

The 1689 Confession; Chapter 8, Paragraph 10 – “Of Christ the Mediator”, Message # 30 – “Christ’s Rule & Our Prayers”, Presented in the Adult Sunday School Class, by Pastor Paul Rendall on July 26th, 2020.

Paragraph 10 – This number and order of offices is necessary; for in respect of our ignorance, we stand in need of his prophetic office; and in respect of our alienation from God, and imperfection of the best of our services, we need his priestly office to reconcile us and present us acceptable unto God; and in respect to our averseness and utter inability to return to God, and for our rescue and security from our spiritual adversaries, we need his kingly office to convince, subdue, draw, uphold, deliver, and preserve us to his heavenly kingdom.

Revelation 5: 8-10 – “Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.” “And they sang a new song saying: You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nations and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign upon the earth.”

1st – Because Christ our King has Purchased His Church with His Blood, He is worthy of having His Bride the Church also come to spiritually reign upon the earth.

Christ our great High Priest and King is the One, and the only One, who it says here, is worthy to take the scroll of human history, to open its seals. He is the only One who has the power, all power in heaven and earth, to bring His Kingdom, the Church, to spiritually reign upon the earth. God the Father has determined that He is worthy of this outcome coming to pass. This is the united purpose of the Father the Son, and the Holy Spirit according to the eternal decrees of the Triune God, and the finished work and intercession of our our Lord Jesus Christ, and so it will most definitely come to pass in time to come; at God’s time. The basis of the Church’s coming to reign is that Christ is a Priest sitting on His throne, as we studied before in Zechariah chapter 6, verse 13 – “Yes, He (that is Christ) shall build the temple of the Lord.” (The temple of the Lord is His Church) He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule on His throne; so He shall be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”

The book of Revelation is a book which Christ has given to His Church so that she might understand, in an overview, the history of the Church, in terms of what she will go through before she can come to spiritually reign upon the earth. In this book are contained in the doctrinal and ecclesiastical oppositions raised up by Satan against her, which are revealed to her in 3 specific time periods in succession; the seals, the trumpets, and the vials, or bowls of wrath. In each of these time periods in the history of the Church leading up to the Millennium, the world Monarchy of Rome is the geographic and political stage for Satan’s oppositions because that is the power that Christ was crucified under, and the Devil has continued to use Emperors, Kings, Popes, and the Civil Governments of Europe as the stage for His greatest oppositions. The whole world has generally followed the Beast of Rome. The vast majority of people in the world have, in past generations, and they are now in this present generation, resisting and opposing the gospel of Christ and His rightful rule over them down through all the centuries until the present day. And they will continue to do so until Christ takes certain specific actions as Mediator and Intercessor and Head of His Church. When He does this the saints will reign upon the earth as it says in verse 10.

2nd – How Does Christ’s Kingdom come? It comes in a greater sense over the generations of this Church age, by means of Christ’s Prayers and Intercession, in connection with our prayers for His kingdom’s advance.

Our prayers are every day being offered through our Lord Jesus upon the golden altar of God’s eternal purposes. Christ was the sacrifice. He was also the altar. “We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.” (Hebrews 13: 10) Our prayers are about many different subjects. We may be praying about our own sanctification. We may be praying against the advances of wicked men who speak and work against the truth. We may be praying for our own defense and for God’s

defending His Church against the in-roads of false doctrine and our compromising our holiness, or the truth. We may be praying for boldness in our witness. All of these things we should be praying for. But we should also pray for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Listen to the Larger Catechism, Question # 191 – “In the second petition (which is, Thy Kingdom Come), acknowledging ourselves and all mankind to be by nature under the dominion sin and Satan, we pray: that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed, the gospel propagated throughout the world, the Jews called, the fullness of the Gentiles brought in; the church may be furnished with all gospel-officers and ordinances, purged from corruption, countenance and maintained by the civil magistrate; that the ordinances of Christ may be purely dispensed, and made effectual to the converting of those that yet in their sins, and the confirming, comforting, and building up of those that are already converted; that Christ would rule in our hearts here, and hasten the time of His Second Coming, and our reigning with Him forever, and that He would be pleased so to exercise the kingdom of His power in all the world, as may best conduce to these ends.”

Zechariah 8: 20-23 – “Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘Peoples shall yet come, inhabitants of many cities; the inhabitants of one city shall go to another saying, ‘Let us continue to go and pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of hosts.’ “I myself will go also.” “Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord.” “Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’”

Christ is presently ruling and reigning at the right hand of the Father over all the people and nations of this earth, but His Church and His Kingdom is not presently spiritually reigning among the kingdoms of this world, yet. However, Christ will faithfully continue in His intercession as our King, in order to bring about this spiritual reign of His Church among the nations, which will take place in the Father’s time. But our Lord does expect us to pray and to labor for this coming victory as well. I want you to see that there is progress, and progression in Christ’s kingdom’s advance with the truth of His word, all during this Church age, even during those times when she is persecuted by wicked men and harassed by the evil one’s wicked schemes. His kingdom will move forward to victory during the time of the Millennium, and then after Satan’s little Season, the Church shall be caught up to eternal glory with Him, to be with Him forever, when He returns.

I want you to also see the great plan which God has for the Jewish people and nation to be witnesses to the truth of Christ’s gospel and to preach and explain the word of God since they will have been converted to Christ. “10 men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’” What a great time period the Millennium will be when the Jewish nation and many other nations of the world come to Christ. God’s truth is marching on to victory. It has been doing so all during this Church age, and it will continue to do so until Christ returns.

I think that we will do well to remember the words of the battle hymn of the Republic. They well represent what these verses are speaking of. “Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.” “He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored.” “He has loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword.” “His truth is marching on.” “Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!” “His truth is marching on.”

2nd – That Christ Himself will establish His Church’s right to rule spiritually among the nations

Let me remind you once again of this very important principle in regard to Christ’s Intercession, that He intercedes for both individuals and His Church’s victory with the gospel among the nations. There are some Christians who have only understood His intercession in terms of individuals. This affects their

eschatology and their whole view of the future of Christ's kingdom, and His Church's being able to completely fulfill the Great Commission, and His kingdom coming to spiritually reign upon the earth. Many Christians have a hard time with the whole concept of the Millennium. Some say that the Millennium, or the 1,000 years, is Christ's presently reigning over the nations for this whole church age. Some say that the Millennium only can come after Christ's 2nd Coming. But, we must ask ourselves a very important question. What is the Millennium according to this passage?

Well, lets read it and think about it together.

Revelation 20: 1-6 – “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.” “He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished.” “But after these things he must be released for a little while.” “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.” “But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.” “This is the first resurrection.” “Blessed is he who has part in the first resurrection.” “Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”

How are we to understand the Millennium of Revelation 20? I believe that we need to understand it Scripturally in its context of the book of Revelation, and by understanding that Christ has earned the right for His Church, His kingdom, to spiritually reign upon the earth. This is a great battle however, because of the activity of Satan is raising up false religion, and his persecution of the Church. We can begin to understand the Millennium it in terms of Christ's Kingly intercession for the nations to become His possession, because it is during the Millennium that the conversion of nations will take place. To understand the Millennium we must pay attention to the exact wording of verse 3. Christ binds Satan and casts him into the bottomless pit, not for the whole Church age, but for the 1,000 years. And during that time he is no longer able to deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years are finished Then he must be released for a little while.

Christ's victory at the cross, during the time of the Millennium is not only applied to individual people among the nations, but to whole nations of people, in His intercession for them. He exercises His Kingly authority in His binding of Satan. He exercises His Kingly authority in connection with the will of the Father and the working of the Holy Spirit to bring greater numbers of people to Himself. Because of His victory at the cross and His resurrection and ascension to rule at God's right hand, Satan no longer has a right to rule over nations to deceive them. He did not have this right before the time of the Millennium, but the purposes of God in relation to his deception of the nations had not come to full fruition so as to judge Satan's usurping Christ's right to have the nations as His inheritance, and to establish His Church's right to rule, until this particular point in history.

But now the set time has come, and so He binds Satan in this respect; that he will not be able to deceive the nations any longer with a false gospel and false doctrine in the great systematic way that he has done through Papal Rome and Mohammedanism and Paganism world wide for all the time before. He has not ultimately been able to deceive the individual elect believers down through the whole Church age in regard to the gospel, for the Lord through faithful preachers of his word, and many faithful witnesses among his saints, opened their eyes to the true gospel based upon the work that He has done at the cross and His giving each believer the Holy Spirit. But Satan all the way down through the generations since the ascension of Christ has still been deceiving the nations in relation to the gospel, and this is what is being talked about in Revelation chapter 20: 1-6 and Isaiah 27: 1-6. This will change when Christ binds him and punishes him in this very important way during the thousand years of the Millennium. He casts him into the bottomless pit for a thousand years and he seals him there. At the end of the thousand years

he will be released, and he will again go out to deceive the nations once again, to gather them together to war against the church.

The Millennium, or the Thousand Years, is called the first resurrection at the end of verse 5. (It will be the first resurrection, in that it will come before the 2nd Resurrection, which will take place at Christ's Return and His appearing. The first resurrection will be a literal spiritual resurrection. The second resurrection will be a literal physical resurrection. It is very apparent from the wording of verse 4 that this first resurrection is not speaking of anyone being raised from the dead physically. It says – "Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness." The first resurrection is a resurrection of souls, not bodies. It is a resurrection relative to the Church; that is, the cause and kingdom of Christ coming to life again after her witness was slain. The slaying of the Church's witness just before the Millennium is described in symbolic detail in Revelation 11: 7-12. "When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them." "And their bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three and a half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves." "and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth." "Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. (This too, is speaking of the 1st Resurrection, the same event as in Revelation 20.) It is the witness of the Church which will be slain and it is the witness of the church that will come to life in the 1st resurrection.

The Millennium is the combined Church of newly converted Jews joining together with Gentile believers in all the world, to be successful in fulfilling the Great commission. It is the Church, God's saints, being raised up in regard to their being able to witness most effectively, and to fulfill the great commission. "Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always to the end of the age."

The "revelation" of the book of Revelation is not that Christ is presently reigning. That truth is apparent from many other portions of the New Testament. The "revelation" of the book of Revelation is that the Church will someday reign upon the earth, as it plainly says in Revelation 5: 10 – "You have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth." Not – We are (presently) reigning on the earth. But the verse plainly says that we shall (that is – We shall eventually) reign on the earth, after the great schemes of the Devil are destroyed and he is then bound, and the Spirit is then poured out upon many peoples and many nations.

So, the Book of Revelation reveals the overview of the history of the Church; specifically her battles with the greatest oppositions of Satan which he would raise up against her. These oppositions have principally come through Rome Pagan and Rome Papal in that order. There have been many Christian martyrs for Christ, during these times, for the forward progress of the gospel and truth of the word of God. Some, it says here, who were beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God. Some who had not worshiped the beast of antichristian Rome from about the year 600 A.D. forward to the present day. They had not received the mark of the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And it is these, it says in verse 4 who "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years". Now, we have established that this is a spiritual resurrection that we are talking about, not a literal physical resurrection; this 1st resurrection. So, in what sense do these martyrs live and reign with Christ a thousand years? The cause that they died for, the cause of truth and righteousness, the cause of Christ's gospel and His kingdom lives and reigns in those Christian people who also, in their successive generations during the thousand years preach, promote, and in holiness live out, during the time of the thousand years.

You remember how in Luke 1: 15 that the angel said concerning John the Baptist that “he would be great in the sight of the Lord and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink.” He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother’s womb.” And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their Go.” “He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the father to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord”? Even as John the Baptist went before Christ in the spirit and power of Elijah, the saints in the during the time of the Millennium, those who reign with Christ, have the same spirit as these martyrs. They live for the same cause of Christ’s gospel and the furtherance of the truth of the word of God unto holiness, and therefore the martyr’s cause, all that they lived and died for, is resurrected. The Church itself at that time period shall altogether receive new life from an almost dead state, in regard to their witness.

The picture then that John sees in verse 4 of Revelation 20 is of thrones, and they that sat on them, and judgment was committed to them; that is, that they would be able to spiritually reign over their spiritual adversaries and specifically the Antichrist. Because he says that he saw the souls (not the bodies) of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God; those who had not worshiped the beast (that is Pagan Rome) or his image (which is Papal Rome), and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. (That is, they had not received Rome’s false gospel and baptism or professed allegiance to that false system) And these “souls” lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. (That is, the cause for which these martyrs died; that of the true gospel and their holding to the word of God concerning the correct understanding of grace and salvation, and having purity in relation to the worship and practice of the Church not being idolatrous, this cause of Christ and the witness of His Church was raised from the dead and their righteous and right spirit prevailed. It will reign for a thousand years. The saints then alive upon the earth will faithfully represent that same spirit. Blessed and holy is everyone who has a part in this first resurrection, meaning every Christian who identified with this cause and who suffered with Christ on account of it. None of them will be affected by the second death. They shall be priests of God and Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years. All this will come to pass because of Christ’s intercession as Priest and King, for His Church, and the triumph of His kingdom.

The rest of the dead of verse 5 are not all the physical wicked dead being raised at the end of a Millennium following Christ’s return, but they are those who after the thousand years will take up, once again, antichrist’s cause and the Devil’s kingdom’s cause. Their cause only comes to life again when Satan will be released for his little season, as it says in verse 7; when he is released from his prison he will go out to deceive the nations of the world one last time. It is sometime during that time that Christ Himself will return and put down this rebellion and raise the physical dead and judge the world as it says in verses 10 and 11.

3. Christ as the High Priest and King of the Church will Intercede and Intervene in history to establish His Church’s spiritual victories among the nations.

Micah 4: 1-8 – “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’” “For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” “He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” “But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.” “For all people walk each in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.” “In that day,’ says the LORD, ‘I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted; I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcast a strong nation; so the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever.” “And you,

O tower of the flock, The stronghold of the daughter of Zion, to you shall it come, even the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.”

The latter days are not all the days of the New Testament Church Age, but they are the latter days of that this present Church Age, before Christ returns. How do we know this? It is because of the way that these verses in Malachi are worded; that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains. The mountain of the Lord’s house is Christ’s Church and His kingdom. These verses are referring to a time in the latter days of this present Church age. They are referring to the Millennium or the Latter-Day Glory of the Church; the Spiritual Reign of Christ’s Church and His Kingdom spiritually coming to rule and reign among the nations. During that time the mountain (the kingdom) of the Lord’s house (that is His Church in this world at that time) shall be established on the top of the mountains. (That is, the kingdom of this world, shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ – Revelation 11: 15) Peoples shall flow to it; that is they will say to each other that they are going to come to church and hear His word taught so that they can learn His ways and walk in His paths. In the process of their doing this, they will be saved and brought into churches, of many nations around the world. The word of the Lord shall go forth from Jerusalem, that is from the Church, and more specifically following the conversion of the Jews, it will go forth from Jerusalem; God’s ancient people having found Christ to be their Savior, and have been saved as a nation. Their witness to Christ will go forth to all nations, and they will be great, great, witnesses to Christ and His grace.

The Lord Himself, by His interceding for His Church, will rebuke strong nations afar off, and by the pouring out of the Spirit, whole nations and people groups will see how wrong it is to wage war against each other, and so they will mutually agree to lay down their weapons of mass destruction and to be at peace with each other. There will be so many people converted among the nations that this will not be a problematic thing in those days. It assumes that since many have been converted to Christ that they have become people of good will and peacemakers, both in their hearts and in their actions. It will not be hard in those days to negotiate peace treaties, or to believe that they will be kept; such will be the strength of grace working in the hearts and minds of many people in the leadership of these countries. Instead, the picture is given of everyone sitting under his vine and his fig tree and no one will make them afraid. As it says in Psalm 46, the Lord will make wars to cease to the ends of the earth.

Isaiah 4: 1-6 – “And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, ‘We will eat our own food and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach.’” “In that day the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious; and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and appealing for those of Israel who have escaped.” “And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem who be called holy – everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem.” “when the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, then the Lord will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night.” For over all the glory there will be a covering.” King James – ... “for upon all the glory shall be a defense.”

Here we find, in the time of the Millennium that many people will want to be called Christians so that their reproach would be taken away. What reproach is that? The reproach of not being thought to be a Christian; not being in Christ, whether you are Jew or Gentile. For in that day the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful; that is Christ and His Church together will be seen by all the nations of the world as beautiful, and holiness will be generally be prevalent among the nations of the world. The Lord will wash away the filth of the Jews, the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem for their national guilt in crucifying Christ. He will do this by a the creating within them a new spirit of judgement in taking away their spiritual blindness and giving them great zeal for Christ, His kingdom and cause. And in those days He will lead them into the promised land of being part of His Church. He will lead all of His people, in all of His Churches in a very personal and powerful way into the development of holiness and righteousness in the most extensive way possible. Over all of this glory shown to the Church will be a covering of His love and preserving and protecting care.

