

Revelation 20:4 – The Millennial Reign of Jesus

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Jesus bound Satan after he rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. It was his prerogative to do so. He did this to limit the Devil's opposition to his church so his Bride – made up of Jews and Gentiles- could reproduce in peace and fill the earth. Today you will see the details of that time when Satan is bound.

Our headings are:

The Time of the Millennial Reign of Christ

The Rulers of the Millennial Reign of Christ

The Effect of the Millennial Reign of Christ

Our goals are: That **seeing Christ's unstoppable rule during the Millennium, you will confidently face your challenges and better work for and worship the Lord.**

The Time of the Millennial Reign of Christ

4 And I **saw thrones**, and **they sat on them**, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the **souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness** to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And **they lived and reigned** with Christ for **a thousand years**.

1. The millennial reign of Jesus began when he rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, bound Satan, and sat down to rule.

Some Christians (called pre-millennialists) believe that the millennial reign of Jesus will take place sometime in the future after Jesus secretly returns, steals away some Christians, and takes them to heaven. Then there will be some cataclysmic events for seven years, after which **Jesus will come back down and set up a kingdom in Jerusalem and rule on the earth for 1000 years**. This denies the clear teaching of Scripture.

(The man who started this strange doctrine, Cerinthus, was a Gnostic, and he said an angel told him this. He was not a Christian. He even denied the Trinity and much of Christ's work. He had similar beliefs to Mormonism.) And yet this is the most popular view today of the Millennium.

2. Is this thousand year (millennial) rule of Christ literally 1000 years as pre-mils argue?

No reasonable interpretation of the Scriptures can conclude the millennium is literally 1000 years. Only cults and unknowledgeable people believe it is literal. These include Jehovah's Witnesses, John Hagee, etc. **How can we know the Millennium is not a literal thousand years...and certainly not a literal thousand years on earth?**

a. When Christ visibly returns in the air that would be the end of the world.

1Corinthians 15: 24 **Then comes the end**, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

Christ will rule until his enemies are conquered. Nations must bow to him and then the end will come.

1Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

b. Further, the Bible uses the word “Millennium” figuratively. A thousand years is a large rounded number. Just like 7 is a picture of perfect complete quality, 1000 years shows a perfect complete quantity. It shows “many-ness.” One thousand is 10X10X10. This is used in many places in Revelation to show large numbers – usually large numbers of people. (Revelation 5:11; 7:4-8; 9:16; 11:3, 13; 12:6; 14:1,3, 20). Consider also

Psalm 50:10-For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills.

When God said this, would any argue that the cattle on 1001st hill don't belong to the Lord? Of course not. So 1000 years is really a long complete period of time... that's all. So we are not waiting for Israel!

3. So we can confidently say we are in the millennial reign of Christ, a very long period, now!

Jesus pointed out that his kingdom was here! It just continues to expand...though sometimes, slowly.

Matthew 13: 31 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, 32 "which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches." 33 Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

Leaven does not only work in part of the dough. It naturally spreads. The effect of the Gospel will be everywhere.

4. Christ will continue his millennial reign until his conquering has been completed and his enemies submit to him.

This kingdom transcends borders...after all, it is a spiritual kingdom. How can you show the kingdom is spiritual? You have been transformed from the Devil's kingdom to the Divine kingdom. There are no geographic borders.

Colossians 1: 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

Ephesians 1:20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. 22 And **He put all things under His feet**, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,

Consider one more passage that teaches the effects of the long rule of Christ. The effect: worldwide converts.

Isaiah 52:15 So **shall He sprinkle many nations**. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider.

And the one who was conquered for Christ was baptized as a sign of his submission.

Christ will rule for 1000 years with his church – the militant church – church on earth until victory is completed.

5. Lessons:

a. Live like you know Christ is on the throne. Go out and conquer. Avoid the doom and gloom people. Christ and his church will never be conquered.

The Rulers of the Millennial Reign of Christ

1. Jesus' disciples (spiritual Israel) would rule under him in the Millennium.

With Christ on the throne shouldn't his children be ruling also? Of course!

Luke 22:29 "And I bestow on you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, 30 "that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and **sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**"

Notice that this was not just a future kingdom...but a present kingdom. He said: "I bestow - give." Further, the present reality of the kingdom is shown by the present reality of the work Christians were given to do: conquer.

Matthew 28: 18..."All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...

2. What are the boundaries of where Jesus and his people would rule?

Christ's kingdom was not a "Jerusalem" based kingdom as the Jews wanted (and others want today), but it went far abroad. Chilton: "Jesus gave His disciples 2 promises regarding the Messianic era: They would sit on *thrones*, and they would *judge all of God's people*. This started in Eden.

Genesis 1:28..."Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; **have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over**

every living thing that moves on the earth."

This was the prophetic hope of the Psalmist, speaking of Christ and men.

Psalm 8:5 For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. 6 You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,

And the writer to the Hebrews confirmed this was an ongoing process.

Hebrews 2:8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him.

But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

3. Not only elders are ruling, but they are accompanied with those who had been beheaded for their faith.

Who are these beheaded people? This can't be literal as people don't normally live for 1000 years. The word used for beheaded (pelekizo) is only used here in the Bible so you can expect a unique meaning. The sense of the meaning is used to refer to the beheading of John the Baptist in Matt 14:10. John the Baptist is unique because he is the last of the Old Testament prophets. It seemed that **Apostle John was drawing attention to those who died before who were faithful**, from Abel, the first prophet, to Zechariah and John the Baptist. These kept the faith and now reign with those who died. After all, all prophets spoke of Christ. See also John 5:45-46, Acts 10:43, and Romans 1:1-3, Romans 3:21-22)

Luke 24:27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

So the old covenant faithful joined with the new covenant faithful, and they are joined with Christ to rule for a thousand years until his enemies become his footstool.

So this reign of Christ takes place in earth and in heaven. (Matt 28)

As you have already seen, Christ rules in heaven and you rule with him. (Ephesians 2:6). The church in heaven and the church on earth worship together today (Rev 7:15, 12:12, 13:6)...so it is not surprising that you rule together. It is a winning rule!

4. Lessons:

a. Not only is Christ ruling, you are too! Make judgments. Speak truth. Protect the innocent. Support mission works.

The Effect of the Millennial Reign of Christ

1. During the millennial reign of Christ his kingdom will extend over the whole earth through evangelism – no other way.

Isaiah 11: 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the

earth shall be full of the **knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.**

How does the knowledge of the Lord spread? Through preaching of the Word of God! As a result, blessings, like the blessings of the Garden of Eden will flow again. Read about those blessings in Lev 26:3-13, and in Deut 28:1-14.

Daniel 7: 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, **That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.**

If you believe the Gospel will spread and the nations will become more and more Christian, you are post-millennial. If you doubt the kingdom will expand or are uncertain about it, you are a-millennial.

Based on these promises, and join them with Psalm 72, 110, 2, Isaiah 54, Habakkuk 2:14, etc. I believe the post-millennial view is more consistent with the tenor of the Bible. (How can “all things” under Christ’s dominion mean “a few things” under his dominion? Look at a couple more.

Acts 2:30...He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool!"

Hebrews 10: 12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that **time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.**

2. What about political spread of the kingdom?

What about making godly laws and requiring men and women obey them? Won't that show Christ's rule? Answer: While Christ is Lord of all areas of life, and politicians are required to follow the teachings of God's Word, the primary means of the kingdom is evangelism, not political action. When the hearts of men and women have been changed, political actions would become easier. Christ's rule starts in the hearts of men, in their families, churches, business, schools, etc. No man is fit to rule in the church (or state) unless he is able to rule his family well.

Matthew 25: 21 "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

It is a sign of a corrupted church that tries to steal power from the civil authorities. One man wrote: "When we are ready, God will give the robe to us. That He has not done so proves that we are not ready. Asserting our readiness will not fool Him."

3. Lessons:

a. With the expectation of the spreading of Christ's kingdom, evangelize by word and life! Let the kingdom of Christ come.

b. Don't try to use the state as a substitute for evangelism. Godly laws save no one!

Conclusion:

Jesus is ruling in heaven and on earth through his saints in heaven and on earth. He will rule until all his enemies become his footstool...either willingly by accepting his grace...or unwillingly and being crushed. The Lord Jesus is not bound by time. He will accomplish his will at his desirable time.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. You have a citizenship in Christ's kingdom that none can take away. Praise the Lord. **Let Christ reign in your heart.** Let him reign in your family. Let him reign in your church. And let him reign in your nation. Hear his words. Obey his directions.

2. You are part of Christ's rule. Praise the Lord. Work for the kingdom. Evangelize the lost so they will be moved to join in the kingdom.

3. How can you do this best? Learn to **die to your own self-interest** and labor for him who died for you. **Pray with all sincerity:** "Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven."

Finally, if Christ isn't your king, he will destroy you. Beg for mercy so he doesn't destroy you. You can beg for mercy if you plead his death as yours.