

## The Messianic Thousand Years

We hear a lot about what will happen before the Lord comes. Jesus spoke a lot about the end times in Matthew 24; Mark 13 and Luke 21. We read books and we hear about the terrifying effects of a catching away of Christians, the Battle of Armageddon, the antichrist, the beast and all those things, but what will happen after all that has taken place? After these things have come and gone, there will be one thousand years of peace; the Messianic Age, where Jesus will rule over the whole earth, after the first resurrection. 'And they lived again and they ruled with Christ the Messiah, one thousand years. Blessed is the person who takes part in the first resurrection! They shall be ministers of God and of Christ and they shall rule along with Him a thousand years' (Revelation 20:4 & 6).

Jesus will rule the nations with a rod of iron. (Revelation 2:27; 12:5). Christians will have the new redeemed bodies we have been waiting for (Romans 8:23). The scars Jesus received from His crucifixion will never disappear, even in His new body as He showed Thomas in John 20:27.

When we finally reach the Messianic Age; the millennium; the one thousand years reign of Christ or whatever one prefers to call that time in the future, Israel will be a huge country; from the Nile in Egypt to the Euphrates River. The Jews are just as important to God as the Christians are, and they are going to benefit greatly from Jesus' return to earth. In Genesis 15:18, God made Abraham a promise. "To your descendants (the Jews) I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates." In Isaiah 27:12, God again promises Israel; "And it shall be in that day that the Lord will thresh out His grain from the flood of the River Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt, and you will be gathered one by one and one to another, O children of Israel." Since this has not occurred in history, it is still to take place.

In Isaiah 11:11 to 16, the Lord gives a detailed account of the Jews' return to Israel. God warns the neighbouring nations that if they vex or harass the Israelites in any way, they will be cut off (killed). 'And in that day the Lord shall again lift up His hand a second time to recover the remnant of His people which is left; from Assyria (Syria), from Egypt, from Pathros (Europe), from Ethiopia, from Persia (Iran), from Babylonia (Iraq) and from the countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea (Lebanon and a slice of Turkey). And He will raise up a signal for the nations and will assemble the outcasts of Israel and will gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The jealousy of Ephraim shall depart, and they who vex and harass Judah from outside or inside shall be cut off (killed). But Ephraim and Judah (Israel) will swoop down upon the shoulders of the Philistines (now Palestinians) toward the west (the West Bank); they (Israel) will strip the people on the east (Gaza Strip). They will lay their hand upon Edom, Moab and the Ammonites (all of Jordan and a chunk of Saudi Arabia. Possibly even Kuwait) will obey them (the Israelites). And the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian Sea and with His mighty scorching wind He will wave His hand over the Nile and will smite it into seven channels and will cause men to cross over dry-shod. And there shall be a highway from Assyria (Syria) for the remnant left of His people, as there was for Israel when they came up out of the land of Egypt.'

People will still be on earth, but not all will be Christians. The Christians will rule the earth with Jesus, as we read in Revelation 20:6. During this time there will be complete peace on earth – there will be no wars; carnivorous animals will no longer eat meat, but will eat grass; tiny children will be able to play safely with snakes; everybody will go to Jesus for advice; the dreadful sudden infant death syndrome will cease and people will live hundreds of years. Those who die before they are one hundred years old will be thought of as just a child.

Let's first look at Isaiah 11:1 to 10, which tells us about that future time. "And there shall come forth a Shoot (Jesus) out of the stock of Jesse (King David's father), and a Branch (Jesus) out of his roots shall grow and bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him – the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the reverential and obedient fear of the Lord; and shall make Him of quick understanding, and His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, neither decide by the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness and justice shall He judge the poor and decide with fairness for the meek, the poor and the downtrodden of the earth; and He shall smite the oppressor with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the girdle of His waist and faithfulness the girdle of His loins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid (a young goat); the calf, the young lion and the fatted domestic animal together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed side by side; their young shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. It shall be in that day that the Root of Jesse (Jesus) shall stand as a signal for the peoples; of Him shall the nations inquire and seek knowledge, and His dwelling shall be glorious."

Isaiah 25:20 & 25 is just as exciting. "There shall no more be in the earth an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who dies prematurely; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner who dies when only a hundred years old shall be thought only a child, cut off because he is accursed. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy Mount (Zion) says the Lord."

Psalms 72 was initially written for Solomon but looking at Solomon's life, it doesn't really fit this Psalm. Even if Solomon had continued living a righteous life, he never had dominion over the whole earth so this Psalm is attributed to David's Greater Son, Jesus, the Messiah and the setting up of His Kingdom on earth. The Psalm gives a detailed description of what the thousand years will be like. Jesus will govern with righteousness; He will bring justice; He will crush the oppressor; He will have dominion all over the earth; all nations will serve Him; He will banish poverty, sickness and hunger; He will have pity on the needy and save them; He will pray continually; the whole earth will be filled with His glory. During the thousand years, Jesus will bring peace which will abound. In that Psalm, there is also an emphasis on helping the needy.

Not only will all people on earth be filled with joy at Jesus' return, all of creation will benefit. As we have already seen, herbivorous animals will no longer be eaten by carnivores, because the carnivores will eat grass. That also means humans will no longer eat meat, but fruit, vegetables and cereals. Heaven will be glad and even the rivers will be joyful. When Jesus returns, He will bring about the redemption of all creation. Animals are also affected by mankind's fall into sin. We see in Romans 8:18 to 25, that creation is waiting for the Messianic Age; 'The sufferings of this present time are not worth being compared with the glory that is about to be revealed to us, for even the whole of creation waits expectantly and longs eagerly for God's sons to be made known. For the creation was subjected to frailty (because of man's fall). Creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole of creation has been moaning together and not only creation, but we ourselves too, who have the Holy Spirit, groan within ourselves as we eagerly wait for the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. We hope for what is still unseen by us, we wait for it with patience'.

The Lord said to Adam in Genesis 3:17b & 18; 'The ground is under a curse because of you ... Thorns and thistles shall the ground bring forth for you, etc'. There never were any thorns and thistles until man fell. Man had dominion over the whole earth, and when he fell into sin, the whole earth was affected. When Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate, they had put on Him a purple robe and pressed a crown of thorns on His head. Jesus stood there with the thorns on His head and the purple of the thistle on His robe as a testimony that He was bearing the curse of man's sin on the ground. Not only will we have our new resurrected bodies; the whole of creation is waiting for the Messianic Age, so they can be set free from the effects of man's sin.

All of creation will rejoice. We see that in Psalm 96:11 to 13; 'Let the heavens be glad, let the earth rejoice, let the sea roar and all the things which fill it. Let the field exult, and all that is in it! Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy before the Lord, for He comes to judge and govern the earth! He shall judge the world with righteousness and justice and the people with His faithfulness and truth'.

Psalm 98:7 to 9; 'Let the sea roar, and all that fills it, the world and those who dwell in it! Let the rivers clap their hands, let the hills sing for joy together before the Lord, for He is coming to judge and rule the earth; with righteousness will He judge and rule the world and the peoples with equity (fairness)'.

If we look at the scripture in Genesis 3:16, where God said to Eve as a result of the curse; "I will greatly multiply your grief and suffering in pregnancy and childbirth; with spasms of distress you will bring forth children ..." we can assume that when the Messianic Age is here and the curse has been lifted, then women should enjoy pain free childbirth.

For one thousand years, all of mankind, all animals and all of creation will enjoy nothing but blessing. There will be no wars, famine, hunger, sickness, poverty, homelessness, oppression, divorce, domestic violence, robberies, terrorism or any of the things that make life difficult. Close your eyes for a few moments, and allow your imagination to grasp the life that we will have then. Imagine the peace; the tranquillity; the hope; the joy; the laughter. Imagine knowing your child will always have enough food and clothing and that your baby will never become ill. If there is someone suffering arthritis; imagine never feeling pain again. For those who are blind or deaf; imagine having perfect eyesight and hearing. For the quadriplegics and paraplegics; imagine being able to run and play with children again; and maybe use your old wheelchair for a go-kart. If you are Jewish, imagine never again being persecuted, bombed or harassed. For those who are caught in the terror of domestic violence; imagine having it stopped for good. For the homeless; imagine having a home to live in, with the assurance that it is yours indefinitely and no nasty landlord will ever make you move. Robberies, violence and terrorism will cease forever. The coming of the Lord Jesus will be wonderful and is something to really look forward to; something to be excited about. In Revelation 22:20, Jesus says; "Yes it is true. Surely I am coming quickly. Amen!" Yes, come, Lord Jesus!

Amen and God bless you!

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