

WHAT IS THE MILLENNIUM?

Millennium - the term is simply the Latin for “a thousand years.” It is taken from Revelation 20, where six times the duration of Christ’s earthly kingdom is said to be a thousand years. But the word “Millennium” has taken on a technical significance, as representative of all that is said of Christ’s earthly reign in other passages as well. Hence today many persons speak of the “Millennium,” not so much signifying its duration of a thousand years, but a time or condition in which there shall be universal peace and prosperity, because these things are prophesied of Christ’s Kingdom.

It would not be possible within a limited scope to refer to all the passages relating to this kingdom. In the Old Testament far more is said of that time than of Christ’s first advent into the world. Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3 state that at that time “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 any more.” At that time the curse of sin shall be removed from the earth (Rom. 8:21), so that “instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off” (Isa. 55:13). Many other prophecies tell of Christ ruling in righteousness, resulting in universal peace (Isa. 32:1-17). This is usually what people have in mind in speaking of the millennium.

SINNERS DURING THE MILLENNIUM

Are sinners on earth during the Millennium? Yes, without question as I understand Scripture. However, all who **enter** the Millennium are saved. Scripture referring to that period speaks of children - indicating there will be births during that time. The curse is to be removed from the earth, making it more fruitful. It appears also that human life shall be greatly extended - see Isaiah 65:22. Such longevity does not involve glorified bodies, as will be true of those who shall inhabit heaven. It means that the law of death which works in our bodies now will be overcome by the changed condition of the earth and its surroundings. Students of the Bible have long noticed that before the time of the flood, men lived many hundreds of years, the longest-lived being Methuselah, whose age was 969. It is believed that conditions in the millennium will be such that long life will be universal except those which die under the judgment of God. And since human bodies will not then be in the glorified state, births will be the natural outcome, and these - as in the early days - will probably be spaced at far greater intervals.

Throughout all dispensations salvation is by grace, through believing faith - the gift of God (Eph. 2:8, 9). Man of all ages are accounted righteous by faith (Rom. 4:3; Heb. 11:13; John 3:1-18). This truth pertains also to those saved (born again) during the tribulation period. During the Millennium period, many will be born. And many will be born again! However, even under conditions with the Lord reigning in righteousness, with Satan and incentive to sin put away, all hearts will not be responsive to Him. Isa. 65:20 seems to indicate that no one will die, due to frailty in infancy or old age. Nevertheless, the same verse (last phrase) indicates an age of accountability, when judgment and death will result from unbelief. Psalms 101:8 has been rendered, “Morning

by morning I will destroy all the wicked of the land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord.”

From Rev. 20:1-3 we learn Satan is bound and unable to deceive during the Millennium. However, when that period is ended, Satan is loosed. The Millennial age is designed by God to be the final test of fallen humanity

- * under the most ideal circumstances,
- * surrounded by every enablement to obey the rule of the King,
- * from whom outward sources of temptation have been removed.

But there is failure again. Satan finds hearts that have not responded in faith to the Savior - obviously amongst those born during the thousand years period. Gathered together, they war against the earthly Saints and are defeated by God (verse 9). Satan is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone and tormented forever (Rev. 20:7-10). Those defeated with him will face the great white throne judgment for unbelievers (Rev. 20:11-15). Then begins the eternal state.