

As we begin this session, let's go back to Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue. As Daniel relayed to the king his exact dream, he said to Nebuchadnezzar,

You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. (Dan. 2:34-35)

As most conservative scholars believe, the *stone cut out without hands* is Jesus Christ at His return (Matt. 21:42-44). When Christ wages war against the antichrist, the 10 kings, and their army at the battle of Armageddon, in the words of Daniel, He will strike "the statue on its feet of iron and clay" and crush them.

I love the strong language used here. Jesus Christ, the captain of heaven's armies, will utterly crush the antichrist and the 10 kings, and in the process, obliterate their eighth kingdom (Rev. 17:14). Though no human army could defeat this empire, Christ will conquer them thoroughly with relative ease, for "He is Lord of lords and King of kings" (Rev. 17:14). When He does, "then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold" will be "crushed all at the same time."

Daniel gave us further insight into this several verses later, saying, "It [the kingdom of God] will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever" (Dan. 2:44, emphasis mine). When Jesus returns and conquers the eighth kingdom, He will, at the same time, *put an end to all these kingdoms*. That means *the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold will be crushed all at the same time*.

How is it possible for Jesus Christ to crush the Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman empires when He crushes the antichrist's eighth kingdom, especially when these empires haven't existed for over a thousand years? Let's take a minute and examine what this means.

Crushed at the Same Time

To begin, notice what Daniel 2:40 states: "Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break *all these* in pieces" (emphasis mine).

In this verse, we see the fourth kingdom of iron, which we have identified as Rome, breaking *all these* in pieces. What is *all these* referencing? Some have argued *all these* refers to geographical areas. That is, in attempting to identify the fourth kingdom, it must be an empire that conquered the geographical areas once part of the ancient Babylonian, Persian, and Greek empires. The only problem is this argument is not found in the text. A much better interpretation, therefore, is to see *all these* referring to the previous kingdoms.

How was it possible for the fourth kingdom to conquer the Babylonian and Persian empires when these two empires had already been conquered? This is explained by each previous empire being absorbed by its conqueror. For example, when Rome conquered Greece, Rome became the champion empire. Why? Because Greece defeated the Persian Empire, who had defeated and absorbed the Babylonian Empire. Therefore, when Rome conquered Greece, it overcame the empires previously defeated and absorbed by Greece, including the Persian and Babylonian empires.

The principle here is similar to boxing. There's the undefeated heavy-weight champion of the world, who crushed the previous two heavy-weight champions with relative ease. But then a new boxer comes onto the scene. This boxer has had great success, but has not yet defeated a heavy-weight champion. Nevertheless, when he knocks out the reigning champion in the first round, he is crowned champion of the world, even though he never fought the other two previous champions. Because the new boxer defeated the former champion, who defeated the previous two champions, the new boxer is considered the uncontested heavy-weight champion of the world.

In this analogy, Rome is the new boxer and Greece is the reigning champion, who defeated the previous two champions of the Persian and Babylon empires.

Of the three former empires, Rome is presently the reigning champion. Even though Rome fell from within centuries ago, it is currently in the process of being revived. As Daniel prophesied, there will be a kingdom of iron mixed with clay before the Lord returns.

The iron will be a partial reviving of the Roman Empire, comprised of European nations who once comprised the ancient Roman Empire. The clay will be other non-European nations, including Arab nations, who join together because of the allure of unprecedented prosperity.

When the antichrist destroys Rome—and the seventh kingdom—his eighth kingdom will become the reigning champion over Rome, Greece, Persia, and Babylon. In addition, as we have previously seen, his eighth kingdom will be like a lion, bear, and leopard, meaning it will be a revival of the Babylonian, Persian, and Greek empires (Rev. 13:2).

This in mind, we can now go back to the rock, who is Christ, crushing the statue on its feet of iron mixed with clay, and at the same, destroying the previous empires of Rome, Greece, Persia, and Babylon. These previous empires, having been conquered and absorbed by the others, will be considered crushed at the same time by Christ at His return. The kingdom of God will therefore be considered the reigning empire of empires. Or as John stated, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15).

When this happens, in the words of Daniel, the “stone that struck the statue [will become] a great mountain and [will fill] the whole earth” (Dan. 2:35, emphasis mine). This means the kingdom of God will conquer every kingdom of man and rule over every nation on the earth.

Make no mistake about it—Jesus Christ is returning to establish His kingdom on the earth in fullness. Scholars refer to this time as the Messianic Age, the Kingdom Age, or the Millennial Kingdom. This age is when Jesus reigns as King from Jerusalem for a thousand years (Zech. 14:16; Rev. 20:4). Scholars refer to this interpretation as the Premillennial view of eschatology.

A Summary of Premillennialism

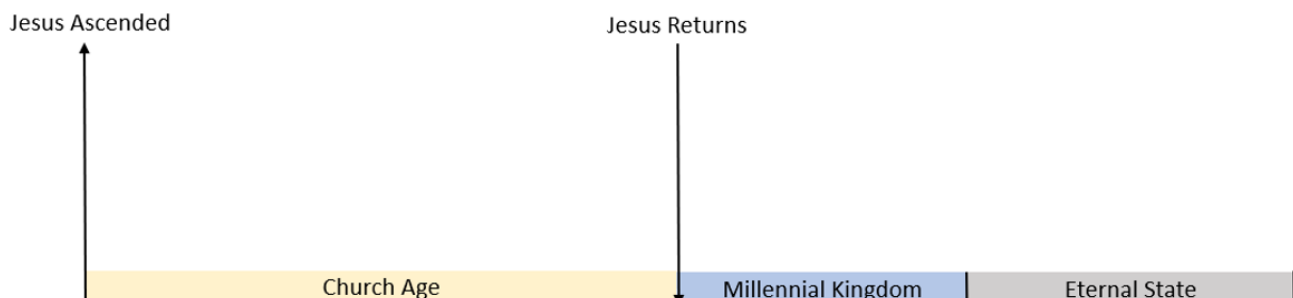
Revelation 20:6 states, “Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.” The Premillennial view of eschatology interprets this verse literally.

Premillennialists also believe the second coming of Christ will occur before (“pre”) the Millennial Kingdom. That is, Jesus Christ will physically return to the earth and then the Millennial Kingdom will commence. This entails Christ reigning from the city of Jerusalem for a thousand-year period. Some Premillennialists debate whether this period is exactly a thousand years or represents a long but finite period of time prior to the eternal ages.

Premillennialism believes all of Israel’s covenant promises, which are scattered throughout the Old Testament prophets, will literally be fulfilled after the second coming of Christ. When His reign is fully established, Premillennialists believe Jesus will hand the kingdom over to the Father, who will then create a new heaven and new earth (1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 21-22).

The chart below shows how Premillennialism believes the Millennial Kingdom will be established after the Church Age, when Jesus returns.

Premillennialism



The Millennial Kingdom Debate

As is true with all eschatology, there's a big debate among scholars, teachers, and preachers on how to interpret the *thousand years* mentioned in Revelation 20:2-7. In these six verses, the word *thousand* is mentioned six times. So how should we interpret this? There really is only two possible ways to make sense of it.

I have already explained the Premillennial view, which is what I believe. But the other interpretation is employed in both the Amillennial and Postmillennial views. Both of these viewpoints believe the thousand years are symbolic and refer to the reign of Christ on earth happening right now through the church. This reign of Christ, through His body, began at Jesus' resurrection, will last until Christ's return, and is spiritual in nature.

As stated in Session 2, the Postmillennial view is far more optimistic than the Amillennial view. The Postmillennial view believes Jesus Christ will return after the church has Christianized the world and taken dominion over the seven mountains of culture, including government, business, education, arts and entertainment, media, and religion.

Postmillennialists believe the preaching of the gospel will be so successful it will usher in a Golden Age of Christianity. They foresee a time when the majority of the world becomes Christians, the nations of the earth obey the teachings of the Bible, and faith, righteousness, peace, and prosperity prevail. At some point during this utopian age, Jesus Christ will return and transition the earth to the eternal age.

The Amillennial view, on the other hand, is much more pessimistic, seeing the reign of Christ through the church as primarily happening through the gospel.

The chart below shows how both Postmillennialism and Amillennialism believe the Millennial Kingdom is on the earth through the church in the present Church Age.

Postmillennialism and Amillennialism



Why I Believe the Premillennial View Is Correct

Let me quickly summarize why I believe the Premillennial view is correct. Here are five reasons why I believe the second coming of Christ will occur before the Millennial Kingdom and why the Millennial Kingdom is a long but finite period of time prior to the eternal ages.

1. It's the most literal way to read the text.

Since prophecy has been fulfilled literally, our default method of interpreting prophetic Scripture should always be literal unless the context suggests otherwise. Just because some take the literal approach to an extreme, trying to interpret everything literally, doesn't give us the license to abandon the default, literal method of interpretation. Not following this guideline has caused many to twist, distort, and misapply Scripture, ultimately misleading and even deceiving those they influence.

The Amillennial or Postmillennial interpretations of the one-thousand years relies on a heavy spiritualized, allegorized interpretation. The Premillennial view, on the other hand, is the most literal way to read the text.

2. Satan is literally bound from deceiving the nations in any type of way for one-thousand years.

If the thousand-year period has been underway since Christ's resurrection and ascension, then Satan has been bound, locked away in prison unable to deceive the nations. Yet just a cursory glance through the book of Revelation shows the devil, his angels, and his human puppets presently deceiving "the whole world" (Rev. 12:9; see also Rev. 13:14; 18:23; 19:20).

Furthermore, if the devil is presently bound, how can you explain the dragon empowering the antichrist and receiving worship through him just prior to Christ's return (Rev. 13:4)? How can you explain Paul's words, when he articulated the coming of the antichrist "in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9)?

The only way around this is to embrace a Partial Preterist view of eschatology, claiming these prophecies were fulfilled in 70 A.D.

In my opinion, if you hold to a Futurist view of eschatology and accept a literal interpretation of biblical prophecy, it's impossible to interpret the thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth presently happening through the church. Nor can you view the thousand years as the eternal state, initiated by the creation of the new heavens and the new earth. It must represent a long but finite period of time prior to the eternal ages.

Some try to get around this issue, claiming the devil is only bound from launching the Armageddon campaign prematurely. But when I read the description of Satan bound for a thousand years, it doesn't seem he's experiencing any type of freedom whatsoever. Instead, an angel descends from heaven with a great chain in his hand. This powerful angel lays hold of Satan, throws him into the abyss, binds him, shuts the door, and seals it. I know Revelation uses symbolic language throughout the book, but there's nothing vague about this. The binding of Satan is not a limited binding. It literally prevents him from deceiving the nations in any type of way for a thousand years.

With this in mind, Satan is clearly bound in the abyss of hell, preventing him from acting in any way while Christ and His church reign over the earth. This is one major reason why I believe the Millennial Kingdom is a long but finite period of time prior to the eternal ages.

3. Premillennialism is the only interpretation that accounts for the literal resurrection from the dead.

Revelation 20:4 states, "Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years."

This verse is straightforward. Those who rule with Christ for a thousand years are resurrected prior to this thousand-year reign.

How do Amillennialists or Postmillennialists interpret this? They view it as a symbolic reference to our born-again experience. That is, after one is truly saved, they experience life from the dead. They experience a spiritual resurrection. Then, after their born-again experience, they begin their reign with Christ.

Here's some major problems with this interpretation. John saw souls who had been beheaded. He also saw those who refused to worship the beast or his image, resisting the temptation to take the mark of the beast. I can't fathom how you could interpret these phenomena as symbolizing our born-again experience.

The only way around this view is to embrace an extreme allegorical interpretation, making many of the precious statements in this passage virtually meaningless.

With this in mind, the first resurrection does not describe our salvation experience but our literal resurrection from the dead, when our disembodied souls are given a resurrected body, never to die again. This first resurrection undoubtedly takes place prior to Christ's thousand-year reign on the earth. This is another reason why I believe the Millennial Kingdom is a long but finite period of time prior to the eternal ages.

4. If Jesus Christ is presently ruling over the earth, He's not doing a very good job.

I mean no disrespect in saying this whatsoever, but looking at our presently insane world, if Jesus Christ is ruling over the earth, He's doing a lousy job. Just look at the rise of rebellion, lawlessness, pornography, sex trafficking, pedophilia, witchcraft, occultic practices, false religion, greed, and abortion. Considering the depraved condition of our world, can we honestly say Jesus Christ is ruling over the entire earth? God help us if He is.

Nevertheless, this is what the Amillennial or Postmillennial views insist. They claim Jesus Christ is presently ruling over the earth through His church. But is this true? Is this what Revelation 20:4-6 states? Let's take a minute and examine what John wrote.

First, John stated, "They came to life and reigned *with Christ* for a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4, emphasis mine). Two verses later, John wrote, "They will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign *with Him* for a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6, emphasis mine).

There's a *massive* difference between reigning with Christ and Him reigning through us. If He is reigning and we reign with Him, this makes us His partners. This means, even if we were to fail, His reign would be unaffected. As His partners, we are dependent upon Him; He is not dependent on us.

On the other hand, if He is reigning through us, this makes Him, in a sense, dependent upon us. If we fail, His reign is hindered to the degree we aren't submitted to Him. Thankfully, the text clearly states we are His partners, and therefore, He is not dependent upon us.

The Amillennial and Postmillennial views teach Christ is reigning through us, even though the text clearly states otherwise. This view gives me no hope whatsoever.

If the only hope for this present earth is Christ ruling through His mostly backslidden, selfish, and powerless church, how hopeless the future would be. Studying church history, this view gives me zero confidence rebellion and lawlessness will ever be vanquished until the new heavens and new earth. If the reign of Christ, mentioned in Revelation 20:4-6, is Christ ruling through His selfish, lukewarm, and compromised church, I have no optimism pornography, sex trafficking, pedophilia, witchcraft, occultic practices, false religion, greed, and abortion will ever be vanquished until fire consumes this planet in judgment.

Thankfully, however, Scripture doesn't teach Christ's reign on the earth will come through His church but with His church by His side as a partner. This means Christ will return to the earth as King and He will right the wrong, establish justice, and usher in an age of righteousness, truth, prosperity, equity, and glory.

Describing the coming kingdom of God and its returning King, John said, "You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign. And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came" (Rev. 11:17-18).

When Jesus begins to reign, it will not be through His church in a figurative, mostly powerless way. Instead, Jesus will take His great power and initiate His uncontested reign. He will not take sides but will take over. This will enrage the nations who hate Him and hate His narrow pathway to life. This will trigger Jesus' wrath, removing everything hindering His kingdom rule. Scripture describes this upheaval as the Day of the Lord. When the Lord's just judgments are complete, then "The kingdom of the world [will] become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11:15, emphasis mine).

In summary, Jesus is not presently ruling over the earth through His church, but will instead reign as King over the earth in the future, after He returns. This is another reason why I believe the Millennial Kingdom is a long but finite period of time prior to the eternal ages.

5. Premillennialism is the only interpretation where the Old Testament prophecies to Israel are literally fulfilled.

Paul said Israel possesses the promises (Rom. 9:4). What promises, exactly, is Paul referencing? The Old Testament promises spoken by the prophets, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zechariah, and Malachi.

I haven't taken the time to count how many future promises God has given to Israel, but I have studied the Old Testament prophets enough to know there are many. And I also know Jesus Christ did not come to cancel these promises but to confirm them. Paul wrote, "Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God *to confirm the promises* given to the fathers" (Rom. 15:8, emphasis mine).

Here's just a few of the promises God made to Israel:

- Jerusalem will be the capital city of the kingdom of God;¹
- Israel will be the worship center of the world;²
- Israel will be the place from which God’s glory shines into the nations;³
- Israel will be the place from which divine blessings, favor, prosperity, and peace are released into the nations;⁴
- Israel will be a place of unspeakable joy and gladness.⁵

When Jesus Christ returns as the Lion from the Tribe of Judah, the root and the offspring of David, He will fulfill God’s promise to David, when the Lord told him, “You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel” (1 Kings 2:4). As Gabriel told Mary, Jesus “will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:32-33). Jesus Christ, the greater David, will sit on the throne of His father David and rule the nations as King of the earth from Jerusalem during the Millennial Kingdom.

Premillennialism, therefore, is the only view where God literally fulfills His prophetic promises to Israel. Both the Amillennial and Postmillennial views are rooted in Replacement Theology.

The Kingdom of God Is Coming in Fullness

Having shown why the Premillennial view of eschatology is correct, let me give a quick summary of the Millennial Kingdom. This will give you insight into what will take place after Jesus returns and is crowned “king over all the earth” (Zech. 14:9).

The Millennial Kingdom will be a time of unprecedented peace, prosperity, righteousness, and glory (Zech. 14:9; Isa. 60). Heaven will invade earth. All of God’s enemies will be defeated. And Satan will be bound for a thousand years (Rev. 20:2-3).

“In that day,” wrote Zechariah, “the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one” (Zech. 14:9). What a glorious day this will be!

When Jesus Christ is enthroned as King of the earth and the kingdom of God comes to the earth in fullness, the world will be transformed into a lush paradise, harmony will be restored between humanity and creation, and worship will fill the planet as the glory of God covers the earth like the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:6-10).

Revelation 20:6 states that “Christ . . . will reign . . . for a thousand years.” Whether this period is exactly a thousand years or represents a long but finite period of time prior to the eternal ages is debatable. The main point is that the kingdom of God is coming in fullness and will penetrate every sphere of life, including politics, agriculture, economics, education, law enforcement, family dynamics, media, the arts, technology, and every social institution. This will result in a period of unprecedented blessing for the whole earth as Jesus establishes righteousness and prosperity, and restores the agriculture, atmosphere, and animal life to conditions similar to the Garden of Eden.⁶

During the Millennial Kingdom, there will be worldwide justice, the abolition of war, unprecedented peace, fullness of joy, healing, longevity of life, the swift punishment of sin, and economic prosperity.⁷ The earth will finally experience the utopia humanity has dreamed about for over 6,000 years.

Jesus, who is the King of the Jews, will make Jerusalem the capital city of the kingdom of God (Isa. 2:1-4). From Jerusalem, God’s kingdom will go forth in fullness into every Gentile nation on the earth.

Jesus called Jerusalem “the city of the Great King” (Matt. 5:35). Jeremiah declared, “At that time they will call Jerusalem ‘The Throne of the Lord,’ and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord” (Jer. 3:17). Zechariah prophesied, “I will return to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts will be called the Holy Mountain” (Zech. 8:3). Isaiah described Jerusalem as the place where justice, peace, divine decrees, instruction, and the Word of God will go forth into the nations (Isa. 2:2-4).

From Jerusalem, Jesus will reign as King over the earth, serve as judge of the nations, and administer God’s word (Isa. 33:20-22; Zech. 14:9). Kings, queens, presidents, and statesmen will come to Jerusalem to meet with King Jesus, seeking His wisdom, guidance, blessing, and favor (Isa. 2:1-4).

God will also showcase the glory of His Son to the nations from Jerusalem. Isaiah prophesied, “For the LORD has redeemed Jacob and in Israel He shows forth His glory” (Isa. 44:23). Isaiah said further, “You are

My Servant, Israel, in whom I will show My glory” (Isa. 49:3). Both of these promises will be completely fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom when Jesus Christ reigns as King from Jerusalem, making this city the praise of the earth (Isa. 62:6-7).

In the Millennial Kingdom, the kings of the earth, who survived the Great Tribulation, will be saved, worship Jesus, and base their national governments on God’s Word (Ps. 72:11, 102:15, 138:4; Isa. 2:2-4, 62:2). These kings, with non-resurrected bodies, will go to Jerusalem regularly to receive counsel from Jesus Christ, the King of the earth (Isa. 2:2-4).

In addition, the overcoming saints, with resurrection bodies, will be given a rod of iron to rule the nations with Christ. They will also sit with Jesus on His throne. These faithful men and women throughout history will rule and reign with Jesus over the nations, as they help spearhead the kingdom of God into every facet of culture.

Together, these two types of kings will partner with King Jesus to establish a godly social order, transforming every sphere of life. Through the leadership of these two types of kings, in partnership with Christ the King, the seven mountains of culture, including business, government, media, arts and entertainment, education, family, and religion, will be thoroughly transformed.

The Natural Processes of Life Continue

Ephesians 1:10 reveals God’s eternal purpose to bring heaven and earth together as one in Christ. This will progress to an entirely new level during the Millennial Kingdom.

Heaven speaks of God’s glory and the unlimited, supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. The earth speaks of the natural processes of life, as we know it today. In the Millennial Kingdom, the natural processes of life will not be discarded. They will be brought to an entirely new level by God’s glory and the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.

Speaking of the Millennial Kingdom, Isaiah prophesied that the offspring of Christ will possess nations and will resettle the desolate cities (Isa. 54:3). This probably involves removing leaders in all spheres of influence, who aligned with the antichrist, and replacing them with those born-again after Christ’s return.

Resettling desolate cities also infers major reconstruction projects, desperately needed after the devastation released through the antichrist and the Lord’s end-time judgments. Just think for a minute how wrecked the world will be after the Great Tribulation.

The earthquakes released before the Lord returns will decimate the infrastructure of many cities. The antichrist will also turn the whole world into a desolate wilderness as he subdues many nations by the most formidable military power in history (Isa. 14:17).

When Isaiah talks about resettling the desolate cities, it will probably involve rebuilding the infrastructures destroyed during the Great Tribulation. Perhaps this will involve rebuilding highways, bridges, economic systems, educational systems, law enforcement, and government agencies. The resurrected saints, in partnership with the kings of the earth, will work together to fully restore the cities of the earth destroyed during the Great Tribulation.

Concerning the Millennial Kingdom, Isaiah wrote:

No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his days; for the youth will die at the age of one hundred and the one who does not reach the age of one hundred will be thought accursed. They will build houses and inhabit them; they will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They will not build and another inhabit, they will not plant and another eat; for as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people, and My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands. They will not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD, and their descendants with them. . . . The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent’s food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain (Isa. 65:20-25).

Take special note of a few important phrases. Namely, “the youth will die at the age of one hundred,” “the one who does not reach the age of one hundred will be thought accursed,” and “as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people.” This clearly means the longevity of life will increase dramatically

during the Millennial Kingdom. Yes, there will still be death. But when the Tree of Life rules and reigns from Jerusalem, the longevity of life will increase substantially.

Not only does Isaiah detail a dramatic increase in life span. But during the Millennial Kingdom, the citizens of the earth will “build houses,” “plant vineyards,” “eat their fruit,” “labor,” and “bear children.” Clearly, the natural processes of life will continue as they do today.

The Earth’s Restoration Will Take Time

When Jesus returns, He will not instantaneously transform every sphere of life in one moment. He will not just wave His hand, snap His fingers, and magically restore the earth in the blink of an eye. It will take time for His kingdom to spread and His influence to affect every city in every nation.

Isaiah declared, “There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore” (Isa. 9:7). Jesus’ government has been increasing since His ascension, but after His return, His kingdom will increase in an unprecedented way during the Millennial Kingdom. Even so, it will still be a progressive increase of Jesus’ influence, authority, and dominion throughout the nations. Because the natural processes of life continue unabated, it will take time for His kingdom to penetrate every facet of every institution.

The survivors of the Great Tribulation, who did not take the mark of the beast or accept Christ, will not be instantaneously discipled. It will take time to convert people individually, disciple them, and lead them into deep worship and adoration of the King of kings. Notice this Scripture, written in the context of describing the Millennial Kingdom:

“For I know their works and their thoughts; the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory [the nations will come to see Jesus’ glory in Jerusalem]. I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them [the survivors of Israel] to the nations: Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations. Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering to the LORD, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem,” says the LORD, “just as the sons of Israel bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD.” (Isa. 66:18-21, emphasis mine)

This passage of Scripture is such an interesting concept. Notice some key truths in this passage:

- “The time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory.” The Lord will gather people who survived the Great Tribulation to Jerusalem to see His glory.
- “I will . . . send survivors from them to the nations.” The survivors mentioned here are most likely the Jews who survived the Great Tribulation. God will send them to the nations as missionaries.
- “That have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations.” Strange as it sounds, there will be people in the nations during the Millennial Kingdom that have never heard of God’s fame nor seen His glory. To reach these for salvation and to see them become worshippers, God will send the survivors of Israel to the nations in order to make Jesus’ fame known.
- “Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering to the Lord . . . to My holy mountain Jerusalem.” The survivors of Israel will make Jesus’ fame known to the nations and then they will bring these people back to Israel to see Jesus’ glory with their own eyes.
- “I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites.” Jesus will choose some of these people who gather to Jerusalem from the nations to be His priests. These will minister to Jesus in the Millennial Temple.

Here's the main point. During the Millennial Kingdom, Jesus' government will not instantaneously penetrate into every sphere of society and culture in all nations. Instead, His government will progressively increase. It will take time to disciple the nations and bring them into full allegiance to the Lord Jesus. That is why both Jesus and the saints will rule the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:27; 19:15). The rod of iron will be used to discipline those who disobey God's laws.

The Purpose of the Millennial Kingdom

Many often wonder what is the purpose of the Millennial Kingdom. *Why* does God even need this period of time? What is He attempting to accomplish? These are all really great questions.

The purpose of the millennial reign of Christ is to prepare the nations for the Father coming in the fullness of His glory to the earth (Rev. 21:1-4, 22:3-5). Writing about the Millennial Kingdom, Paul stated, "Then comes the end [of the Millennial Kingdom], when He [Jesus] hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power [it will take time to do this]. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. 15:24-25, emphasis mine).

Simply put, the purpose of Christ's one-thousand-year reign is to abolish "all rule and all authority and power" and to "put all His enemies under His feet."

Think about this for a minute. If Christ rules for one-thousand years and He also rules until all authority and power and every enemy has been put under His feet, then maybe it takes a thousand years for all of this to happen. Perhaps it takes a thousand years to spread, mature, and test the righteousness in every nation. Maybe it takes a thousand years for Jesus' government to increase into every sphere of life and to prepare the nations for the Father's glory and His eternal reign.

The Millennial Kingdom Is A Transitional Period

When the thousand-year reign of Christ is complete and His influence has spread into every sphere of society in all nations, Satan will be released from prison to test the nations' obedience to the Word of God (Rev. 20:7-8).

John said the number of those deceived by Satan will be "like the sand of the seashore" (Rev. 20:8). To prepare the nations for the fullness of the Father's glory, Satan will be allowed to test the nations' obedience so that every form of unrighteousness can be purged from the earth.

Following Satan's unsuccessful bid to recapture the earth, God will judge the dead according to their works (Rev. 20:11-13). This is known as the Great White Throne Judgment. Then comes eternity, when unbelievers are cast into the lake of fire, the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven to earth, and the saints enjoy the fullness of God's glory forever (Rev. 20:14-15, 21:1-22:5).

The Faithful Saints Will Rule and Reign with Jesus

In the Millennial Kingdom, Jesus will share His power and authority with the faithful saints throughout history. John saw this in vivid detail, stating,

Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4)

Those who take part in the first resurrection will reign with Christ for a thousand years. What a glorious invitation to all of us!

In the Millennial Kingdom, the overcoming saints will rule the nations with a rod of iron, establish justice in their jurisdiction, and administrate punishment on sinners. Jesus promised the overcomers they would have "authority over the nations" and they would "rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26-27). Jesus also told the lukewarm Laodiceans, "He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne" (Rev. 3:21). The throne represents not only a place of intimacy but also authority.

As kings, the faithful saints throughout history will rule and reign with judicial responsibility and kingdom authority. This involves bringing justice and righteousness into their sphere of authority.

The parable of the minas, taught by Jesus in Luke 19:11-27, also reveals the faithful saints throughout history ruling over literal cities during the Millennial Kingdom. More specifically, those who were faithful stewards of the resources God entrusted to them will have authentic authority over real nations when Jesus reigns as King over the earth. This glorious truth is often missed because people don't consider the context of this parable.

Nevertheless, Jesus said, "A nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return" (Luke 19:12). Jesus is the nobleman and the distant country is heaven. At His heavenly coronation, revealed in Daniel 7:13-14 and Revelation 5, Jesus will receive the kingdom which will reign over the earth.

While Jesus is away, his servants are called to "do business" until He returns (Luke 19:13). We do business by being faithful stewards of the resources God has entrusted to us. This includes the way we manage our time, money, assets, talents, gifts, and ministry calling. If we are "faithful in a very little thing," Jesus said, we will be given "authority over ten cities" or "five cities" (Luke 19:17-19).

For too long, the church spiritualized these cities. However, the cities Jesus is talking about are real cities, such as New York City, Washington, D.C., London, and Paris. Jesus will give his faithful servants authority to rule over literal cities in the Millennial Kingdom.

Closing Summary

As we bring this session and class to a close, since we have covered much ground, let me highlight some of the main points.

End-time prophecy was not fulfilled in 70 A.D., either partially or completely. Nor will a great revival transform culture in every city of the earth before Christ returns. What we have seen, instead, is much of end-time prophecy is Jerusalem-centric. God has not forgotten His promises to Israel and neither should we. Nor has the church replaced Israel in God's prophetic agenda. Rather, as Gentiles, we have been grafted into Jesus Christ—the ultimate expression of Israel—and the covenant promises made to Him.

At the end of the age, to fulfill Israel's prophetic destiny, bring Israel to salvation, and prepare the church as God's inheritance, the Lord will allow two antichrist kingdoms to rise up before Jesus returns.

In the days ahead, we will see a great clash between a New World Order, Islam, and the Kingdom of God.

The New World Order is the seventh antichrist kingdom. This kingdom will be a partially revived Roman empire, comprised of many nations who were once part of the ancient Roman Empire. These European nations will align with other non-European nations to establish a one-world government, one-world religion, and a one-world economy. Perhaps through the UN's 2030 Agenda, 17 Goals of Sustainability, the Great Reset, and Inclusive Capitalism, the seventh kingdom will mature, increase in influence, and expand its worldwide dominion.

The seventh kingdom will have a one-world religion of universalism promoted by the Pope and Vatican. This one-world religion will likely be some type of merger of the three faiths of Abraham. The leaders in this kingdom will blend together Judaism, Christianity, and Islam into a state-sanctioned, harmonious religion that unites the world and establishes peace. This false religion will seduce many once-loyal Christ followers, leading them to apostatize from Jesus Christ.

The seventh kingdom's government will be a hybrid of socialism, corporatism, and technocracy. It will be run by the wealthy elite, influential political leaders, the world's successful CEOs, and technical experts, who working in partnership, dictate to the serf-like population what is acceptable and unacceptable beliefs, thoughts, and behavior.

The seventh kingdom's economy will be a hybrid of socialism and capitalism, what some have called Inclusive Capitalism or Stakeholder Capitalism. The idea is to take the wealth generated by the success of capitalism and distribute it to the less fortunate nations, until every nation is equalized and poverty is eliminated.

This seventh antichrist kingdom will be characterized by tolerance, peace, prosperity, manipulated unity, humanistic compassion, soulless love, and false justice.

Satan's goal in the seventh kingdom will be to intoxicate the nations with false religion and prosperity, preparing them to worship the antichrist, and ultimately, him. Through universalism, the apostasy Paul

warned about will intensify, as many once-loyal Christ followers imbibe the wine of Babylon and come under a strong delusion.

Nevertheless, at the beginning of the last three-and-a-half years of the age, known as the Great Tribulation, the antichrist and the 10 kings will destroy the harlot city Rome as they go forth conquering and to conquer. As Daniel 11:39 states, this demonically-energized coalition will wage a religious war to conquer nations for their god. Their goal will be to establish a revived Ottoman Empire and Islamic Caliphate. Not only will this Islamic coalition destroy Rome, they will also invade Israel, conquer Jerusalem, and swiftly establish their empire in parts of Europe, Turkey, the Middle East, Northern Africa, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

This eighth kingdom will be characterized by intolerance, war, a state-controlled economy, forced submission, totalitarianism, and chaos. The eighth kingdom will be established by war and conflict, as the antichrist's formidable military conquers nations and controls the people under his domain through a state-run economy regulated by the mark of the beast.

The antichrist will eliminate every religion except Islam, forcing the nations under his authority to convert or die. As a result, the apostasy will reach its apex. Christ-followers who live in his domain will have to make the toughest decision of their lives. Will they spare their lives, renounce Christ, and pledge their allegiance to the antichrist? Or will they remain loyal to Jesus Christ, sacrificing themselves as lambs for His name and glory?

Satan's goal in the eighth kingdom is to receive the worship he has always craved, through his proxy the antichrist. That's why this man of lawlessness will conquer Jerusalem and enthrone himself in the Jewish Temple, mandating worship for himself from the nations. In addition, his totalitarian government will likely attempt to establish Shira law in the conquered nations.

When all hope seems lost, Jesus Christ will return as King of kings and Lord of lords. The Warrior-King from heaven, the leader of heaven's armies, will return to Israel and wage war against the antichrist, the 10 kings, and the eighth empire. Jesus will thoroughly crush all of these enemies, eliminating forever the eighth empire, and at the same time, all the antichrist empires throughout history.

Jesus is returning as a rock who will crush the pride, lawlessness, and rebellion of humanity and fallen angels. When all the empires of fallen man are crushed at His return, Jesus will establish His worldwide kingdom and global government of peace, prosperity, justice, and righteousness. Ruling from Jerusalem as the son of David and sitting upon the Davidic throne, Christ will make Jerusalem the capital city of the kingdom of God and the praise of the earth.

This utopian Kingdom Age will restore the earth to the conditions in the Garden of Eden as His glory covers the earth like the waters cover the sea. This is why Paul referred to His coming as the blessed hope and why all creation longs for the revealing of the sons of God, for in partnership with Jesus, they will restore the earth as the Old Testament prophets foretold (Titus 2:13; Rom. 8:19-22).

With that, we say, "Maranatha. Come quickly Lord Jesus!" (1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 22:20). Amen.

¹ Jer. 3:17; Zech. 8:3; Isa. 2:2-4, 33:20-22; Zech. 14:9; Matt. 5:35.

² Mal. 3:2-4; Zech. 8:20-23, 14:16.

³ Isa. 4:2, 24:23, 30:26, 44:23, 49:3; Hab. 2:14.

⁴ Zech. 8:23; Isa. 60:3-5, 10-11.

⁵ Isa. 60:15, 65:18-19.

⁶ Rev. 20:1-6; Isa. 2:1-4; 9:6-9; 11:1-16; 51:1-8; 60-62; 65:17-25; Ps. 2:6-12; 110:1-7; Matt. 5:5; 6:10; 17:11.

⁷ See Ps. 2:9; Isa. 2:4; 4:1; 9:3-7; 11:4-9; 12:3-6; 14:7-8; 25:8-9; 28:17; 29:17-19; 30:23-25; 32:17-18; 35:3-6; 42:1-4; 60:1-14; 61:1-2; 61:4-7, 10; 65:20, 22; 66:24; Jer. 31:8; Ezek. 36:36-38; Mic. 4:6-7; Zeph. 3:19; Zech. 14:14-19; Rev. 20:7-10.