

THE KINGDOM OF GOD REIGNING UPON THE EARTH

(Revelation 20:1-10)

SESSION #13 – WORKBOOK

Intended For

“KINGDOM WARRIORS IN THE ARMY OF GOD”

Unveiling Mysteries in the “Book of Revelation”

Based upon the Book:

GOD’S ANOINTED WARRIORS

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(Slides # 2 thru 5)

THE MILLENNIAL AGE A 1,000 YEAR REIGN OF THE KING OF KINGS

Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands.

They came to life and **reigned with Christ for a thousand years**. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the **thousand years** were ended. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and **they will reign with him for a thousand years**.
Revelation 20:4-6

(Slides # 6 - 7)

A-MILLENNIALISM

First, I want to briefly mention that many in the church have a problem understanding the reign of the Kingdom of God known as the Millennial Age; an age preceding the coming of the New Heavens and New Earth.

- **They have been taught that there is no actual future millennial kingdom and that these words in Revelation 20 are simply “spiritual.”**

These “spiritual teachings” of the millennial period first surfaced with the influence of Greek Platonism on the church around the fourth century.

- Platonism theology was mostly popularized by Augustine (350–430 AD), who was also a Greek. He was a popular theologian of the 5th century who spiritualized the biblical concept of the “new earth” being symbolic of a non-physical “spiritual heaven.”
- Subsequently, the Roman Catholic Church came to embrace St. Augustine’s view that human beings are better off without bodies and that Heaven is a disembodied spiritual state. (Certainly explains their priestly non-marriage philosophy).
- They teach that Satan has been bound since the resurrection of Jesus and that we are currently living in the millennial age. Additionally, several Protestant denominations also embrace this spiritualized millennial teaching.

- One only has to look at two-thousand years of continuing persecution and rampant false teachings within the church in order to understand that this is another deceptive teaching designed to put Christians to sleep while the real spiritual war is raging across the world.

My personal experience tells me that most Christians who adhere to views of a non-physical reign of Christ during a 1,000 millennial era are also among those who fail to discern the times for this present generation –

- A time of great tribulation and judgment coming upon the Christian church and our nation. They like to spiritualize these events also instead of facing the reality of truths clearly found in the prophetic book of Revelation.

(Slide # 8)

THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS UNDERSTOOD THE TRUTH OF A PHYSICAL MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Contrary to those “spiritualized” teachings, the majority of the early church fathers understood the millennial period to be an earthly, physical reign of the Lord Jesus Christ and His saints.

- They rightly understood the millennial era to be a thousand year period which follows the defeat of the Antichrist-----yet precedes the Day of Judgment and the coming of the New Heavens and Earth.¹
- **This is known as “historic (or classical) pre-millennialism”** and was embraced by our most prominent early church fathers, such as Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, etc.
- Other respected theologians such as Sir Isaac Newton, Charles Spurgeon, George Eldon Ladd, Merrill Tenney, Carl Henry, Francis Schaeffer, etc. also taught the truths of historic pre-millennialism.²
- They understood the millennial kingdom as being a time that the Old Testament prophets called the final redemption of Israel and that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through Israel because Jesus is reigning from Jerusalem.
- **A suggestion for those who have been taught differently: Read Revelation 19 and 20 without listening to anyone else.**

¹ Gaebelein, Frank E., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 12* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981) p.578

² Pawson, David, *When Jesus Returns*, (London Sydney Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1995) p.259

Notes:

(Slide # 9)

The 1,000 year millennial period is bordered by two distinct judgments:

- The opening judgment (seven bowls of wrath being poured out) comes against all the nations, principalities, and powers that opposed Jesus Christ and His reign-----including many among the nation of Israel.
- The judgment that closes the millennial age is known as the final God-Magog war which completely erases evil from the creation forever.

Notes:

(Slides # 10 - 11)

**REMOVAL OF SATAN FROM THE EARTH
(Revelation 20:1-3)**

Before the millennial kingdom can be established, the deceiver of the nations must be removed.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a **thousand years**, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until **the thousand years** were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. *Revelation 20:1-3*

Key Points:

- At this time, the human armies of Satan have been completely annihilated. His two human cohorts, Antichrist and the false prophet have already been thrown in the Lake of Fire.
- Now an angel from God has been dispatched from heaven with the authority to remove Satan himself from the earth so that he cannot deceive the nations during the coming millennial reign of Christ.
- **How will Satan be removed from the earth?** This mighty angelic representative of Almighty God will first seize Satan; then bind him with a great chain which will not be removed for a thousand years. He will then be thrown into a deep, bottomless pit.
- Additionally, it is quite probable that the demonic angels who were the dark agents of Satan for six thousand years are also imprisoned during this time: (2 Peter 2:4)
- **However, Satan’s confinement is temporary**; at the end of the millennial period, he will again be released to go out among the nations to recruit an army for the final showdown between the Kingdom of the World and the Kingdom of God.

Note: Discuss with the group. Why wasn’t Satan thrown in the Lake of Fire with the Antichrist?

Notes:

(Slides # 12 - 13)

THE MILLENNIUM AGE – THE SEVENTH DAY OF REST

The 1,000 year millennial age will precede the coming of the new heaven and the new earth and will be a time when the earth is being “restored” for both God and man’s eternal dominion.

Think of it like this:

The time from Adam to Noah was a downward transition of the world away from a paradise in the Garden of Eden to a flood that destroyed life on earth.

- The time of the millennium is an upward transition from a world that has been devastated by the seven Bowl Judgments to a paradise restored – a new heaven and new earth.
- Thus, the millennium appears to be a 1,000 year transition between the life that we now have and the Garden of Eden-type paradise that comes with the new heaven and new earth.

Now recall that the earth was created in six days and on the seventh day, God rested from all of His works; now these numbers are symbolic of many truths revealed in the Bible. **For example:**

- Six days of labor must be followed by a day of rest known as the Sabbath.
- The number six refers to man while the number seven symbolizes perfection and completion.

Additionally, when the apostle Peter described events that must take place before the end of the age, we learn that a single day with the Lord is as a thousand years to mankind. ³

- This prophecy of Peter’s goes on to point out that “as the earth once perished by a Great Flood, so it will also perish by a great fire that is yet coming.” ⁴
- Likewise after the fires of the Armageddon war, there will dawn a new age known as the Millennium in which Jesus Christ, the Son of God will reign from a restored Jerusalem.

Notes:

³ 2 Peter 3:8

⁴ 2 Peter 3:4-8

THE MILLENNIUM AGE – THE SEVENTH DAY OF REST

Also, there certainly appears to be a parallel between the six days of creation and the first six thousand years of human history.

Key Points:

- These “sixes” may be described as a period of “labor”— six days of labor for the Creator and 6,000 years of labor for mankind.
- These “sevens” may be described as a period of “rest” --- one day of “rest” from labor for the Creator and 1,000 years of “rest” for mankind and the creation.
- Thus, the seventh 1,000 year period, known as the millennium, represents the Sabbath day of rest when equating the 7,000 years of mankind’s history to the seven days of creation.

One of our very early church fathers by the name of Irenaeus was a man discipled by a close friend of the Apostle John.

- Irenaeus also wrote a book called “Against Heresies” some fifty years after John recorded the Book of Revelation. In his book, Irenaeus says the following:

“As God views 1,000 years as a day and He created the earth in 6 days and rested on the 7th, so shall the earth last for 6,000 years and rest under the reign of Christ for the last 1,000 years”.

- Thus, Irenaeus, a man taught by a friend of the apostle John stated that Jesus Christ would return to reign on earth for one-thousand years which would represent a period of rest from six-thousand years of sinful, rebellious living in the world.

Finally, we should take note that the timeframe revealed in the bible puts us very close to the completion of six-thousand years since the time of creation.

Notes:

THE PURPOSE FOR THE MILLENNIUM

The Millennial Age will be a period of time that precedes the coming of the New Heaven and the New Earth; a time when the earth is being “restored” for God and man’s eternal dominion.

Paul lays out a passage which provides some insights into the purpose of this one thousand year millennial period:

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. **The last enemy to be destroyed is death.** 1 Corinthians 15:22-26

Jesus Christ, the Son of God must reign until he puts all of His enemies under His feet.

- The Millennium is a period of His ruling where all evil will eventually be exposed and destroyed forever.
- Until that time, death still exists even though it has limited powers during the Millennium.
- At the end of the Millennium, death will be the last enemy destroyed and then, the kingdom is made ready for the Son to deliver it over to His Father.

The millennium is also a time when Jesus Christ is vindicated before the nation of Israel and the world that persecuted Him.

- Thus, the millennial age is a time for the rulership of Jesus; while the following age of the New Heaven and New Earth will be under the rulership of God the Father.

Jesus, as the last Adam, brings back obedience and fellowship to the Father, even as the first Adam broke that fellowship by disobedience.

Notes:

(Slides # 20 thru 23)

TWO RESURRECTIONS

Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands.

They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection!

Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a **thousand years.** *Revelation 20:4-6*

Two resurrections are mentioned in these verses, one at the beginning of the millennial reign and one at the end. Now, it seems apparent throughout the church that all Christians who have died through the centuries are immediately raised up to heaven.

- For example, in Revelation 6 & 7 we are shown a great multitude standing before the throne and before the Lamb of God.
- Additionally, we are shown that the martyrs that have died for their faith are together under the altar before the throne of God.
- This all takes place before the millennial period. Thus, it appears that this first resurrection is not speaking about all the saints that have died since they are already in heaven.

Key Points:

The first resurrection appears to be a select group of saints who lost their lives for their testimony of Jesus but will live and reign with Him on this earth for a thousand years.

- This group certainly consists of those who have been martyred for the gospel of Christ through the centuries, but it is probable that it is also for those who surrendered their lives totally for the kingdom, even though they were not physically martyred.
- This will also include those who are alive at His coming and will be caught up into the air to join His holy army as they descend to the earth. They lived during the period of great

tribulation, but refused to worship the Beast and did not receive his mark on their foreheads and hands. ⁵

- The first resurrection appears to be those who are the strongest and most mature warriors in the army of God. They will have leadership positions in His kingdom, helping prepare the world for the final stage of paradise.

Thus, the first resurrection appears to be a time when this select group of saints will receive their “resurrected bodies” and reign with Christ on earth during the millennial period.

The unbelievers of the human race will be among those of the second resurrection.

- The first resurrection is for a chosen group of the righteous only.
- The second resurrection is for those who denied the Lord during their life upon this earth.

The righteous ones that are not included in the “first resurrection” will be joyfully waiting in heaven during the millennial reign of Jesus and then descend with the heavenly Jerusalem at the end of the millennium. Then all those who are the bride of Christ will be united forever.

Yet, it should be our goal to make it to the first resurrection – if it means being physically martyred, so be it. If it means total dedication as if spiritually martyred, so be it.⁶

Listen to Paul’s hope for a better resurrection:

.....that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. *Philippians 3:10-11*

- Paul obviously did not doubt his salvation. What he desired was to attain a higher level of resurrection and be part of the first resurrection.

The same principal applied to other heroes of the faith:

.....others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; *Hebrews 11:35 (NASU)*

Notes:

⁵ 1 Thessalonians 4:17

⁶ Intrater, Keith, *From Iraq to Armageddon*, (Shippensburg: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc., 2003) p.154-155

(Slide # 24)

MILLENNIAL REIGN BEGINS—45 DAYS AFTER BOWL JUDGMENTS?

The following end-times prophecy in Daniel has been the subject of much speculation over the centuries. Perhaps the understanding of the coming millennial age might provide some insights into the blessings inherent within this prophecy.

And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days. But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days. (*Daniel 12:11-13*)

Key Points:

- Since Antichrist is to reign for 1,260 days from the time the abomination of desolation is set up in the temple mount, it would seem as if the additional 30 days represent the period of the “bowl judgments.”
- If true, then the reign of Christ appears to begin on day 1,335, which is 45 days after the completion of the bowl judgments.²⁹³
- These 45 days may be a time when the earth is being prepared for the millennial kingdom and the first resurrection of those saints who will reign with Him takes place.
- This certainly would explain the blessedness associated with the 1,335 days.

Notes:

(Slide # 25)

RESURRECTED BODIES OF THE SAINTS

In order to get an idea of what our resurrected bodies will be like, we can look at Jesus' appearance when He walked the earth following His resurrection.

Key Points:

- He suddenly appears and disappears.
- The natural people on earth will live in different locations and travel by normal means, while the resurrected people will be free to move into different locations as they are led by the Spirit of God.
- Like the resurrected Jesus, His resurrected saints will also walk, talk, and eat with those in the natural. They will have physical bodies which can be touched like those in the natural; physical bodies that perform physical functions, but also have great supernatural capabilities.
- Thus, the resurrected saints will be real people in real bodies; bodies that are incorruptible and eternally free from sin. They are the first to receive their eternal, physical bodies.
- These will be resurrected bodies of immortality with infinitely greater capabilities than the old physical bodies of this world that have been corrupted by sin.

(Slides # 26 - 27)

NON-RESURRECTED PEOPLE IN THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Within the nations around the world will be innumerable peoples who survived the “Bowls of Wrath” and were not among the armed forces that had gathered at Armageddon and subsequently killed.

These will constitute the first generation of human beings living in the Millennial Kingdom.

- These surviving people among the nations are in various stages of maturity. There will be babies, children, fathers and mothers, aunts and uncles, grandparents, etc.
- Prior to this time, the gospel of the Kingdom will have been preached throughout the nations, but many may not have heard or perhaps, did not understand.
- However, after witnessing His almighty power poured out across the earth, their understanding will have grown and there will no longer be any question in their minds that the God of Christianity is truly the one and only Almighty God.

- Many will have suffered tremendous grief at the loss of loved ones during this period and others are undoubtedly stricken with sickness from the plagues, but a period of the cleansing of the earth is about to begin.
- They may not understand who Jesus Christ is initially, since they will be in a state of shock and confusion, for the world is completely different from what they have been taught from birth.
- But, they will undoubtedly listen to the teachings which are about to go forth to the nations. These millennial evangelists are among those of the “first resurrection.”
- Those who die during this millennial period will become part of the second resurrection at which time they will receive either eternal life or damnation.

Now Christians have always wondered about the destiny of peoples - who they believed - have never had the opportunity to hear the gospel message during their lifetime.

Key Points:

These would include:

- Ancient peoples in far countries, children who die at a young age, babies that have been aborted; these are examples of human lives that certainly never had the opportunity to know the Lord.
- Now Paul tells in Acts 17 that God overlooks times of ignorance, but since the resurrection of His Son, He calls all people everywhere to repent.

Okay - So what is their destiny? Well, consider this:

- Perhaps this millennial period is a time for those peoples to be resurrected into their natural bodies and experience life under the reign of Jesus Christ. If so, then these are peoples who comprise much of the natural population during the millennial era.
- Now, I know this is speculative, but perhaps it is possible.

Now, the natural people on earth will live in different locations and travel by normal means, while the resurrected people will be free to move into different locations as they are led by the Spirit of God.

Notes:

(Slides # 28 - 30)

THE MILLENNIAL AGE – A TIME OF RESTORATION

The thousand year millennium period is a time designated by the Lord to bring about a restoration of all things.

- This will be a day to day restoring of the world to that condition that existed in the Garden of Eden-----a perfect world that our Lord calls, “very good.”
- A time when many among mankind will walk in the fullness of Jesus Christ as sons and daughters of our Almighty Lord.
- A time when the entire creation, which has been groaning for six thousand years, will again rejoice over the righteous reign of the children of God:

..... the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. *Romans 8:21-23*

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ provided the means for the human race to be restored to our Father’s design for us:

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you — even Jesus. He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. *Acts 3:19-21 (NIV)*

This is speaking of the millennial age!

Notes:

(Slides # 31 - 32)

THE MILLENNIAL AGE – A TIME OF RESTORATION

Much of the detail concerning this restoration process is found in the prophetic books of the Old Testament. Some examples follow:

Restoring earth’s dead waters:
A large river of fresh water will flow out of the Lord’s millennial temple in Jerusalem so deep that one can only swim in it. It flows through the eastern part of the land and into the sea where it will change the seas into fresh water. These seas will again be populated with living creatures and every kind of fish.⁷

The animal kingdom will be restored back to the splendor of the Garden of Eden:
The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.⁸

The earth will again yield tremendous fruit for His beloved people:
"Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord, "when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it."⁹

Humans and animals will be united in love for one another:
The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.¹⁰

⁷ Ezekiel 47:1-9
⁸ Isaiah 11:6-7
⁹ Amos 9:13
¹⁰ Isaiah 11:8-9 (NIV)

Length of life will be as the pre-flood era:

"Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed."¹¹

There will no slavery among mankind - each will reap the fruit of their own labors:

They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.¹²

These millennial peoples certainly will live long and healthy lives, but all will eventually be subjected to death since they have not yet been resurrected.

(Slide # 33)

Finally, there is an remarkable parallel between the restoration of the earth during the millennial age and the sanctification process of “born-again” Christians. In both cases, the spiritual regeneration precedes the physical.

- That is, the earth requires the presence of Christ in order that it might be “born-again” and begin the process of physical restoration to its original state.
- Also, Christians require the “born-again” experience of the Holy Spirit before we can undergo the maturing process of restoration to our original state.¹³ Pretty interesting!

Notes:

¹¹ Isaiah 65:20 (NIV)

¹² Isaiah 65:22

¹³ Pawson, David, *When Jesus Returns*, (London Sydney Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1995) p.228

(Slides # 36 thru 38)**RESURRECTED SAINTS – THEIR MILLENNIAL MISSION**

When Jesus was resurrected and appeared before various groups of people, He interacted socially with those who lived in human bodies.

- He talked with them, ate with them, cooked for them; they all fellowshiped together much like they did before His death.¹⁴

Key Points:

The resurrected saints of the millennial kingdom are going to interact with the peoples of all the nations from a heart of deep, passionate love. A heart of Jesus!

- These will be governing authorities, judges, evangelists, teachers, and advisors to the nations.
- They will be in positions of different levels of authority; depending on a person's gifting and proven record of dependability.¹⁵
- Jesus will be their King ruling from His temple in the capital city of Jerusalem.

Some will be on His cabinet overseeing various areas of government.

- Such as: the department of agriculture, commerce, transportation, etc. Some will be governors over provinces and some will be mayors over cities.
- Others will be in charge of leading worship in the temple. Still others will take the message of Jesus out to the peoples worldwide.
- Jesus will be teaching from the city of Jerusalem and His evangelists and teachers will be taking His message to the nations around the world.

These teachings will cause many peoples to say:

"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes

¹⁴ Luke 24; John 20

¹⁵ Matthew 25:21; Luke 19:17

for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaiah 2:3-4

Notes:

(Slides # 39 - 40)

THE MILLENNIAL GOVERNMENT

Unlike the original government established in the United States, the government ruling over the Kingdom of God will not be democratic.

Key Points:

- It will be a glorious monarchy with Jesus Christ, the King of kings, ruling from His throne in the capital city of Jerusalem.
- His position of authority is not chosen by popular vote, but by the divine choice of Almighty God, our Father.

The Bible informs us that both Jesus Christ and His chosen leaders will rule over the nations with a “rod of iron.”

- This is indicative of strong and uncompromising rulership which will establish laws based upon the foundational truths of righteousness and holiness.
- The character of our Lord will be the ruling character in the lives of His sons and daughters who will live eternally under His kingship.

God's boundary lines for the nations which have been usurped by man may again be reestablished by this government:

And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, *Acts 17:26*

Most probably people groups will be broken down into seventy nations which is the number of the sons of God:

When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. *Deuteronomy 32:8*

All the descendants of Jacob were seventy persons; *Exodus 1:5*

Nevertheless, during the millennial reign of this government, there will be many who would rather pursue the lusts of their hearts rather than the ways of the Lord.

- Though they will outwardly obey the laws of the Kingdom; yet, within their hearts, they are hoping that a time will come when they can throw off the shackles of God's righteous laws and pursue their individual destiny.

These are those that our Lord describes as the:

But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death." *Revelation 21:8*

Notes:

(Slides # 41 - 42)

SATAN RELEASED & THE FINAL WORLD WAR

During the Millennium, the earth has been restored, peace reigns; inhabitants of the nations live with great joyous freedom. And it is even going to get better.

SATAN RELEASED & THE FINAL WORLD WAR

As Satan is released, he will be allowed to move among the nations and tempt people to turn from the Lord exactly like he tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden.

- The rest of the imprisoned demonic hoards will undoubtedly be released with him and will be employed to deceive and rally mankind to rebel against the Kingdom of God.
- In the end of the 1,000 year millennium, Satan and his demonic allies build an army so numerous that “their number is like the sand of the sea.”

The Defeat of Satan

And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. *Revelation 20:7-8*

Key Points:

This is the last of three major battles between the forces of light and darkness described in end-times prophecy:

- First, the battle of nations from Magog that comes against Israel. As mentioned in a previous session, I believe this to be the sixth seal event described in Ezekiel 38-39.
- The second battle is that known as Armageddon described both in Revelation 19 and various Old Testament prophecies. This comes at the end of the six-thousand year age of mankind and is followed by the second coming of Jesus to establish a 1,000 year millennial reign.
- The third battle is the final attempt by Satan and his followers to defeat the purposes of God at the end of the millennial reign of Christ. Here the enemies of God will be quickly consumed by fire. This will be followed by a day of final judgment.

Notes:

SATAN RELEASED & THE FINAL WORLD WAR

This last battle attempt to attack and seize Jerusalem, now the capital of the world, fails completely. In fact, the battle is never joined by the people of God on earth:

And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. *Revelation 20:9-10*

Key Points:

- The Kingdom of God no longer has need for armies; Joint Chiefs of Staff or a Secretary of Defense.
- Our Father in heaven sends down fire upon these enemy forces as they surround the city of Jerusalem; and they are completely consumed.
- The final Great War between the forces of light and darkness is also the shortest ever. The entire army of Satan is killed without the loss of a single human life among those in the Kingdom of God.
- This great climax will occur on the old earth before the new earth appears so that the entire world will witness the final victory of good over evil.

Many of us probably wonder why Satan would arise to lead this final rebellion.

- Did he not expect his defeat? Did he expect his last bid for earthly sovereignty to succeed? Was he self-deluded as well as the deceiver of nations? Did he really think he was stronger than God's people and therefore, God Himself?
- Or did he, knowing his fate was sealed, seek to take as many as he could to share in his ruin, in a last fit of frustrated rage? We may never know!
- However, we do know that the heart of Satan epitomizes the arrogant pride that refuses to recognize the righteousness of God even in the face of eternal judgment.

Notes:

(Slides # 47 - 48)

HADES OR SHEOL – A TEMPORARY ABODE

Hades, (or Hell) in the New Testament, is the “temporary” holding place for the spirits of unrighteous men and women who have died in their sins.

- **It is not their eternal destiny**, but a place where they will experience continual unrest and torment until the coming of that day when they will be resurrected to stand before the Judgment Seat of Almighty God.

Sheol in the Old Testament is the equivalent of Hades however, prior to the resurrection of Jesus Christ; Sheol was the holding place for both the righteous and the unrighteous.

- It was composed of two entirely separate compartments that may be referred to as Paradise for the righteous and Torments for the unrighteous. These two compartments are visibly described in the parable of the Rich man and Lazarus.¹⁷

When Jesus laid down His life on the Cross, he first descended into Sheol, and released the righteous ones whose spirits had been awaiting His coming.

- Then the spirits of the righteous in Christ arose and accompanied Him into Heaven; although some of them appeared to many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem before they ascended into Heaven.¹⁸ (These were undoubtedly the first witnesses to Jesus being the promised Messiah following His crucifixion.)

Notes:

¹⁷ Luke 16:19-31

¹⁸ Matthew 27:51-53; Ephesians 4:8-9; 2 Corinthians 12:1-4

HADES OR SHEOL – A TEMPORARY ABODE

The spirits of our faithful brethren of the Old Testament dispensation could not go directly to Heaven until their sins had been completely cleansed by the shed blood of Jesus at the Cross; thus they had to wait in the paradise section of Sheol.

- But now, all who die in Christ will ascend directly to Heaven and stand with all their brethren in the holy presence of our Almighty Lord.
- The spirits of the unrighteous dead will remain in Hades (hell) until the end of the millennial reign of Christ. At that time they will be resurrected to stand before the Judgment Seat of Almighty God who will then, determine their eternal destiny.

Another interesting scenario that certainly quite speculative: That is, some believe that Hades holds a remnant of people who are truly repentant but come to repentance only after experiencing the suffering of hell.¹⁹

- Earlier, I mentioned the probability that many who have not had the opportunity to hear the true teachings of Scripture would be among those who may be resurrected during the millennial period; where they will be given an opportunity to freely choose their direction in life.
- The final judgment at the end of the Millennium which comes after an extended incarceration in Hades raises the possibility that God may consider that punishment as sufficient for some people.
- This sounds quite similar to those present day criminals who have been sentenced to prison for their crimes and subsequently have a “born again” experience. The world has been taken from them; life has suddenly taken a different turn which opens one’s heart to hear and receive the truth of God. It took the punishment of imprisonment to open up the heart to repentance.
- Perhaps the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus conveys the possibility that a period of suffering may bring true repentance.

The Bible does not answer this question and there is no reason to take a strong stance on it, one way or the other.

- However, if it is true that the dead in Hades are resurrected during the Millennial Age, they will certainly have the opportunity to manifest their true hearts.

¹⁹ Intrater, Keith, *From Iraq to Armageddon*, (Shippensburg: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc., 2003) p.204

- For when Satan and his demonic forces are released to raise a rebellious army designed to destroy the Kingdom of God, they can either choose to join with him or oppose him.

Notes:

(Slides # 51 - 52)

“ETERNALLY CONDEMNED” - OR - “ETERNALLY TORMENTED?”

It is understandable that all of mankind, both believers and unbelievers, have difficulties with the doctrine of eternal punishment.

- We all shrink from this teaching for none of us dare visualize how eternal punishment might be experienced by someone we know and love. Yet, the Bible does not ignore this teaching and neither can we.
- The reality of the fiery torments of hell should spur all of us to continually communicate this truth with great zeal and urgency.
- How long will the unrighteous be tormented in the Lake of Fire?

Traditional teachings stick to the view that Hell is a place of eternal, conscious torment.

- That is, a person who is sentenced to Hell is doomed to be painfully tormented forever and ever. Many respected theologians certainly believe this to be true.
- However, there are others who do not believe that sinners are eternally tortured but that, after completing their allotted period of torturous punishment, their souls disintegrate into what they perceive as the “second death.”

THE NEXT SESSION:

First Read: Revelation 20:11-15; Revelation 21 & 22)

**THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT
&
THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH**

- The Day of Judgment
- Judgment Day – Who will be Judged?
- The Book of “Works” and the Book of “Life”
- Lake of Fire – The Permanent Abode of the Ungodly
- The New Heaven & New Earth
- The New Jerusalem
- Heaven: Boring or Exciting?
- Life on the New Heaven & New Earth
- “Behold, I Am Coming Soon”
- A Final Warning

Additional Notes:

THE LAMB OF GOD - OUR TRUE “COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF”

The days are rapidly approaching when a tremendous separation will take place among mankind.

Yet, during this present era of warfare, He reigns as our Commander-in-Chief and His Name continues to be the battle cry for those warriors who fight daily for righteousness and truth.

His name is Jesus, Our Lord, Our King, Our Commander-in-Chief

- **A truly mighty Leader who would never delegate assignments to His people that He Himself wouldn't readily embrace.**
- **A Commander that Christian warriors will readily follow not matter the danger or what costs have to be paid.**
- **These are warriors whose deepest desire is to hear Jesus welcome them with the following words when they enter into His presence:**

..... 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' *Matthew 25:21*