

# 1,000 Literal Years

*Revelation: How It All Ends*

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**Bible Text:** Revelation 20:1-9

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Look at Revelation 20:1

“1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

That's an interesting phrase, “a little season.” In other words, you have this idea in our paradigm where you have a seven year tribulation period that is yet to happen known as Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week and then you're like, “I wish you would quit drawing it.” No, we're stuck until we're done. Then you have this 1,000 years that's described in the book of Revelation 20. Today we're going to talk about that whole term thousand years; we're going to talk about whether that should be literal, figurative, future, past, present. We're going to talk about that today.

In verse 3, there is this little season that takes place. That little season and I don't know how long the little season is but we need to see that it's been used before. I want to show you where it's been used before without necessarily taking you back there. Do you remember in chapter 6, we have one of the seven sets of judgments taking place. Do you remember which set of seven takes place starting in chapter 6? That's true, the four horsemen are part of what set of seven judgments? The seals, that's right and the fifth seal, we find someone under the altar from the perspective of John. He looks at the altar in heaven and he sees souls under it who have been martyred and he says, “Just hang on for a little season.” Oh, okay. Well, if John saw that in AD 95 and they're still waiting, well then, I don't have any idea how long this set of time is here. I don't have any idea. After the thousand years described here, if the little season that those martyrs under the altar, I don't have any idea. If John saw them in AD 95 and that little season is still happening, then I don't have any idea how long Satan will be loosed after the thousand years. Sorry, don't know.

Verse 4,

“4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them,” who did? “and judgment was given unto them,” who? “and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

Again, today we're going to talk about whether that thousand years is meant to be literally, figurative. But let's talk about that idea of souls sitting on thrones. Let's understand a few things here: this word “souls” has been used before in the book of Revelation. Now, in the book of Genesis, some of you that have been with us for three years, remember we got to Genesis 2 and we understand that man became a living soul, that word “soul” there means “life force.” In other words, so long as you have life in your body, you have a soul. That's just a little bit too simple for some folks. They want to get mystic; they want to get Platonic. No, there's no need to. You're not talking about disembodied souls sitting on thrones here. There is no reason to.

Now, it's not just my opinion. Let me give you some scriptural precedent here. Look at chapter 8:9. Please, look with me. We talked about this in chapter 8 but we are forgetful, aren't we? We need to hear it again and again and again. I do, you do, most people do. We have some geniuses, I'm sure, that don't but I'm not one of them. So, in chapter 8 and verse 9, we have the seven trumpets, the second sets of seven judgments. And you have in the second trumpet, in verse 8 of Revelation 8. If I said Roman which is what I'm feeling like I said, I was completely wrong. Revelation 8:8, “And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.” Third part of the creatures which were in the sea and had life. You know, that word “life” there, do you know what that is? It's the word “soul.” The same Greek word. If memory serves, we don't have any mermaids but it talks about creatures that had life died in verse 9. You see, you don't have to believe that the only usage of the word “soul” is people without a body because that wouldn't make any sense here, would it? Are you all with me?

Let's look at one more usage of this word, Revelation 12:11, so that you understand that just because the passage of Scripture uses the word “soul” doesn't mean that we're talking about people who have died and have not been resurrected. Not necessarily. There are times when we say, “That poor soul.” What? They don't have a body anymore? Okay, so we don't use it that way all the time so you probably shouldn't. “Oh my soul.” You're not concerned about your body? Of course you are. It has the idea of life.

I'll come right to you, Brother Dick.

Look at Revelation 12:11, “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives,” that's the same word translated “souls” in Revelation 20. What, they didn't love their souls even to death? I thought the

soul that sinneth it shall die, so are these people dying? Does that mean they're sinners? See how crazy it can get if you start saying the only time the word "soul" when it's used, the only thing you can see it as is a person who has died and this is their soul somewhere. In particular, when we get to Revelation 20 and we see in verse 4, "I saw thrones and they that sat upon them and judgment was given unto them and I saw the lives of them that were beheaded," so you can see that if you just use the other English word that's used in other places of the book, there is no need to see that these people are still dead reigning on thrones. That is one of the possibilities but there's not need to say that.

Brother Dick? (I was just going to say....)

In Exodus, the first chapter of Exodus, it talks about the number of people that migrated from Canaan to Egypt and it said 70 souls. What, they left their bodies in Canaan? Of course not so we're dealing here with a general usage of anyone that has a life, they're a soul. By the way, any creature that has a life is said to have had a soul. Does that bother some of your theology? Maybe it's not a problem to say that fish don't go to heaven when they die but maybe we need to reframe our usage of the words a little bit and adapt them to biblical usage because what is true is that fish don't have a spirit that communes with God. You could probably say that; you could probably theologically be correct saying that but I hope you can see that you don't have to have a uniform interpretation of this verse to say, "Oh, here in Revelation 20:4, we're dealing with dead people reigning somewhere. We don't have to. That's one of the possibilities.

We'll pick it up in verse 4 again,

"4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. 7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

For how long, verse 3? A little season. Verse 8,

"8 And Satan shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog."

We'll talk about what that means next week. If it kills me, we're going to talk about it because I was ready.

“to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

Well, what about that? So I wanted to know the nature of the thousand years. Please notice that it is used six times in this passage of Scripture. I looked up the term “thousand years” in the Greek language and looked up where else did they occur in the New Testament. One other place, just one other place so let's go and look at it. 2 Peter 3 and let's get an idea. Some of you are coming in here today saying, “Of course it's a literal thousand years. What kind of numbskull?” Be careful, there are God-fearing, Bible-believing, salvation by grace alone believers who believe that it is not a literal thousand years and you need to understand that they get up like you and have their devotions just like you. They pray over their children, just like you. They say grace before dinner, just like you. There is no one, really, with an agenda out there that I know of who is saying, “Well, you know, I think it's figurative and I don't like Jesus.” There is no one out there doing that so try to understand that this is a respectable view. It might not be heard of before among some of your family but the truth is, there is a large portion of Christianity that does not see this as literal. The church's official stance says it's literal but there are large portions of people that we would say that we agree with that don't believe it's literal. Bottom line up front: I do and so I'm going to give you reasons why I do.

Now, my mind has not always been made up on that topic because when you grow up in the Lord, you start re-examining things that you've been taught and every now and then you see that you've been wrong about a thing or two, haven't we in this room in the last year? There have been times where people have thought, “I never heard that before in my life.” Well, that's okay, that's not a sin. What's a sin is rejecting light that God gives you. That's the sin.

So, look at 2 Peter 3:1, “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” Now folks, let's notice right away that Peter is saying old earth/new earth. Are you getting that? This is amazing. He's talking Revelation stuff so we're going to keep going here. Verse 8, “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” I'll grant you that there's no doctrinal proof in there that the

day of the Lord is a thousand years old but I think it's interesting that we're about to see in verse 9 and 10 the topic come up called the day of the Lord and surrounding it are this idea of the destruction of the old heaven and earth and a creation of a new heaven and earth. We are seeing three now, three, count them, three Revelation topics in the same passage. It's not a mistake. It's not an accident. It's a parallel of some type.

Verse 9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Wow, could we talk about that for 15 minutes? "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." But we read in Revelation 16, did we not, that it comes as a thief in the night to those who are not ready? That was before the sixth vial so we need to remember that this does not mean Christians are caught unaware. It means unprepared Christians are caught unaware. "In the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." In other words, Peter is saying to his people, "Hey, since you and I are going to outlast what we're standing on right now, we should probably clean up." That's what it says. All these things will be dissolved. That ground you're standing on, gone, so maybe since everything you love and you stand on and live in every day maybe since it's going to be gone, maybe you should take inventory on what's on the inside.

But I did want you to see that the only other place in the New Testament that that term "thousand years" is used is right here. Right slap before a passage that talks about the day of the Lord. A thousand years is as one day. Speaking of one day, he says in verse 10, the day of the Lord. Interesting. A person without stretching too far might say that the day of the Lord really is a thousand years. Now, having said that, I want to find out where that came from, don't you? Do you think Peter was just this brilliant man that came up with new material? He might have been. He did often with a twist of Jesus added in but is that what happened here? Did he just think this up? No, he did not.

Let's find out where it came from. Look at Psalm 90. Let me give you alternatives. At this church we have what is known as a pre-millennial – that has the idea that Christ is going to return before the millennium here. Then we have what might be known as the post-millennial. There are many different types of millennial when it comes to post. Typically, the post-millennial will typically say that the seven year period took place back here somewhere between the cross and 70 AD. Typically, and then we are living at some point a thousand years, it's figurative and whenever the church is successful at bringing peace on earth and good will to men, Christ will return. That's post-millennial. Let's make sure we keep this straight. This is pre and that is post.

Then there is this idea of amillennialism. "A" means "none; no or not." That has the idea that basically the thousand years began during Christ's first coming and that was when Satan was bound figuratively in the bottomless pit and that it will continue until Armageddon when he returns. So we have a thousand years figuratively. By the way, amillennialists typically, at least Andy Webb in town, pastor of Providence Presbyterian,

believes that the last seven years of this present age will be the tribulation and that there is no millennium afterwards, it's happening now with Christ reigning in heaven with the saints that have passed on.

We're in Psalm 90 and I want you to see, please, in verse 1, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." That's where Peter got it, right there. Well, the writer of this Psalm who is Moses. Maybe you just learned something. David did not write all the Psalms so now Moses is the originator of the idea. Not David, Moses is the one who informed Peter that a thousand years is to the Lord as one day.

Right here, right now are we supposed to think that the writer, Moses, though, "Alright, I am talking about a literal thousand years is just like one day," or is a thousand sort of like saying, "He says it a thousand times. He says it a hundred times. You exaggerate all the time. You're always saying it a million times. If I said it once, I've said it a trillion times." Is that how it's being used here? It seems like it in some degree. So, in Psalm 90 we have this idea of the thousand years being like a day. There is no question in my mind that Moses probably did not have this in mind. I don't think for a minute that Moses was thinking, "I'm talking about this far away reign of Christ on earth for a thousand years." I don't think he was.

Let's look at Psalm 91 and let's see how Moses, again, the writer of this Psalm, uses the word "thousand." "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." Clearly, he is using thousand and ten thousand in a figurative sort of way, non-literal. He's not saying, if you have 1,001, "Oh, that one got a lucky shot." Right? "You're safe against a thousand so if you find 998 out there, find two other lucky jokers that you can wallop real quick." It doesn't say that. It is figurative of mass amounts will come against you but you'll not be defeated. So clearly, we can see in the book of Psalms, for the most part, we're two out of two, for the most part, "thousand" is used figuratively and what's troubling about that for a pre-millennialist ought to be that Peter is quoting a figurative reference to thousand. That ought to be troubling to a pre-millennialist, at least a pre-millennialist who believes in a literal thousand year reign.

Let's keep looking. Look at Psalm 84. I'm showing you pretty famous verses anyways and so these are good for you to underline and maybe pass them to someone for encouragement from time-to-time, so long as you remember that there are verses before

and after most of them. Psalm 84 and let's look at verse 5, "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee," talking about the Lord, "in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca" everyone has been there, I'm sure, "make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." That's an encouragement, think about that: everyone in Zion appears before God. "O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah. Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed." I think it was seven months ago I preached this passage at my Grandmother's funeral. I just can't help but talk about Jesus there in verse 9. The reason you're accepted in front of the Lord in verse 7 is because he is looking at the face of the Christ in verse 9. Notice that? Isn't that good? That's good stuff, even if I'm the only one who thinks so. I have one over here, that's good. Let me say it again and I'm just going to enjoy it like that Greek dessert, like wafers and honey, what's it called? Baklava, I'm going to enjoy it just like that. The only reason you can appear before God in verse 7 is because Christ appears before God in verse 9.

Look at verse 10, "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." There are some versions of the Bible that say "for a day in your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else or elsewhere." But 1,001, I'll swap.

Yes? (...) No. (I have a question, although there are portions of the Psalms that are prophetic, it is also a poetic book?) Yes. (So does that mean we need to....) Absolutely. (...a prophetic book like Revelation...) Absolutely. The question was: since Psalms is at times prophetic, not pathetic, prophetic, I already told you my joke about that. You can get those words mixed up quickly like immorality and immortality. We believe in both. One of them is not necessarily the one you want to follow. We do believe both exist. Yeah, seriously. I heard a preacher mess that up one time, "We believe in immorality!" Awkward. (...) Which part? The part where I said it was a joke?

The question was: we know parts of it are prophetic but it's also poetic and we take a lot of poetic license in our own culture so why not understand that since a thousand is being used in poetry here, that it is being used figuratively whereas 2 Peter is clearly a letter. It is not poems; it is not tip-toeing through the daffodils and blah, blah, blah, roads less taken and all other such frostiness. So, there is no need to think that because it's used figuratively in poetry that it must also be figuratively in a letter. So, great question, beat me to the punchline.

Look at Psalm 84 again and you're going to see that he says that a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. In other words, he's using it figuratively. Give me a million days somewhere else and I wouldn't swap it for an entire day of holding the door back there for people to come in to worship God, or to be a doorkeeper in heaven. Take your pick.

Sir? (...) I do know your hand. Your name is Walter. (I am an amillennialist.) I know you're an amillennialist. (...) It's because you're a Presbyterian in your history and I love

you anyway. (But doesn't it seem to make more sense to interpret apocalyptic language by apocalyptic language?) Sure, if – and I thought about that, Brother Walt, but here's what I know... (...) Sure, yes, but here's something else that I know: if I'm in the New Testament, in particular the book of Revelation, and I'm thinking about that term “thousand years” the first thing I want to do is check the other apocalyptic language. Yes, the problem is in the New Testament there aren't any that say “thousand years.” None, so what I want to do is I – I know ain't is not a word, I want to calm everyone out there. I have some teachers in our midst. The next thing I would want to do then is see who else uses the term. Well, there's only one other place that uses the term. It becomes a very simple Bible study when you realize there's no other apocalyptic language in the New Testament, not even if you used the Mount of Olives or the parables of Christ, there is no other apocalyptic language in the New Testament that uses the term “thousand years.” There's not so I want to see does anyone else use the term “thousand years”? Ah, Peter does. Where did Peter get it? He got it from a book of poetry so I want to see how that book of poetry uses it. That's all. That's just the methodology. Could I be wrong? I might find out one day with Walt that Walt was right the whole time but right now, to be honest with you, if I thought Walt was right, I wouldn't be talking this way.

Now, let's look back at Psalm 50. Quickly, before he raises his hand again. No, I'm just kidding. That was a good question, Brother Walt. No, you're right and it's a good methodology question because we're not all together tomorrow morning in our devotions and hopefully you're going to leave this room thinking, “Well, part of that was clear but part of it I think he was stretching.” Fine. At least you have an opinion. Let it be a Bible informed opinion.

Psalm 50. We want to look at verse 9, “I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.” But the 1,005 hill I don't own so you go ahead and offer that one to me. You can see there's a conundrum there, yes?

(They are all mine.) They're all. It's shorthand for “all.” And I'm going to tell you right now, if I didn't know that Satan was loosed, I would say this is a never-ending kingdom, right? But we have stuff in the chronology of Revelation that says stuff comes after this. But if I didn't have something that said there's Satan being loosed and oh, by the way, a great white throne and a battle of Gog and Magog, which you and I haven't talked about, we'll get to it, if I didn't have all that stuff in the chronology I would be like “a thousand is shorthand for forever.” Forever. I mean, it is in the Psalms. He owns everything, the cattle on a thousand hills. You can give me all the days in eternity somewhere else, I want one holding the door for people to get into God's house. I mean, that's very clearly in poetry it is used very symbolically very clearly.

Having said that, I do want to point out that 2 Peter is not poetry and that is why I think we have a liberty at least to say that Peter, although he took it from Moses' writings under aid of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, not by his own whims, I believe that he was a student of the Psalms. I believe that because Peter is talking to real people in a real geography and he's not quoting poetry necessarily, he's making a point, a theological



point with a line from a poem so I think we should at least consider the fact that the only other place in the New Testament that what's quoted from a poem in the Old Testament, the only other place that uses the term "thousand years" in the New Testament is talking about a day of the Lord in 2 Peter 3. It's a day of the Lord and what happens in that day of the Lord? Well, it comes as a thief in the night to some people; the old heaven and earth are taken away, they're dissolved, the new heaven and earth are created. All of that takes place Peter seems to lead us to believe, in a day. A thousand years that is to the Lord as a day and that it is why it is called the day of the Lord.

Let's go and look back at Revelation. I have just a few minutes. It doesn't mean that you can't ask or make comments, it doesn't, but I need to cover something first. So, it's true: a thousand years is used symbolically. A thousand is used symbolically all through the poetic books in the Old Testament but in the one time that it's used as thousand years in the Psalms, it's quoted in Peter and it's quoted in Peter in an instructive letter and his goal there is not to quote poetry.

Now let's talk about other numbers in the book of Revelation. Let's talk about them. Did John really see seven churches? (Yes.) Are you sure? Were there really seven seals? Were there really seven vials? I'm not saying did they symbolize anything. We know they symbolized stuff but did John really see seven? (Yes.) Did he hear seven trumpets? Seven thunders? Seven vials? Did he really see 144,000 male virgin Jews. (Yes.) Did he? Was the reign of the antichrist really 42 months? One thousand two hundred and threescore days? Was it really that? If it wasn't, then you have to deal with the fact that in Daniel 9, the first 69 weeks are literal and the 70<sup>th</sup> week is not. Are you ready to do that? Careful. You're saying the first 483 is absolutely literal, it happened just like it was supposed to between the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the crucifixion of Jesus but the last seven years is really 2,000 years long? So, every number that's been used so far, do you really believe he only saw two witnesses? (Right.) Are you sure? Were there really 24 elders? Are you sure? That's all he saw? And when he doesn't know the number, what does he say? (I cannot know.) I can't number them. He says it here in chapter 20, particularly verse 8, the end of the verse, "to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." He doesn't give us a number. In chapter 7, when he sees a multitude of every ethnicity, race, culture, creed, you name it, he says a multitude which? No man can number.

So, every other number that is used in the book of Revelation that he sees, he really sees it. Now he uses a term six times in this passage. Look at it, chapter 20. Remember, where else is it used? One other time in the New Testament? There are 26 other books and he uses the term "thousand years" in one of them, 2 Peter, and it's found one time. Here, it's the second place in the New Testament that it's used and it's used six times. In every other place in the New Testament, though the numbers may symbolize something, that is, though they might actually appear to be something else when he sees them, he really does see seven symbols or two symbols or here he sees a thousand years. So, the numbers matter all throughout the entire rest of the book, why not here? That's my point.

Thirdly, I already mentioned it, it's used six times for emphasis. If he said it lasted for a thousand years, I would say, "Okay, that probably means that it could be a shorthand for forever, after all, in the Old Testament it's used for shorthand for forever." But the problem is and I think it's a big problem, is that he goes out of his way to say it six times, thousand years, figurative. A thousand years, probably figurative. A thousand years, could be figurative. A thousand years, probably not figurative. A thousand years, I don't think it's figurative. A thousand years, how could this be figurative? That's what the reader should be thinking but I can't make you think that way, anyone.

(Pastor, we also have to keep in mind that when Jesus was talking to the disciples and told them that they would reign with him, he was talking about a specific responsibility that they would have, each having responsibility for a tribe of Israel.) Right. (And that is not figurative.) That's true. You're right and that was not figurative.

Now, I want to mention this reign. Did you notice that it says that they will reign with Christ a thousand years? Does everyone see that? I'm going to show you one more thing and then I wish I could show you something else but we won't have time. Let's talk about where this reigning is supposed to take place. Let's do that. Look at Revelation 5 and I'm going to bring it right back to chapter 20 and then we're going to go. Look at chapter 5. I think the patterns that John sets forth are very important. Look at verse 9, "And they sung," who's they? Look at verse 8, "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." Who is bowing down? 24 elders. "And they sung a new song," who is "they"? 24 elders. "They sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign," where? "On the earth." So the 24 elders said, "We're going to reign on the earth."

Now, we know from the chronology of the pre-millennialists over here that there is a new heaven and a new earth. One of the possibilities is that they mean the new earth. Now, I would probably believe that if the last time we saw the 24 elders was somewhere in here in chapter 20 but let's look at the last time the 24 elders are seen in the book of Revelation. Look at chapter 19. What happens in verses 11-15 you heard from Brother Gregg a couple of weeks ago? What happens? Yup, the second coming of Christ. Christ returns and where do we see the 24 elders for the last time in the book? Look at verse 4, "And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia." What happens next? We see the heavens open in verse 11. Now, the last time we see the 24 elders is here and then in the chronology, we see, I didn't say it, these 24 elders said, "We're going to reign on the earth." Look, there are people who are reigning in chapter 20:4. I have to believe, I'm going to believe, I have to believe until I can see better proof in another way that this is the same reigning forecasted in chapter 5:10. Why? Because the 24 elders promised it in chapter 5:10 and the 24 elders are seen right before the second coming that brings the reigning in chapter 20:4 and you don't see them again after that. To me, that is a good hint that chapter 5:10

reigning on the earth and chapter 20:5 talking about they're reigning on thrones, it's the same reigning. I have to believe that.

You don't have to but then you have to answer the question of why do we see the 24 elders for the last time right before the second coming? Now, in the chronology, let's remember: in the chronology, it's before the thousand years, it's before Satan is loosed, it's before the battle of Gog and Magog, it's before the great white throne of Revelation 20, it's before the new heaven and new earth are seen. It's before those things but if you have the 24 elders reigning on the earth in the new heaven and new earth, that means in the amillennial perspective, the new heaven and new earth is the age to come and you have to believe, you have to believe that the 24 elders are reigning here on the earth and not here on the earth because they're certainly not reigning now on the earth. So when do they reign on the earth? Well, if they reign on the earth during the new heaven and new earth, why are they not seen in Revelation before the new heaven and new earth show up in chapter 21? They're seen before the second coming which is before the millennium in chapter 19. I think that's a strong point.

If you have any questions or disagreements, it doesn't mean I'm right and you're wrong, it just means that we're out of time so you can email me and we'll talk and if I'm wrong about something, I've been wrong in here before, I'll come back next week and I'll show you something that I was wrong about. I've done it with Brother Corbin, I've done it with Brother Dick, I've done it with a few others in here. I'm not against saying, "Oops." I'm not so if there's a disagreement, just send me an email and I'll study it again.

Let's pray.

*Lord, thanks for the opportunity to study your word. Help us to be careful students of the word and, God, I think it's good that sometimes we're not popular because the truth is, Lord, if we didn't have Sodomites that hated us and people on the left that thought we were old-fashioned and out of touch, if we didn't have people attacking us Christians, we would find reasons to attack each other like figurative or literal thousand years. Lord, help us to remember we worship the same Christ and that although this is an important point, it's not on the top five by any means. We surely do appreciate your kindness to us through Jesus and the grace he provided in dying for our sins on the cross and I pray you'd help us to remain humble students of your word. In Jesus' name. Amen.*