
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: **What is the millennial reign of Christ?**

In previous studies I have discussed issues relating to the millennial reign of Christ. I have discussed:

- The rapture
- What's wrong with premillennialism
- The binding of Satan

If you missed these studies, go to our website and either read or listen to those presentations. The material covered in those studies will be helpful in the present study.

In this present study, we will focus our attention on the thousand year reign of the Lord.

First: Let's establish the fact that there is a millennial reign of Christ—that is, a thousand-year reign of Christ.

Revelation 20:4-6

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.

⁵ But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

⁶ Blessed and holy 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.

The millennial reign of the Lord is a description of the entire gospel age—from the time the Lord ascended into heaven and was enthroned at the right hand of God until the time He returns again and delivers the kingdom back to His Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-26).

The reign of the Lord is a spiritual reign. The Lord became enthroned in heaven when He ascended after His death and resurrection. Hebrews 1:1-4 says that after the Lord's ascension He "*sat down at the right hand of God.*" This means He sat down on the throne of God to reign in God's kingdom that will never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44).

When Jesus sat on God's throne, He at the same time also began sitting on the throne of David to fulfill the prophecy made to David that the Messiah would reign over God's people from David's throne (2 Samuel 7:1-17). The "*throne of God*" and the "*throne of David*" are two names for the same throne.

- In 1 Kings 2:12 the Bible says, "*Solomon sat on the throne of his father David.*"
- But in 1 Chronicles 29:23 the Bible says, "*Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father.*"

These two passages demonstrate that the "*throne of David*" is the same as the "*throne of the Lord*." Peter, and the other apostles, declared that the Lord Jesus began sitting on this throne when He resurrected and ascended into heaven (Hebrews 1:1-4; Acts 2:22-36).

Second: Revelation 20:4-6 teaches that the souls of the Lord's faithful saints go to heaven when they die and these reign with the Lord by giving their praise and approval to the Lord for all that He does. These disembodied saints are with the Lord and are patiently waiting for the day that the Lord will return to judge the world. When the Lord comes again, He will bring these saints with Him (1 Thessalonians 3:13). They will be reunited with their bodies, and together with those saints still alive on the earth, will be caught up to the heavens to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

You will notice that Revelation 20:5 speaks of a "*first resurrection*." The "*first resurrection*" is a spiritual resurrection and refers to these disembodied saints "*living again*" with the Lord in heaven awaiting the Lord's second coming. The bodily resurrection when the Lord returns is the "*second resurrection*" by implication.

The "*first resurrection*" is experienced only by the saints, but all people, both good and wicked, will experience the second resurrection—the bodily resurrection (John 5:28-29).

By contrast, the "*first death*" is a physical, bodily death that comes upon all people both good and wicked (Hebrews 9:27). But there is a "*second death*" which comes upon only the wicked (Revelation 20:14). So:

- The first resurrection is a spiritual resurrection experienced only by the saints.

- The second death is a spiritual death experienced only by the wicked.

The reign of the Messiah on the throne of David is occurring right now as the Lord reigns at the right hand of God. He governs through His church on earth as the church witnesses for the Lord to unbelievers—trying to encourage unbelievers to repent. The "*thousand years*" is a symbolic number meaning the entire gospel age during which time the Lord's church witnesses on His behalf. Those saints who have died and have gone to be with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8), have experienced the "first resurrection"—a spiritual resurrection. They are truly blessed because over these who have died faithfully, "*the second death has no power*" (Revelation 20:6). Only those who have died faithfully have eternal security. These are the true "*overcomers*" described in the Book of Revelation (Revelation 2:7). Their trials are over and they were faithful until death (Revelation 2:10), and since their trial is now over, there is no possibility that they might fall away and be lost.

Those who are still alive are still on trial. Living people are not "overcomers" until they die. There is the danger that living saints might sin, fall away, and be eternally lost. Because of this danger, the scriptures constantly warn living Christians to beware lest they fail the test and find themselves lost (Hebrews 3:12; 2 Peter 2:20-22).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Well ... thanks for listening to our message this week. We invite you to visit our website www.WillofTheLord.com. There you may

download the notes and the audio file of the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on ***Bible Talk***.