c) mortal believers who are alive at the beginning of the Everlasting Kingdom who are judged righteous and who will be transformed into immortals. Therefore, because mortals will be present in the Millennial Kingdom, there will be death, but because only immortals will be present in the Everlasting Kingdom, there will be no death.

### **Attributes of the Millennial Kingdom The 1,000-Year Reign of Christ**

The Millennial Kingdom is described in great detail throughout the Bible. This should not be surprising because many of the promises made to Israel will be fulfilled during that time. Some of the significant attributes of the Millennial Kingdom are described below.

### **The Millennial Kingdom takes place in the new heavens and a new earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22).**

The fact that the Millennial Kingdom is called "a new heaven and a new earth" can be confusing because the Everlasting Kingdom also takes place in " ... a new heaven and a new earth ... " (Rev. 21: 1). Upon reflection, it is easy to see why both kingdoms will require a new heaven and earth. Mankind has polluted and ruined much of the earth. In many places the water is not fit to drink nor the air fit to breathe. Many species of plants and animals are now extinct and more are dying off every day. During the Tribulation and the battle of Armageddon, even more of the wildlife and habitat will be destroyed and the world will generally be unfit for life. Therefore, after the battle of Armageddon, the earth will be anything but "Paradise." The fact that the Millennial Kingdom is also called "Paradise" indicates that a renewal will take place. This is why Christ spoke of " ... the renewal of all things ... " (Matt. 19:28). Christ will not set up his Kingdom on a wasted planet but will restore the earth. The deserts will bloom, thirsty ground will become bubbling springs (Isa. 35), polluted water will be healed (Ezek. 47), and the air will be fresh and clean. After this renewal there will be Paradise- " ... a new heaven and a new earth .... " "At the end of the Millennial Kingdom, this renewed world will be completely destroyed by fire and then the heavens and earth will be totally re-created. Thus, the Everlasting Kingdom is also called " ... a new heaven and a new earth ... " (Rev. 21: 1).

### **The Millennial Kingdom will be a Kingdom and Christ will reign as King.**

Old Testament prophecies foretold that the Messiah would be a king (Gen. 49:10; Num. 24:17-19; Ps. 2; Ps. 110; Dan. 2:44; 7:14) and a descendant of King David (Isa. 9:6-7; Ps. 132:11; Isa. 16:5). While he was on earth 2,000 years ago, Christ, the King himself, spoke of his coming Kingdom (Matt. 16:28; John

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<sup>3</sup> 1Co 15:23 But, each, in his own rank: — A firstfruit, Christ, after that, they who are the Christ's, in his presence [Parousia], 1Th 4:15 For, this, unto you, do we say, by a word of the Lord, — that, we, the living who are left unto the Presence [Parousia] of the Lord, shall in nowise get before them who have fallen asleep;

18:33-38, etc.). The Book of Revelation also says that Christ will rule over a kingdom (Rev. 11: 15). It is clear that the future government will be a kingdom-not a democracy, republic, dictatorship, oligarchy, etc.

Christ will rule his Kingdom with the help of those who were faithful to Yahweh in their first life. Ruling with Christ is part of the believer's reward and should "anchor" each believer to righteousness in his day-to-day living. Not every believer will receive the same reward. Believers who have been faithful to Yahweh and Christ will receive a greater reward, including greater authority to help Christ rule. Judges and counselors will be restored (Isa. 1 :26); " ... rulers will rule with justice" (Isa. 32: 1); and shepherds with the heart of the Lord will lead the people with knowledge and understanding (Jer, 3:15). Ruling with Christ is promised to both Israel and the Church.

The following promise in the book of Revelation is to both the people of Israel and to the believers who will be alive during the Tribulation.

Revelation 2:26-27 To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations- 'He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery- just as I have received authority from my Father.

The same promise is made to the Christian Church, i.e., any Christian who stays faithful and obedient will reign with Christ.

2 Timothy 2:11-12 Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us.

Not every believer will have the same standing in the future Kingdom. Those who endure now and remain faithful and obedient in their Christian walk will reign over the nations with Christ. Any one who disowns him (many versions have "deny him") by acting like an unbeliever will be denied the privilege of reigning with him and will have lesser assignments in the Kingdom. This is very sobering and should help every believer stay "anchored" to Christ and to a Christian lifestyle.

### **The Millennial Kingdom will be populated by three "categories" or "types" of people.**

a) Christians caught up into the air at the close of the Church Age who then return to earth with Christ during his Second Coming to fight the battle of Armageddon. They will remain on earth and enter the Millennial Kingdom. Each Christian will have a glorious new body fashioned after Yehoshua' resurrected body (Phil. 3:21).

b) Believers (both Jew and Gentile) who died before the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and believers who will die during the Tribulation. These believers will be resurrected and transformed into immortals during the First Resurrection, which occurs after the battle of Armageddon (Ezek. 3 7: 12-14; Rev. 20:4-6). This category includes believers such as Abraham and Sarah, Moses and Miriam, Joshua, Ruth, Samuel, David, Esther, Daniel, and those murdered during the Tribulation for their refusal to worship the Beast.

c) "Natural" or mortal believers who survive the Tribulation and the battle of Armageddon and are judged "righteous" (Matt. 25:31-46). This category will include both Jews and Gentiles. The term "natural" is used to provide a distinction between these people, who are mortals, and the people who are no longer "natural" but immortal, namely, those in categories a and b. These "natural "people will experience the same life cycle of all mortals. They will grow, mature, marry, procreate, age, and die (Isa. 65:20-25).

The Bible makes it dear that there will be survivors after the Tribulation and the battle of Armageddon, and some of them will be judged righteous and allowed to enter Christ's Kingdom. This point must be understood · because some Christians teach that after the battle of Armageddon no one will be alive on earth. This is dearly not the case. Yes, the majority of the people of earth will be dead, but as Isaiah 13: 12 and 24:6 say, there will be survivors, "very few," but there will be survivors. There are more than six billion people on earth at this time, so "very few" could easily mean a few million or more. Matthew 25:31-46 implies that there will be a significant number because the "nations" will be brought before Christ at the start of his 1,000-year reign.

Because there will be no war and plenty of food, these survivors will multiply rapidly and will repopulate the earth. In fact, they will multiply to such a degree that by the end of the 1,000 years they will be as numerous as " ... the sand on the seashore" (Rev. 20:8). This growth in population should not be surprising. In the Old Testament, Israel entered Egypt as a group of seventy people (Gen. 46:27). When they came out they numbered about three million. This significant increase in population occurred under horrible conditions. If a few million are present at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom, imagine the growth potential when the prevailing conditions are peace and prosperity!

As mentioned earlier, it will be the "natural" people who will make up the nations. Because they will still be "natural," they will be subject to the weaknesses of a mortal body and will still be prone to sin. Therefore, even though they are living in Paradise, they will need to be ruled with an "iron scepter." Christ will not be cruel or mean, but he will rule with an iron scepter by enforcing the laws so that there is no crime, and people can live in safety and security. In the King James Version, these words are translated as the familiar phrase, "rod of iron." The phrase "iron scepter," or "rod of iron," occurs in four verses: Psalm 2:9; Revelation 2:27; 12:5; and 19: 15. The application of the iron scepter can be seen in the following verses: Isaiah 11:4; 14:2; 49:22 and 23; 60:10-14; 61:5 and 6; 66:12; Micah 7:14-17; and Zechariah 14:16-19.

Prophecies of Christ ruling with an iron scepter are strong evidence that there will be a Millennial Kingdom populated at least in part by unsaved, mortal people. In addition, it should be obvious that these prophecies must apply to the future because they were not fulfilled during Christ's first coming. In spite of the many clear verses on this subject, there are some people who do not believe that the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth is literal, and others who do not believe the Kingdom is coming in the future. 9 If either of these beliefs were correct, then the only people available for Christ to rule with an iron scepter would be the saved believers in the Everlasting Kingdom. Being ruled with an iron scepter is not the way most Christians envision everlasting life. Thankfully, that is not how the Bible portrays it either. It is the unregenerate, "natural" people alive during the Millennial Kingdom who will need to be ruled with an iron scepter.

The need for the iron scepter is due to the fact that these "natural people" still have a sin nature and are therefore prone to be selfish and sinful. Although they will live in Paradise, surrounded by bounty, many of them will still find reasons to complain. That is not unusual. Both history and the Bible teach that there are many times when people who should be happy because they are healthy, well fed, and financially secure still are unhappy and find reasons to complain constantly. The presence of these "natural" people in the Millennial Kingdom explains in large part why there will be disputes in the Millennial Kingdom (Isa. 2:4; Mic. 4:3). The Book of Zechariah says that if any nation selfishly decides not to go and worship in Jerusalem, then that nation will have no rain (Zech. 14: 17). This is an example of the natural selfishness and "can't be bothered" attitude prevalent among "natural" people. It is also an example of how Christ will wield the iron scepter. At the end of the 1,000-year period Satan is loosed, and he will deceive many of these "natural" people and incite them to rebel against Yahweh and His people. Their rebellion will fail when they are destroyed by fire from heaven (Rev. 20:7-9).

The presence of these natural people in the Millennial Kingdom also helps explain why there will be priests (Ezek. 42:13 and 14; 44:15-31; Rev. 5:10). A priest, by definition, is someone who intercedes or mediates between Yahweh and another person. Aaron was a priest because he stood between Yahweh and Israel. If everyone in the Millennial Kingdom has a new, everlasting, regenerated body and an intimate relationship with Yahweh, there would be no need for priests. Since there will be many "natural" people in the Millennial Kingdom, priests will be important.

Some Christians do not believe there will be two literal and distinct kingdoms in the future because, to them, it does not seem possible to have "natural" people (mortals) and immortals alive on the earth at the same time. So they take verses like those cited above and "spiritualize" them by saying they are figurative and not literal. There is no justification for handling these verses in that manner. They are written very clearly and do not have any of the aspects of figurative language. Just because something Yahweh says about the future is hard to believe or hard to understand does not mean it is not literal and true.

### **The Millennial Kingdom will last 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-4).**

Revelation 20:1-4 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time. I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Yehoshua and because of the word of Yahweh. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

The Millennial Kingdom will start after Christ fights the battle of Armageddon and conquers the earth at his Second Coming and will end when the earth is destroyed by fire from heaven, after which Yahweh again creates " ... a new heaven and a new earth ... " as described in Revelation 21.

### **The Millennial Kingdom will be a time of unprecedented joy, peace, and prosperity.**

The people will " ... be glad and rejoice forever ... " (Isa. 65: 18) because of the wonderful life in the Kingdom. There are many reasons why this will be a time of great joy, including the fact that the Devil will be chained the entire time and not free to afflict people (Isa. 24:21 and 22; Dan. 7:12; Rev. 20:2).

### **Christ will be both the King and the High Priest during the Millennial Kingdom, fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament.**

One clear scripture that says that Christ will be both King and High Priest is in Zechariah:

Zechariah 6:12-13(NASB) Then say to him, "Thus says Yahweh of hosts, 'Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of Yahweh. Yes, it is He who will build the temple of Yahweh, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.'"

It is typical of the character of the Millennial Kingdom that the Word says there will be "peace" between the office of Priest and King. Historians know how rare that is. The rivalry between the political sector and the religious sector is well known and has been almost continuous throughout history. For example, the rivalry between the Roman Catholic Church (represented by Cardinal Richelieu) and the Crown

(represented by Louis XIII) is the background for The Three Musketeers. The political versus religious rivalry has had a profound impact on society. In the Millennial Kingdom, that rivalry will cease, and there will be "Shalom" (peace, prosperity, well-being) between the Crown and the Priesthood.

Because of the reference to a temple, these verses further document that there will be two separate and distinct kingdoms in the future. As previously mentioned, there is no temple in the Everlasting Kingdom. Therefore, this prophecy must apply to a kingdom that has a temple, i.e., the Millennial Kingdom. It is interesting to note that while many Christians would say that the throne in the above verses is literal, they do not support the idea of a literal temple. According to their view, the Temple is "spiritual" (meaning figurative) and represents the Church. This view is based on scriptures in the New Testament in which the Church, a body of believers, is called a temple. The fact that a group of people is referred to as a temple is no reason to conclude that Ezekiel's Temple is spiritual and not literal any more than it would be a reason to conclude that Solomon's Temple was spiritual simply because it was called a temple. Other scriptural evidence clearly shows that Christ will build a literal temple in the Millennial Kingdom and that he will literally be both King and High Priest.

**In the Millennial Kingdom, the tribes of Israel will each receive a special land area just as they did when Joshua divided up the land.**

In the Old Testament, Joshua divided the Promised Land among the tribes of Israel. In the Millennial Kingdom, the land will again be divided among the tribes, but with some important differences. When Joshua divided up the land, the tribal areas were uneven in size and shape. In contrast, the Promised Land in the Millennial Kingdom will be divided into strips of land going lengthwise from east to west with the width of each strip being equal (Ezek. 47: 14-48:29). The exact width of the tribal areas is not given in Scripture, but based on the overall boundaries of Israel an estimate can be made. Appendix D contains a map depicting the divisions by Joshua, as well as a map depicting the divisions in the Millennial Kingdom.

**In the Millennial Kingdom there will be a rectangular shaped area of land between the tribal areas of Judah and Benjamin that Yahweh calls His "special gift" and in the center of this area there will be a "sacred portion" (Ezek. 48:8-10).**

This "special gift" land area will run lengthwise from east to west just as will the other tribal areas, but it is specifically said to be 25,000 cubits "wide" (i.e., from north to south).

This "special gift" area will have specific areas for the priests, the Levites, the Temple, Jerusalem, and the Messiah himself (Ezek. 45:1-7; 48:8-22). Inside the "special gift" area is a "sacred portion" of land that is laid out in a square, 25,000 cubits wide by 25,000 cubits long-about 8 miles square (Ezek. 45:1-6, 48:8-15). This "sacred portion" will be divided into three parts. The Levites will receive the northern portion measuring 25,000 cubits east to west by 10,000 cubits north to south-about 8 miles by 3 miles (Ezek. 45:5; 48:13 and 14). The priests will receive the middle portion, which will also measure 25,000 cubits by 10,000 cubits. The Temple will be situated in this area (Ezek. 45:5; 48:13 and 14). The city of Jerusalem will be situated in the southern portion, which will measure 25,000 cubits by 5,000 cubits-just over 8 miles by 1.5 miles (Ezek. 45:6). The city itself will measure 4,500 cubits square-about 1 ½ miles square (Ezek. 48:16).

The relative position of these areas can be determined from the fact that the Temple, the sanctuary, will be in the middle of the "sacred portion" (Ezek. 48:8) and that it is in the section belonging to the priests (Ezek. 48: 10). Since the city is on the south side (Ezek. 40:2), the Levites must have the portion on the north side. The land in the "special gift" area that is east and west of this 25,000 cubits square "sacred

portion" will be given to "the Prince," who is the Messiah, Yehoshua Christ (Ezek. 45:7 and 8; 48:21 and 22).

That Yahweh would allot special areas for the priests, the Levites, and the Prince is reminiscent of what happened in the days of Joshua. When Joshua divided the land, the tribe of Levi did not receive a tribal area of its own. They ministered to Israel from forty-eight Levitical sites (Num. 35:1-8; Josh. 21). In the Millennial Kingdom, part of the "sacred portion" will be set aside for the Levites. Once again, they will not have a tribal area like the other tribes but will have a designated area from which they can minister to Yahweh and to the people (Ezek. 45:5). The priests will also have their own section of the "sacred portion," just as under Joshua, when they were given their own cities Gosh. 21:19, Ezek. 45:3 and 4; 48:9-12). When Canaan was conquered by Israel, the conquering general (Joshua) was given his own inheritance Gosh. 19:49 and 50). Similarly, the conquering general, i.e., "the Prince," Yehoshua Christ, will receive his own portion (Ezek. 45:7; 48:21-22).

**By the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom, the physical features of the country of Israel and of the earth in general will be radically altered.**

In the Millennial Kingdom, many of the physical features of the earth will be altered from what they are today. In Israel, an earthquake will split the Mount of Olives in two. The northern half will move north, the southern half will move south, resulting in an east-west valley leading down from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea. At the same time, the area of Jerusalem will be lifted up and will become a high mountain the highest in Israel and perhaps the highest in the world (Isa. 2:2; Ezek. 20:40; 40:2; Mic. 4: 1). At first this would seem both unlikely and undesirable. Who would want the highest mountain in the world in Palestine? Who would enjoy climbing it, even to visit the Temple of Yahweh? What about oxygen (Mount Everest is more than 29,000 feet and most people cannot survive at the top without supplemental oxygen)? These concerns, however, are not actually valid. Scripture says that during the Tribulation there will be earthquakes and disasters that level (or reduce the height of) the high mountains existing today (Isa. 40:4; 54: 10; Rev. 6: 14; 16: 18-20). Thus the Mountain of Yahweh in Jerusalem could be the highest in the world and still be of very modest height by today's standards. In any case, the height of the Mountain of Yahweh will not deter people from climbing it.

Isaiah 2:3a Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the Yahweh of Jacob ...

The Mountain of Yahweh will be in the "sacred portion" of Israel. The Temple will sit on top of the Mountain of Yahweh, and the city of Jerusalem will be situated on the south side of the mountain (Ezek. 40:2). The river of life will flow out of the Temple of Yahweh and down the mountain to the Dead Sea on the east and to the Mediterranean Sea on the west (Ezek. 47:1; Zech. 14:8).

**In the Millennial Kingdom, the Temple will be on the top of the Mountain of Yahweh (Ezek. 40--44).**

The Temple will measure 500 cubits square-about 850 feet square (Ezek. 42: 15-20; 45:2). As has been stated before, the presence of a temple in the Millennial Kingdom is proof that there will be two separate and distinct kingdoms in the future because, according to Revelation 21:22, no temple will be present in the Everlasting Kingdom. The detailed description of the Temple provided in Ezekiel makes it evident that it is, in fact, a literal temple. It is true that at times the Church is called a "temple," but in these instances the figure of speech Metaphor, a comparison by representation, is being employed. The Church can metaphorically be called a temple because both the Church and the literal Temple are the dwelling place of Yahweh. Ezekiel, however, does not simply use the word "temple" as does the New Testament. He describes it in great detail, including the people who will work there. The description of the Temple in

Ezekiel is so detailed that many Study Bibles and Bible Dictionaries have drawings of what it will look like. It is so complete that it is difficult to see how any unbiased person who reads the chapters on the Temple (Ezek. 40-44 and 46) could say they refer to anything other than a literal building. The Temple in Ezekiel is not a Metaphor. It is a literal description of the future Temple that Christ will preside over as High Priest.

There is no teaching that this author is aware of propounding that the Tabernacle or Solomon's Temple are Metaphors. Everyone accepts without question that they are actual buildings, and with good reason. Beyond the fact that they were literal buildings, the Bible goes to great lengths to describe the physical details of the buildings and their services. Exodus has twelve chapters on the Tabernacle and its services (Exod. 25-31; 35-39). 2 Chronicles has three chapters on Solomon's Temple (2 Chron. 3-5). When it comes to the Millennial Temple, Ezekiel has six chapters on the Temple and its services (Ezek. 40-44 and 46). The volume and detail of these records is in stark contrast to the absence of detail in the verses in the New Testament where the Church is metaphorically called a temple. The detailed description of Ezekiel's Temple will someday be realized in a literal temple, built to the specifications and measurements given in Ezekiel, and Yehoshua Christ will minister there as the High Priest.

There are many conservative Christian scholars who recognize that the Temple in the book of Ezekiel is described in such a way that it must refer to a literal building. Nevertheless, they do not realize that it is a future temple and state that, for a variety of reasons, it was simply never built. Most of these scholars think that Ezekiel was writing to encourage the people of Judah who had been taken captive to Babylon. These captive Judeans were heartsick that Solomon's Temple had been burned to the ground. Some scholars propose that Ezekiel's vision of a new and grand temple was meant to encourage the captives. The New Bible Dictionary states this view well:

The exiles were heartened in their grief by the vision granted to Ezekiel. More details are given of this [temple] than of Solomon's structure, although it was never built.

Smith's Dictionary of the Bible agrees that the Temple was never built, but goes even further:

It is not a description of a Temple that ever was built or ever could be erected at Jerusalem.

The idea that Yahweh gave the captives in Babylon a vision of a temple that He knew would never be built is preposterous. In fact, the idea that Yahweh gave a false vision at all is a stab at the very character of Yahweh. The vision of Ezekiel covers nine chapters and gives many details. Can the Yahweh who "cannot lie" give such a vision and then it simply not come to pass? That would contradict the nature of Yahweh.

It is true that Ezekiel's Temple has not yet been built, but it will be, and it will be the centerpiece of the Millennial Kingdom. Therefore, the minute description of the Temple is very appropriate because it will be the center of attention of the entire world for a thousand years and will play a major role in the life of every single person on earth. The following aspects of the Temple are described in Scripture in detail: location (Ezek. 45:3 and 4; 48:9 and 10); size and shape (Ezek. 42:15-20; 45:2); walls, alcoves, rooms, doors, porticos, gates, steps, courtyards, decorations, slaughtering tables, the holy place, the most holy place, altars, and the clothing of the priests (Ezek. 40-44). Interestingly, there will not be an Ark of the Covenant in the Temple (Gen. 3: 16). This is understandable because in the Old Testament, the Ark of the Covenant, along with the mercy seat, was where Yahweh dwelt and where He met His people. In the Millennial Kingdom, Yahweh will meet His people through Yehoshua Christ.



The mention of sacrifices and offerings is one of the reasons that some Christians say that Ezekiel's Temple must be figurative and not literal. They say that the sacrifices have been done away and therefore will not be reinstated in the future. This position assumes that the "new" sacrifices would be identical and serve the same purposes as the "old" sacrifices. Note that nowhere does Scripture say that these "new" sacrifices will be a way to salvation. The book of Hebrews makes it clear that Yehoshua Christ is the one time sacrifice for sin. The future sacrifices may be memorial offerings similar to the Old Testament Jewish feasts such as Passover, which memorialized a past event. They may also be a means to prove the sincerity of people who are asking for forgiveness for their actions. In any case, the offerings will provide food for the priests and Levites just as they did in the Old Testament.

Ezekiel 44:28-30 I [Yahweh] am to be the only inheritance the priests have. You are to give them no possession in Israel; I will be their possession. They will eat the grain offerings, the sin offerings and the guilt offerings; and everything in Israel devoted to Yahweh will belong to them. The best of all the first fruits and of all your special gifts will belong to the priests. You are to give them the first portion of your ground meal so that a blessing may rest on your household.

Just because the book of Ezekiel mentions offerings and sacrifices is no reason to dismiss it as a "spiritual temple" or figure of speech. The prophecy that Christ will be both King and High Priest will be fulfilled literally.

### **In the Millennial Kingdom, Jerusalem will be the capital of the world (Isa. 62:1-7).**

Jerusalem will be located in the southern part of the "sacred portion" between the tribe of Judah to the north and the tribe of Benjamin to the south (Ezek. 48:7-23). It will be situated on the southern slope of the Mountain of Yahweh (Ezek. 40:2) and will measure 4,500 cubits square- just less than 1 1/2 miles square (Ezek. 48: 16). It will be a beautiful city and will be the praise of the earth (Isa. 62:7).

### **The Millennial Kingdom is still future.**

In what is known as "The Lord's Prayer," which is the best known prayer in Christendom, Yehoshua instructed people to pray, "Thy Kingdom come" (Mace. 6:10; Luke 11:2 -KJV). He would not have prayed that prayer, or asked others to pray it, if the Kingdom were already here. Today, some 2,000 years after Christ gave that prayer to his disciples, people still recite it, asking for the Kingdom to come because it has not come yet.

After his resurrection, Yehoshua' disciples asked him if he was going to set up the Kingdom (Acts 1:6). They wanted the Kingdom to come, and probably not just because they wanted the pain and suffering of this life to come to an end. Yehoshua had told them that when he set up his Kingdom they would all sit on thrones and judge the tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28). Yehoshua politely answered the disciples' question by saying that it was not for them to know the times or dates when the Father would set up the Kingdom (Acts 1: 7). As is evident, it was not set up during Christ's life on earth, nor between his resurrection and ascension, nor has it been set up since then.

Christ will set up his Kingdom when he comes back to earth and, when it is here, it will be very obvious. He will be ruling the earth from Jerusalem and " ... He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9: 1 O). The prophecies and promises of joy, peace, food, and health will all be fulfilled. The blind and the lame will all be healed. There will be justice on earth. The deserts will bloom and a river of life will flow from Jerusalem down the Mountain of Yahweh into the Rift Valley and the Dead Sea will be healed. When the Kingdom finally comes, no one will miss it.

Occasionally, people become confused about whether the Kingdom is already here or if it is still future. This usually occurs for one of two reasons. First, they are confused by the verse that in some versions reads, " ... the kingdom of Yahweh is within you." Second, they are confused by verses that seem to say that believers are already part of the Kingdom. Each of these must be considered. In many versions, Luke 17:21 is translated, " ... the kingdom of Yahweh is within you," and it is often quoted as if it were the only clear verse on the subject of the Kingdom of Yahweh and absolutely self-explanatory. Ironically, it is perhaps the most obscure verse on the subject. The hundreds of other verses on the subject, including the Lord's Prayer, make it clear that the Kingdom of Yahweh is not "in" anyone, and both the Bible and personal experience testify to the fact that it has not yet been established on this earth. Furthermore, when Christ said, " ... the kingdom of Yahweh is within you," he was speaking to the Pharisees, who opposed both Yehoshua and his Father. It was to them that he said, " ... You do not know me or my Father ..." (John 8:19). The Kingdom was certainly not within them—they were even in danger of being excluded from it altogether (Matt. 21:23-31, especially verse 31).

It is important to note that the context of Luke 17:21 shows conclusively that the Kingdom is future, alerting the reader to the mistranslation.

Luke 17:20-21 Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of Yahweh would come, Yehoshua replied, "The kingdom of Yahweh does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of Yahweh is within you."

The Pharisees knew the Kingdom was future and were asking when it would come. Of course, one might contend that the Pharisees were wrong and the Kingdom was there at that time, but that possibility is excluded when the entire answer that Yehoshua gave is read and understood. Yehoshua told his audience that they would not need to search for the Kingdom (v. 23) because, when it does come, it will be like lightning that lights up the entire sky—everyone will see it (v. 24). Yehoshua went on to say that as it was (in the past) in the time of Noah, so it will be (in the future) in the " ... day the Son of Man is revealed" (vs. 26 and 30). This discourse by Christ clearly indicates that his Kingdom is future.

The word "within" in many versions is better translated as "among" or "in your midst." Sadly, much of orthodox Christianity takes this one mistranslated phrase, "... the kingdom of Yahweh is within you," and then asserts that each person has the Kingdom of Yahweh within himself. This teaching misses the mark because it fails to observe two key points of biblical interpretation: a) failure to identify to whom Christ was speaking and b) failure to consider the context of the verse. As previously noted, Yehoshua was speaking to the Pharisees, enemies of Yahweh, and the context clearly indicates that the Kingdom is still future.

Then what did Yehoshua mean when he said, "... the kingdom of Yahweh is within you"? Besides recognizing that he was speaking to the Pharisees, it is also important to recognize that the Pharisees were challenging him, testing him, trying to prove he was a fraud. They were arrogantly "demanding" (KJV) to know when the Kingdom of Yahweh would come. They were aware that some of the people believed Yehoshua was the Christ—the Messiah, the King—and they wanted to discredit him. Therefore, they brought up what they thought was a good challenge to his credibility, saying in essence, "If you are the King, where's your Kingdom." Of course, Yehoshua felt no obligation to respond to the challenge, at least not in the way the Pharisees were expecting. Yehoshua could have answered them plainly. He knew the answer to their question. He had plainly told his disciples that only Yahweh knows when the Kingdom will come.

Matthew 24:36 No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Yehoshua told his disciples that he did not know when the Kingdom would come, but he did not answer the arrogant and unbelieving Pharisees as dearly. He answered them, as he often did, somewhat enigmatically. The Greek word translated "within" can also be translated "among" or, perhaps even better, "in your midst." Christ knew he was the King, even though his Kingdom would not be physically manifested until later, so he told the Pharisees, "The kingdom of Yahweh is among you," i.e., in the person of Christ himself. Although the translation "among" is represented in many versions, Christians generally do not recognize or quote it. This is a result of mainline Christian thinking that perceives the Kingdom as a figurative kingdom that is somehow inside each Christian and not as a literal kingdom. In making the Kingdom figurative, the force of Christ's powerful statement is lost. He subtly derided the arrogance of the Pharisees because they failed to acknowledge that the King was in their midst. They did not recognize him. They not only failed to understand that the King was in their midst, but they also had him crucified as a blasphemer.

In spite of the fact that most Christians quote the verse using "within" instead of "among," there is an impressive list of versions that read "among" or "in your midst." These include: the New American Standard Bible, International Standard Bible, The New English Bible, The Jerusalem Bible, The Revised Standard Version, The Emphasized Bible (by J. B. Rotherham), The Bible: James Moffatt Translation, Complete Jewish Bible (by David Stern), Yahweh's New Covenant (by Heinz Cassirer), and the acclaimed translation in contemporary idiom, The Message (by Eugene Peterson).

Another reason people believe that the Kingdom is here now is that there are a few verses that seem to say that Christians are already part of the Kingdom. For example, Colossians 1: 13 says Christians have been brought "... into the kingdom of the Son ...," making it sound like they are already part of it. The answer to this apparent contradiction lies in understanding a common Hebrew and Greek idiom called the "prophetic perfect." In the use of the prophetic perfect, when something is absolutely going to occur in the future, it is spoken of as having already happened. Thus, the Bible says that Christians are now part of Christ's Kingdom because they absolutely will be part of it when it does come. The "prophetic perfect" is an idiom used in both the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible. Because the impact of the prophetic perfect on both theology and the proper understanding of the Bible is very significant, this idiom is covered in detail in Appendix E.

### **Biblical Names of the Millennial Kingdom**

The Millennial Kingdom is referred to by many different names in Scripture. This should not be considered unusual. Throughout Scripture, a person or place may be called by several different names. For example, Jerusalem is called "the city of David" (2 Sam. 5:7 and 9), "the city of Yahweh" (Ps. 46:4), "Salem" (Ps. 76:2), "Zion" (Ps. 76:2), "Yahweh our Righteousness" (Jer. 33:16), "Sodom" (Ezek. 16:46), "the city of the Great King" (Ps. 48:2; Matt. 5:35), "Ariel" (Isa. 29: 1,2 and 7, which means "Lion of Yahweh" or "Hearth of Yahweh"), "the City of Truth" (Zech. 8:3), and others. It is evident from the context of each name that it refers to the city of Jerusalem. The same practice is evident in our culture: New York City is called "the Big Apple" and Chicago is called "the Windy City." Although it can be very confusing to the new student of the Bible when a person or place has different names, this is something that every serious student of the Bible studies and eventually learns. "Likewise, the Millennial Kingdom is called by many names and people should not let that fact confuse them. Below are many of the names by which this future Kingdom is known in Scripture. A study of these names in their contexts shows that they all refer to the same Kingdom.

- The kingdom of Yahweh (Mark 1:15).
- The kingdom of heaven (Matt. 4:17).

Your [Yahweh's] kingdom (Matt. 6: 10 in "The Lord's Prayer").

- The kingdom of their Father (Matt. 13:43; "their" being the righteous who will live there).
- The kingdom of our father David (Mark 11: 10; Christ's Kingdom is recognized as an extension of David's Kingdom and as fulfilling the prophecies that Christ would reign on David's throne).
- My kingdom (Luke 22:30; spoken by Yehoshua who will be King).
- Paradise (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7; Christ's future Kingdom will be "paradise on earth").
- The kingdom of Christ and of Yahweh (Eph, 5:5).
- The kingdom of the Son He loves ( Col. 1: 13).
- His heavenly kingdom (2 Tim. 4:18).
- The eternal kingdom of our Lord (2 Pet. 1: 11).

## **The Wonderful Qualities of Life Promised in the Millennial Kingdom**

Most people who believe that they will live forever want to know what that life will be like. Thankfully, the Bible provides some answers to that question; in fact, many aspects of life in the Millennial Kingdom are described in clear detail. These promises and prophecies of the future are so wonderful that they almost seem "too good to be true." Remember that Yahweh cannot lie-these promises will indeed come to pass. The more clearly Christians understand these prophecies, the more each one should be salivating and "champing at the bit" for the Kingdom to come soon. Furthermore, every Christian should be excited enough about the future that he is eager to "spread the word" to those who do not yet know. Some of the wonderful qualities of the Millennial Kingdom are detailed below.

There will be justice on earth. (Isa. 2:4; 9:6 and 7; 11:1-5; 32:1, 2, 5, 16-17; 51:5; Jer. 23:5-6; 33:15)

Christ will reign, "establishing and upholding it [his Kingdom] with Justice" (Isa. 9:7). Bribery and corruption, bigotry and prejudice, hatred and intolerance have ruined judicial systems since the dawn of man. Through the centuries, the fallen nature of man, combined with self-interest, has often resulted in justice not being served in the courts. In the future Kingdom, there will be many reasons why justice will reign, not the least of which is that Christ, who knows the hearts of all men, will be the "Chief Justice."

### **There will be no war. (Isa. 2:4; 9:4-7; 60:18; Hos. 2:18; Mic. 4:3-4; Zech. 9:9-10)**

War has been a scourge on mankind since Genesis. There is almost always a war (usually several) somewhere on earth. Furthermore, feuding and "cold wars" have often ruined lives even when there was no overt war. If the money invested in weapons, military training, and maintaining armies were invested in other areas, billions of people could experience a greater quality of life. In Christ's Kingdom, " ... nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore." In fact, the weapons that are not destroyed during the Tribulation or the battle of Armageddon will be converted and used as farm implements: "... They will beat their swords into plow blades and their spears into pruning hooks ... "(Isa. 2:4; Mic. 4:3).

### **The resurrected believers and caught up Christians will enjoy perfect health.**

(Isa. 29:18; 32:3-4; 33:24; 35:5-6; 57:19; Jer. 33:6; Mal. 4:2)

Sickness and disease have taken a terrible toll on human life and happiness. What a blessing to know that what medical science has tried and failed to do-cure human sickness-the Lord will do for the resurrected believers and the caught up Christians in his Kingdom. "No one living in Zion will say, 'I am ill' ... " (Isa. 33:24). At that time the "... eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy ... "(Isa. 35:5 and 6).

Scripture is not as dear about the perfect health of the "natural" people who will be part of the Millennial Kingdom. They will die (Isa. 65:20; Ezek. 44:25), but whether they will get sick or be healthy until their bodies wear out from old age is not dear. Zechariah 8:4 mentions that people will grow old and need canes to help them walk, but that does not necessarily imply pain and suffering. Of course, since the Devil and his demons are chained during the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20:2; Dan. 7: 12), any disease that has a spiritual cause will not be present. Note that in the Everlasting Kingdom death and disease will be banished forever and everyone will be perfectly healthy (Rev. 21:4).

**Mankind will live safely on the earth.**

(Isa. 11:6-9; 32:18; 54:14-17; 60:11,17 and 18; 65:17-25; Jer. 23:4; 30:10; 33:6; Ezek. 28:26; 34:25-31; Mic. 5:4-5; Zeph. 3:13-17)

Since Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise, mankind's existence has been a saga of grief and sorrow that is due in large part to a general lack of safety in the world. Unforeseen tragedies constantly ruin lives and destroy families, running the gamut from misfortunes that involve pain and discomfort to those involving broken bones, disfigurement, dismemberment, and even death. These tragedies can be purely accidental, caused by "nature," self-inflicted, or caused by other people. On a daily basis, newspapers record the diverse and seemingly endless array of calamities that plague mankind. Personal safety is a daily cause of concern. Things in the Millennial Kingdom will be different. The wolf will lie down with the lamb. Children will play close to cobras with no fear of harm (Isa. 11:6-8). Yahweh promises "abundant peace and security" (Jer, 33:6), a stark contrast from what we have today.

**The land will be healed and the deserts will bloom.**

(Isa. 32:15; 35:1, 2, 6-7; 41:18-20; 44:3; 51:3; Ezek. 47:8-9; Hos. 2:21-22; Joel 2:21-23)

Throughout history, deserts and other unusable land have limited mankind's ability to raise crops and to enjoy the earth. Farmers have often struggled just to get meager crops out of the soil. The problem continues to worsen as pollution makes otherwise good land less productive or even unusable. Much of the earth's topsoil has been washed away or depleted and severe weather ruins many crops. The Word of Yahweh promises that, in the Messiah's Kingdom, the land will produce bountifully. What a wonderful joy it will be to live when "... the desert becomes a fertile field, and the fertile field seems like a forest" (Isa. 32: 15). "... Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs ... "(Isa. 35:6 and 7).

**There will be an abundance of food, so starvation and even hunger will be abolished.**

(Isa. 25:6; 30:23-26; 32:15; 35:1,6 and 7; 51:3; Jer. 31:5,11- 14; Ezek. 47:1-2 and 7-12; Joel 2:18-26; 3:18; Amos 9:13)

In the Millennial Kingdom, the land will be healed and the weather will be perfect for farming, so there will be " ... a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine the best of meats and the finest of wines" (Isa. 25:6). 26 Verses such as Jeremiah 31: 12 mention flocks and herds. That verse combined with Isaiah 25:6 clearly shows that people will eat meat in the Millennial Kingdom, not just vegetables. 27 Although most people in the United States have never faced starvation, throughout history worldwide hunger and starvation have been a terrible problem and the cause of untold misery. That misery will be abolished in the Messiah's Kingdom because there will be more than enough food produced for everyone. Even the animals will have so much food that they will eat "... fodder and mash, spread out with fork and shovel" (Isa. 30:24).

**Theological arguments and bickering will come to an end.**

Everyone "... sees through a glass, darkly ... "(KJV) today, and there is a lot about Yahweh and truth that is not generally agreed upon or known. History, sadly, has been full of religious disagreements and debates that have ended friendships, broken families, and even been the cause of persecution, torture, and religious wars. In the Millennial Kingdom, things will be different. When the Lord rules from Jerusalem, arguments will be easily resolved because people who have questions can go ask him. The house of Israel will know Yahweh (Isa. 29:23 and 24; Jer. 31:33 and 34; Ezek. 11:18-20), and Christians will "know fully"(1 Cor. 13:12). When Christ rules the earth from Jerusalem, it will be available to know Yahweh as never before. Isaiah 11:9 and Habakkuk 2: 14 will be fulfilled: "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea."

**The people will be holy and blessed, and there will be joy.**

(Isa. 4:2-5; 35:10; 51:3; 60:1-22; 61:4-11; 62:1-12; 65:17-25; Jer. 30:18-19; 31:4,12-14)

Many verses speak of the blessings and joy in the Millennial Kingdom in general terms. One can easily imagine how much fun life will be when people are healthy and well-fed and there is no fear of war, disaster, or danger of any type. Life will truly be a joy and a blessing to the people who live there. No wonder Scripture tells us that, "From them will come songs of thanksgiving and the sound of rejoicing ..."(Jer, 30: 19).

**All believers in the Millennial Kingdom will be given Yahweh's promised gift of holy spirit.**

(Isa. 32:15; 44:3-5; Ezek. 11:19; Joel 2:28-32; John 7:37-39; 14:16-17; Acts 1:8; 2:16-18, 38-39) In the Old Testament, Yahweh made his gift of holy spirit available only to a few people. However, He has promised that there will be a time coming when "all flesh" will receive the holy spirit (Joel 2:28 KJV). Peter understood this and quoted Joel on the Day of Pentecost when holy spirit was first poured out upon the Church (Acts 2: 17). Since Peter spoke about the outpouring of holy spirit to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost, it is clear that he did not think that someone had to be raised from the dead at the Resurrection of the Just in order to receive holy spirit from the Lord. This fact should set the standard for Christian thinking about holy spirit being poured out in the Millennial Kingdom. It is not only for those who have been raised from the dead, it is "upon all flesh." The word "all" should be qualified by the context and scope of Scripture to mean "all who believe." That is certainly what happened at Pentecost, and it is in line with what Christ taught about the coming gift of holy spirit:

John 7:37-39 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Yehoshua stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Yehoshua had not yet been glorified."

As covered earlier, there will be "natural" people in the Millennial Kingdom. Initially, they will all believe to some degree. However, through the years people will be born who will not believe, and from what Scripture says, they will not receive holy spirit. There would be no point in Yehoshua saying that those who believed would later receive the spirit (v. 39) if in fact every person, whether he believed or not, were going to receive the spirit.

The Bible student should not be confused by the fact that there will be a need for the "rod of iron" (KJV) during the Kingdom even though many people will have the spirit of Yahweh. The gift of holy spirit does not force a person to obey Yahweh. The Old Testament has dozens of examples of people with holy spirit making mistakes, being disobedient, and even openly rebellious towards Yahweh. Joshua had holy spirit but made the mistake of making a covenant with the Gibeonites (josh, 9). Gideon had holy spirit but made

an ephod idol that the people of Israel worshipped (Judg. 8:27). King Saul had holy spirit, yet he repeatedly disobeyed Yahweh. 32 David had holy spirit, yet he committed adultery with Bathsheba and plotted the death of Uriah (2 Sam. 11). Solomon had holy spirit but "did evil in the eyes of Yahweh" (1 Kings 11:6). The New Testament continues the theme. Many Christians, all of whom have the gift of holy spirit, currently live in sin and disobedience. Through the gift of holy spirit the Lord can speak to us, but it is a still small voice, a gentle guiding. Anyone who makes up his mind to disobey is free to do so.

In the Grace Administration, every person who is saved (every Christian) has Yahweh's gift of holy spirit and so, having holy spirit is often equated with being saved. That is not the case however in other administrations. It was not the case in the Old Testament or the Gospels, and it will not be the case in the Millennial Kingdom. The gift of holy spirit enables believers to experience greater communion with Yahweh than would otherwise be possible, but it does not take over and control a person's thoughts or actions, nor does it keep a person from sinning. 33 The gift of holy spirit does not make a person obedient to Yahweh.

### **People from other nations will come to Jerusalem to worship, and foreigners will be allowed to sacrifice at the Temple.**

(Isa. 2:2 and 3; 14:1; 19:18-25; 56:4-8; 60:3, 9 and 14; 66:21; Zech. 2:11; 8:20-23; 14:16)

The words of Isaiah, made famous by Christ, "my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Isa. 56:7), will be fulfilled. It may even be the case that some foreigners are made priests and Levites (Isa. 66:21). The Jews thought that the Tabernacle and Temple were exclusively theirs. Foreigners who came into the Temple (and the Jews who brought them there) were executed (Acts 21:27-32). This will change when Christ sits on his throne as King and High Priest. All people will be welcome to worship and pray in the Temple.

### **Some nations that are destroyed during the Tribulation and at Armageddon (or before) will be restored.**

The Bible foretells the destruction of many nations that have sinned against Yahweh. Yet, it also specifically foretells that there will be nations whose fortunes will be restored when Christ sets up his Kingdom. These nations include Egypt (Isa. 19:18-25; Jer. 46:26), Assyria (Isa. 19:23-25), Moab (Jer. 48:47), Ammon (Qer. 49:6), and Elam (Qer. 49:39). Many of the peoples of these nations will love Yahweh and will worship him. They may have been enemies of Yahweh an idolatrous nations in the past, but the prophecies reveal that they will have a change of heart. The Temple in Jerusalem will become a house of prayer for all nations.

### **Summary Remarks about the Millennial Kingdom**

Several issues should now be clear. First and foremost is the issue of whether the Millennial Kingdom is in the future or the present. It should be clear that the Kingdom is still future because the promises of health, safety, justice, no war, no hunger, and great joy on earth are not yet fulfilled. The religious leaders of Christ's time wrongly assumed that when the Messiah came his Kingdom would come at the same time, and so, when Christ came and the Kingdom did not appear, they crucified him as a blasphemer and imposter. But Scripture indicates that his Kingdom will be established in the future, at his Second Coming, when he comes from heaven and conquers the earth.

The issue of whether the Kingdom is heavenly or earthly is also clear. There is no need to heal the land and have the deserts bloom if no one will be present to farm and to enjoy the land. Why heal the land if no

one will be here? Christ and the prophets of old have made it clear that the meek will "inherit the earth," not "go to heaven."

Understanding the Messiah's Kingdom should do another thing-it should produce in each believer a great desire to be a part of it. How could anyone really understand what the Messiah's Kingdom will be like and not want to be part of it? This book has pointed out that the Hope of a glorious future life is an anchor for the soul. But, the Hope is not only to anchor the life of the believer, the one who has already made a commitment to Yahweh; it is also to be a prime motivator for the unbeliever who is considering becoming a Christian. Too often Christians try to "scare people to Christ" by graphically portraying unbelievers suffering in "hell." Yahweh never does that. <sup>34</sup> There is absolutely no biblical basis for the descriptions found in classical literature of people being burned or tortured by demons, placed head-first in boiling mud pools, being stabbed by red-hot pitchforks, or any such thing.

It is very dear in Scripture that Yahweh motivates unbelievers with the wonderful attributes of Paradise rather than "scaring them into salvation" by the horrid features of "hell." Yahweh shows how wonderful the future life will be for people who believe. And since Christians are to be "imitators of Yahweh" (Eph. 5: 1), we should imitate how He reaches out to unbelievers with His goodness. Christians need to study and learn about the coming Kingdom of Christ and become experts in presenting it to others in order to bring them to Christ. Each and every Christian should be so excited about the wonderful qualities of the Kingdom and his personal part in it that he works to become knowledgeable to the end he has no difficulty communicating these great truths to others.

### **The End of the Millennial Kingdom**

After 1,000 years, Christ's wonderful Kingdom will come to an end. This end is described in the Book of Revelation:

Revelation 20:7-10 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth-Gog and Magog-to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of Yahweh's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

As these scriptures state, at the end of the 1,000 years the Devil will be loosed. He will then deceive the "nations" so that they will come against Yahweh's people. The "nations" will be comprised of the "natural" people living in the Kingdom. These rebellious "natural" people will be descendants of the Tribulation survivors who were judged righteous and allowed to enter the Kingdom. Like the Israelites in the Old Testament who forgot the hard lessons learned by their ancestors, these people will have forgotten what their own ancestors had learned during the Tribulation and the battle of Armageddon. This is an interesting commentary on human beings. It seems that every generation needs to discover for itself that rebellion against Yahweh ends only in self-destruction.

Although the people in these nations will have a sin nature, the Eden-like conditions on earth and Christ's firm but just hand of rulership will maintain order until, at the end of the 1,000 years, "Satan," i.e., the Devil, and his hordes of demons, are released from prison (Rev. 20:2; Dan. 7:12). The Devil then sows his seeds of discontent, jealousy, greed, and hatred until finally millions of people from the nations band together to attack Israel. They will forge weapons and march on Israel with the intent of destroying it. Their weapons will be primitive by modern standards and will be similar to weapons that existed in biblical times, because the weapons of destruction that exist today will either have been converted for



useful purposes (Isa. 2:4; Mic. 4:3), or burned up and destroyed (Isa. 9:5). At the end of the Millennial Kingdom, the rebels will not have developed the weapons of mass destruction that nations have today. Nevertheless, a spear or sword will be as deadly then as it has always been. It is this attack on Yahweh's people that is one reason for the well-known verse in Isaiah, "no weapon that is formed against you shall prosper ..." (Isa. 54: 17, NASB). This unbelieving army does not prevail. Their weapons do not "prosper" and they do not win the war. In fact, there is no evidence that a war even begins. When Satan's army surrounds Yahweh's people, fire falls from heaven and kills all of them (Rev. 20:9).

It is common to hear Isaiah 54: 17 quoted by Christians as if it applied to them. It dearly does not, however, as is evidenced by the fact that Christians die every day by various weapons of unrighteousness. They are shot, stabbed, poisoned, etc., and have been since the inception of Christianity. This is true in wars, in crimes, and in specific acts of hatred against Christians. It is dear from the immediate and remote context that this verse in Isaiah applies to Yahweh's people in the Millennial Kingdom and is an absolute promise to those Christians and resurrected believers who will be there. No Christian or resurrected saint from Israel (like Moses or David) or from the Gentiles (like Noah or Abraham) will need to fear a weapon wielded by a malcontent. No weapon formed against them will prosper.

The fire from heaven not only destroys the enemies of Yahweh, it destroys the earth as well. This fact is elaborated on in the following verses:

2 Peter 3:10-12 But the day of Yahweh will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and Godly lives as you look forward to the day of Yahweh and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

Because the world is destroyed by fire at the end of the Millennial Kingdom, in order for Yahweh to put His people back on the earth in the New Jerusalem, He will have to create a new heaven and new earth. This is exactly what Revelation 21: 1 says: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away ..."

### **Between the Millennial Kingdom and the Everlasting Kingdom**

Before the Everlasting Kingdom can start, the "business" of the Millennial Kingdom must be concluded. For one thing, millions of people must be judged. It is between the two Kingdoms that what is known as the "Second Resurrection" or "Resurrection of the Unjust" occurs. It is called the "Second" Resurrection because the "First" Resurrection will have already occurred at the start of the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20:4). It is called the "Resurrection of the Unjust" because the vast majority of people who get up will be unjust. This is explained by the fact that all of the righteous people from the time of Adam until the start of the Millennial Kingdom will have already gotten up at either the Parousia of the Lord or the "... resurrection of the just" (KJV-Luke 14:14). The only righteous people remaining to be resurrected are those who died during the Millennial Kingdom. The rest of the people who will be resurrected consist of all the unjust and unsaved people who have ever lived. The "Resurrection of the Unjust" is the only time when unbelievers will be raised from the dead. At that time, every unbeliever who ever lived will be raised for judgment.

The judgment associated with the Second Resurrection is known as the "Final Judgment" because it is chronologically the last judgment in Scripture. It is also known as the "White Throne Judgment" because Yehoshua Christ will be sitting on a "great white throne."

Revelation 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades [Sheol] gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

The White Throne Judgment clears the way for Yahweh's Everlasting Kingdom to begin. Those people whose names are in the Book of Life will be given everlasting life, while those people who are not listed there will be thrown into the lake of fire and incinerated, thus experiencing a "second death." 36 After the White Throne Judgment, death is abolished. In the Everlasting Kingdom, there will be no more death.

### **The Everlasting Kingdom**

After the Final Judgment, Yahweh will create a new heaven and new earth and set up a new Kingdom. He will rule this Kingdom from a throne in the New Jerusalem along with His Son, Yehoshua Christ. Although the Bible has no specific name for this kingdom, the "Everlasting Kingdom" is appropriate because this kingdom will last forever. There are many similarities between the Millennial Kingdom and the Everlasting Kingdom, but there are also significant differences—evidence that there are in fact two different kingdoms.

### **Attributes of the Everlasting Kingdom**

Although Scripture provides less detail about the Everlasting Kingdom than the Millennial Kingdom, what is provided is both enlightening and encouraging. The following are some of the distinctive attributes and characteristics of the Everlasting Kingdom.

- 1) The Kingdom will begin after fire from heaven destroys the earth (2 Pet. 3:10-12; Rev. 20:7-10) and Yahweh creates " ... a new heaven and a new earth ... " (Rev. 21:1).
- 2) The Kingdom will last forever (Rev. 22:5).
- 3) The Devil and his demons will not be present. At the close of the Millennial Kingdom, they are all cast into the lake of burning sulfur (Rev. 20:10). 37
- 4) Only believers, the saved, will populate the Kingdom. All unbelievers will have been judged and cast into the lake of fire to be incinerated (Rev. 20:11-15).
- 5) There will be no death in this Kingdom. This is in direct contrast to every other kingdom or time period recorded in the Bible from the time Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden through the Millennial Kingdom. (Rev. 21:4). The absence of death may also mean that animals will not die either. In the Original Paradise both man and animals ate plants only (Gen. 1:28-30). This may well be the case in the Everlasting Kingdom, but the Bible does not speak specifically about it.
- 6) Yahweh and Christ will live in and rule from the "New Jerusalem" (Rev. 21:2), which will be by far the largest city the world has ever seen. The apostle John saw the city in a vision and described its dimensions: "The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide ... " (Rev. 21:16). The Greek text gives the measurements of the city as "12,000 stadia"; the length and the width and the height of it are the same (Rev. 21:16). A Roman stadia was 625 Roman feet, or 606 3/4 American feet, which makes the city roughly 1,400 miles on each side. 38 The city is so large that it is quite possible that every saved person from all of time could live in it comfortably.
- 7) There will not be a temple in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:22). This is a key difference between the Everlasting Kingdom and the Millennial Kingdom. Although this may seem to be a minor point, it is very

significant. The reason given in Revelation 21 :22 for the absence of a temple in the Everlasting Kingdom is that, " ... the Lord Yahweh Almighty and the Lamb are its temple." Understanding the word "temple" is the key to unlocking the significance of this verse. In the first Paradise, Eden, there was no building called a temple that Adam and Eve visited regularly to worship Yahweh. Instead, Yahweh would appear "in person" to Adam and Eve. He came in a human form so He could fellowship with them intimately. When Adam and Eve disobeyed Yahweh, sin entered the world and, therefore, Yahweh no longer chose to "reside" in the world. He did on occasion appear in a human form to people throughout the Old Testament, including Abraham (Gen. 12:7; 15:1; 17:1; 18:1), Moses and some elders (Exod. 24:9-11), Samuel (1 Sam. 3:10), Isaiah (Isa. 6:1-5), and Daniel {Dan. 7:9-14). Nevertheless, His personal presence was represented to the people through the temple building.

In the Church Age, there is no temple building. Yahweh's gift of holy spirit gives each believer personal access to Him, which is also why the Church is figuratively referred to as a "temple." In the Millennial Kingdom, a temple building will again be present to represent Yahweh's presence to the people. He will not be personally present because there will still be sin in the world via the "natural" people inhabiting the Kingdom. But in the Everlasting Kingdom, Yahweh Himself will be personally present just as He was in Eden because there will be no more sin in the world. Therefore, there is no need for a temple building " ... because the Lord Yahweh Almighty and the Lamb are its temple." Scripture says of the Everlasting Kingdom, " the dwelling of Yahweh is with men, and he will live with them " (Rev. 21:3).

The fact that Yahweh will not be personally present in the Millennial Kingdom the same way He will be personally present in the Everlasting Kingdom explains I Corinthians 15:24, which says that when the end comes, Christ will hand over the Kingdom to Yahweh. During the Millennial Kingdom, Christ will reign in Jerusalem as High Priest and King, and he will worship Yahweh in the Temple described in Ezekiel. There will be no throne for Yahweh because He will not be personally present yet. But when the Everlasting Kingdom begins, Yahweh will take His place on His throne in the presence of all people, and Christ will present Him the Kingdom. There will be no need for a temple because Yahweh Himself will be tangibly present.

8) The Tree of Life will grow in the city (Rev. 22:2). This is the first specific mention of the Tree of Life since the Garden of Eden. Ezekiel 47:12, in the context of the Millennial Kingdom, refers to trees with similar qualities and may in fact be the same type of tree, but they are not specifically called "the tree of life."

9) In the Everlasting Kingdom, there will be no sun and no moon, so day and night as they are known today will not exist. Also, there will be no night because Yahweh will give the city light (Rev. 21:23 and 25; 22:5). In the Millennial Kingdom, there will be day and night (Isa. 60: 11)...

There are literally hundreds of verses in the Bible describing these magnificent future kingdoms. It is obvious that Yahweh wants to convince people to "choose life" (Deut. 30: 19) by showing them how wonderful the future will be. Furthermore, once someone is saved, Yahweh wants to "anchor" that person in his or her commitment by promising wonderful rewards to those who are faithful to Him. Because Christians are "ambassadors" for the Lord (2 Cor. 5:20), we should be knowledgeable about the coming kingdoms so we can communicate these truths to others. Christians cannot promise people a problem-free life in the here and now, but each and every one of us can confidently speak the "Good News" and promise people a wonderful life in the future Kingdoms.

**The Full Book, The Christian's Hope, The Anchor of the Soul** can be purchased at Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/Christians-Hope-Anchor-Soul/dp/0985367490>